

# SHOP WELL WITH YOU™

using clothing as a means towards wellness



*Hello Everyone!*



SWY hosted a fashion show to celebrate National Cancer Survivors' Day at Mount Sinai Hospital for the third consecutive year on May 23, 2004. The ten models were cancer survivors of all ages and lengths of survivorship.

Welcome to Shop Well with You's (SWY) third annual newsletter. Since our last update, we have made considerable strides to uphold our mission **to help women with a history of cancer improve their body-image and quality of life by using clothing as a means towards wellness.**

Women whose body-image has been changed by cancer often lack knowledge about what clothing will accommodate them; energy to look for clothing; and tools to use clothing creatively. As the only organization of its kind to provide comprehensive and accessible information about the body-image resources available to female cancer survivors, SWY is meeting quite a need.

In a recent *New York Times* article, SWY Board member and Director of Survivorship at the Lance Armstrong Foundation, Doug Ulman recognized the need for continuing support. With over 10 million cancer survivors nationwide, "...there was very little support out there for people who were really thinking longer term about their lives. Not, Will I live or die? But, How well will I live?" With an increasing amount of people living with, through, and beyond cancer, quality of life issues such as leading a healthy lifestyle, sustaining one's emotional well-being, and maintaining a positive body-image are more important now than ever.

Bodies differ, treatment protocols differ, and as a result, each woman's request for assistance to SWY differs.

For example:

- Susan, a 34-year old ovarian cancer survivor, contacted SWY looking for head covering options as an alternative to wearing a wig.
- Elise, a 60-year old colorectal cancer survivor, wanted suggestions about clothing that could accommodate her rapidly changing body temperature during and after chemotherapy.
- Margaret, a 42-year old breast cancer survivor, had a sensitive abdomen and was looking for stylish pants with a comfortable waistband.

SWY was able to help each of these women through our online **Clothing Guide** as well as our **One-on-One Service**. You can find more information about these programs within the newsletter.

After going through a life-threatening disease like cancer, a woman may feel guilty that she is troubled by her body-image. Looks aren't everything, but they do have an impact on how you feel. Because these issues are not frequently addressed, typically, when a woman first hears about SWY, her initial reaction is relief. "You mean, you can help me?" Usually the second question is, "And it's free?"

In order to continue to answer affirmatively to both of these questions, as well as meet the growing need for SWY's programs, the challenging task to raise funds remains. While we pursue funds from numerous sources such as foundations, corporations and individual donors, we'd love your help in creatively raising funds for SWY in your community. Check out **Ways to Give** within this newsletter for a list of ideas!

There is much more work to be done, but I am energized by SWY's accomplishments thus far. And we couldn't have done it without your support!

Have a wonderful summer and be well.

Warm regards,

*Emily Spivack*

## What's Inside:

- Spotlight on a Board Member
- Program Update
- Ways to Give
- First-Hand Experience
- Staff, Volunteer, and Intern Updates
- Stay Tuned
- Ideas from SWY's Online Clothing Guide

## How To Contact Us:

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Mail: 38 Greene Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10013

Web: <http://www.shopwellwithyou.org>

## SPOTLIGHT:

### Board Member Lisa Raiola

Lisa Raiola has been able to lend her professional expertise and personal experience to SWY since the organization was just a twinkle in Emily's eye. Lisa was involved with the development of SWY's business plan that won Emily the Brown University Entrepreneurial Program Competition and enabled her to start SWY after her college graduation.

Also a Brown graduate ('84), Lisa is now the Vice President of Alumni Relations at Brown and has a faculty appointment in the medical school's Department of Community Health. Lisa currently teaches a course in ethics and public health.

Lisa is not only a SWY board member, but she is also currently undergoing multiple treatments for uterine cancer. Lisa continues to work full-time through her treatments and she says, "A big part of working is looking like you're up to the task." Already petite, Lisa has lost 20 pounds since she began treatment, which completely changed her body shape. SWY's objective is important to her because she believes that a woman should be able to feel beautiful no matter what she looks like. SWY is also valuable to Lisa because it views cancer survivors from a more compassionate perspective rather than from a clinical perspective.

Lisa has two children, Austin, 13, and Stefanie, 14, who are at ages when they are very aware of what is happening to her. The way Lisa looks affects the way her children feel. Lisa says, "When they see me looking good and feeling good about myself, they take the lead from me. They have a better sense of confidence in my recovery."

### Board Members

#### Steve Massarsky

#### Josef Mittlemann

Executive in Residence and Adjunct Lecturer  
in the Division of Engineering  
Brown University

#### Landis Olesker

#### Lisa Raiola

Vice-President of Alumni Relations  
Brown University

#### Emily Spivack

Founder and Executive Director  
Shop Well with You

#### Doug Ulman

Director of Survivorship  
Lance Armstrong Foundation  
Founder, Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults

## PROGRAM UPDATE

### Online News

Who wants to search around town for the right swimsuit after a mastectomy? Or scour stores looking for clothing made of soft, natural fabrics after radiation treatment? You don't have to! Through SWY's online information hub, [www.shopwellwithyou.org](http://www.shopwellwithyou.org), we are able to assist women nationwide with clothing recommendations for cancer-related side effects, links to other body-image related organizations, and articles about cancer, clothing, and wellness.

We are constantly updating the site with the latest products and tips, but if you are unable to find what you need in our Clothing Guide, you can also

use SWY's One-on-One Service and Request Personal Assistance online (see below).

In addition, visitors to our website are able to ask questions and share resources with each other through our online bulletin board. Whether you live in New York or New Mexico, these SWY resources are available to you!



Emily with Tiffany Ga Randall Macon from Foundation at the Or Society (ONS) congress in April 2004. Gener attend this and other provided by Innovati

### One-On-One Service: Request Personal Assistance

SWY realizes that cancer treatments and related surgeries can impact a woman's body-image, or how she perceives herself. We also understand that each woman has individual concerns that she would like addressed. Through the SWY's **One-on-One Service**, her personal needs can be met.

To participate, take a few minutes to complete a Resource Request Form on our website or over the phone. SWY will evaluate the request and compile a variety of clothing suggestions and advice tailored personally to you including photographs of items, size, color, price information, and advice on how to give a new look to

clothing you already own.

Requests have included:

- Inserts that can be worn in bras and bathing suits to help even out the bust after a lumpectomy or reconstruction,
- Professional clothing that will accommodate lymphedema in the arm,
- High cut dresses that will cover scars on the chest, and
- Basic garments to build a new wardrobe after significant changes in weight.

Within 5-8 business days, SWY will send your packet to you by mail, fax, or e-mail depending on what is easiest for you. This service is provided free of charge.

### WAYS TO GIVE

SWY operates solely on donations received throughout the year. As we continue to assist women nationwide, we depend on your support to help us continue providing our programs free of charge.

A few creative ways to give include:

- Seek matching charitable contributions from your workplace.
- Honor a special occasion, such as a birthday or anniversary, with a donation to SWY in the name of that person. We will send a letter to him or her acknowledging your donation.
- Consider an in-kind donation to SWY, such as printing, design, or IT assistance.

SWY now accepts online credit card donations. Go to our website and follow the prompts at [www.shopwellwithyou.org](http://www.shopwellwithyou.org). Click on **How to Donate** and fill out our **Secure Online Donation Form**.

## FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE By Meg Bonner

I do not enjoy shopping for clothes. Give me a farmers' market any day. The pinch of a tomato, the scent of fresh goat cheese and small pots brimming with herbs...I am in heaven. But in those hot and steamy changing rooms with their unflattering mirrors, if my initial choices do not please me, I am quickly out the door. If I am pleased, I buy several colors of what fits.

After surgery to my breast, radiation, chemotherapy, lymphedema, and finally an extensive case of shingles, I was uncomfortable in all clothes - especially my bra. My employer's manual is vaguely specific in this day of business casual that "appropriate undergarments must be worn at all times". In other words, the flower child within could bloom at home but not in the office.

I frequently attended the St. Vincent's Comprehensive Cancer Center lecture series to learn more about coping with cancer. I noticed an interesting workshop called Fashion Your Own Sense of Self and decided to attend, more out of curiosity than ever expecting a solution to some of my clothing needs.

SWY's Founder, Emily Spivack, and their Program Coordinator at the time, Sarah Ballard, were easy to talk with and the program transitioned seamlessly from an open discussion to Emily's presentation. Emily was keenly able to understand the benefits of using clothing to improve one's body-image through her own mother's battles with cancer. Emily discussed sleeves and armholes to accommodate the bandages of lymphedema, wide waist

bands, elastic to accommodate fluid gained and lost, and attractive dresses that buttoned in the front and were easy to get on. They had attractive, reasonably priced, comfortable solutions to almost any physical complaint we could toss at them. Solutions that could make a patient feel good about her appearance. I was now armed with enough education to shop cleverly for most of my needs, but not for finding a bra.

After the workshop, I was given the opportunity to utilize SWY's free One-on-One Service. Yes! My wish list was long and included items such as: 1) comfort, 2) soft cotton, 3) no nylon, 4) no scratchy lace, 5) no underwire, 6) front closure, 7) light pressure to reduce swelling, 8) good support, 9) no irritating seams and 10) enough stretch in the fabric to accommodate the changes to the size of my right breast due to the drainage from my arm. During my phone interview, I passed along my wish list. Sarah listened carefully and asked additional questions about these features.

Shortly, I received a well-crafted e-mail with color photos, descriptions of the bras, and several mail order resources for a large selection in a variety of price ranges. I ordered the first option and it worked the best for my needs.

The Fashion Your Own Sense of Self seminar and the One-on-One Service changed my outlook. I spent more time finding hair accessories, earrings, scarves - little things that allow me to express myself and still feel comfortable.

Recently I start belly dancing classes and am feeling good about my body's movements. Now I need to find a comfortable, non-irritating bra with green sequins, a few pearls, and gold coins - I wonder if Shop Well with You has any resources?



*Balligan and the Lance Armstrong Oncology Nursing Class in Anaheim, CA. Her support to our conferences was x.*

## STAFF, VOLUNTEER, AND INTERN UPDATE

As SWY grows, our staff and volunteers continue to expand and change as well.

**Sarah Ballard** was SWY's Program Coordinator from September 2003 through June 2004 as part of an Americorp program called Public Allies. She has moved to Colorado to pursue another Americorp fellowship. We are sad to see her go!

**Lee Ann Gullie** has replaced Sarah Ballard as Program Coordinator after her graduation from Cornell University this spring. Lee Ann started at Shop Well with You as a summer intern in 2003.

**Emily Cohen** has been a dedicated SWY volunteer for some time now. While Emily is a full-time Merchandising and Marketing Assistant at O'Bryan Brothers, Inc., she volunteers her time as SWY's Volunteer Coordinator as well. We appreciate all that Emily has done to organize a vital part of SWY - our volunteers.

**Katie O'Connor** spent her summer at SWY as a full-time intern. Among her many duties, she is responsible for planning and organizing this newsletter. We'll miss her when she returns to Holy Cross for her junior year in the fall.

We would also like to thank **Dessolena Bottiglieri** for her expertise in designing this year's newsletter!



*Volunteers (L-R): Emily Cohen, Avon Representatives Marie Tremblay and Julia Rosenberg, Judy Barrett, Adrienne Mercante, Nicole Chiacchiero, and Xoli Hlatshawayo at the 2004 Fashion Show for National Cancer Survivors' Day.*

## STAY TUNED!

### Fashion Your Own Sense of Self

Check out the SWY Event Calendar online for information about upcoming Fashion Your Own Sense of Self outreach programs that are taking place throughout New York City.

### SWY's Holiday Accessory Sale Benefit

Mark your calendar for SWY's fall fundraiser on November 17, 2004 at Artists Space. The event will include fashion, hors d'oeuvres, and cocktails at an accessory sale and silent auction. It will be a great opportunity to begin shopping for the holidays. Look for more info to follow shortly!

### Upcoming Book Features SWY

Emily Spivack, SWY's Executive Director, has written a section on clothing, body-image, and cancer for an upcoming book about beauty and cancer written by Ramy, cancer survivor and owner of make-up company RAMY Beauty Therapy. Look for this book in January 2005.

## IDEAS FROM SWY'S ONLINE CLOTHING GUIDE:

Here are some examples of the helpful information found on SWY's website:

### Headcoverings

- **Buff USA:** "Buff Wear" is a seamless piece of soft, breathable, and wind-resistant fabric that wicks sweat away and can be worn year-round as a bandana, headband, or underneath a hat. [www.buffusa.com](http://www.buffusa.com)
- **Babushka:** Babushka uses decorative and functional fabrics to create updated bandanas that come in a variety of sizes, fabrics, and styles made from either polar fleece or light-weight microfiber. Receive 20% off your online purchase by entering coupon code SHPWL03 at checkout. [www.headscarves.com](http://www.headscarves.com)

### Bathing Suits

- **Lands End:** Lands End offers mastectomy bathing suits in both one and two pieces that have high necks and prostheses pockets. [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com)
- **Amoena:** Amoena has an extensive collection of swimwear with pockets that are sold through a number of retailers including Women's Personal Health. [www.womenspersonalhealth.com](http://www.womenspersonalhealth.com)

### Camisoles

- **Still You:** Still You offers multiple tank top styles made of cotton and lace that can be worn as inner or outerwear, and are designed with side pockets for easy access for a prosthesis. Receive 10% off your online purchase by entering coupon code ShopWell1004 at checkout. [www.stillyoufashions.com](http://www.stillyoufashions.com)
- **Ladies First:** Ladies First manufactures the SOFTEE Camisole which you can step into instead of lifting your arms to put it on over your head. It has pockets for two breast forms and a pocket to place drains following surgery. To find a retailer near you, visit: [www.ladiesfirst.com](http://www.ladiesfirst.com).



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## SWY's Mission Statement

*Shop Well with You, a national not-for-profit organization, helps women with a history of cancer improve their body image and quality of life by using clothing as a means toward wellness. Through education, outreach, and personalized services, SWY focuses on the woman, not the cancer, in order to provide support and promote survivorship. All programs are offered free of charge.*