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To The Editor:

Many of you know the impact of the words “you have cancer”. In an instant, your life is different. Your priorities change. Your perspective narrows. You become fixated on those microscopic cells multiplying wildly somewhere in your body that may eventually kill you!

This is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and those of us who have had this diagnosis or any other cancer diagnosis should celebrate life! Yes, celebrate! Cancer can give you a profound appreciation for life, even as it threatens to take it away. We learn to choose life day by day and be grateful moment by moment.

In January of 2002, my routine annual mammogram led to a second not-so-routine mammogram to an ultrasound to a biopsy to a cancer diagnosis and surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy. Without that mammogram, the cancer would have continued to grow and spread for 2 or 3 more years before it could be felt, and the outcome could have been very different.

That’s why I encourage EVERYONE to get cancer screenings. That’s why I celebrate life! Early diagnosis and early treatment can make all the difference.

If you have not had your yearly breast exam and mammogram, and are uninsured or underinsured, please contact the Fulton and Montgomery Counties Cancer Services Program Partnership. They can provide you with the services you need to do your part for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Please contact Suzanne Hagadorn, Program Coordinator at 770-7516.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Conboy, Schenectady