

Winning the race.

If not for breast cancer, this is the time of year Sandy Knight would be planning the next family gathering, making her scrumptious strawberry shortcake, preparing for another “Mud Run” in her Jeep and taking her daughter Nicki shopping.



If not for her breast cancer, the *Especially for You* (EFY) Race Against Breast Cancer might not exist, let alone be marking its 20th year. Sandy Knight was the catalyst.

It was 1989 when 37-year-old Sandy Knight discovered a lump in her breast. Testing revealed it was cancerous. Her older sister, Cindy Young, remembers getting a phone call from Sandy. “She put it right out there. She said ‘I have something to tell you and it’s going to shock you.’ I couldn’t imagine what she was going to say. She told me she had breast cancer and that she’d already discussed treatment options with her doctor. They said a mastectomy was needed and that she’d do chemo and radiation. She felt positive, though, that she’d beat it.”

When doctors performed the mastectomy, they discovered the cancer had spread. They diagnosed her with Stage 4—late stage—breast cancer. In consultation with her doctor, Sandy began a regimen of chemotherapy. Cindy said her sister looked good and remained determined to beat the disease. But a follow-up doctor’s appointment in mid-1990 dealt Sandy and her family a huge blow. The cancer had spread to her bones, liver, lungs and brain. She and her husband Gary decided to forego further treatment, choosing instead to make the most of the little time she had. She and Gary planned a final trip together. She attended her daughter’s high school graduation. She co-founded Mercy’s breast cancer support group, where she and several other women talked about their desire to start a

Visit the official website www.especiallyforyourace.org to sign up for the race, donate to the EFY fund or purchase EFY apparel. The first 10 readers to e-mail especiallyforyou@mercy.org will receive a free EFY T-shirt.

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*Cindy Young
20-year EFY participant &
sister of Sandy Knight*

race as a way to raise awareness about early detection.

Sandy died July 6, 1991—a month after her 39th birthday.

Just two weeks after her death, Sandy’s husband and sister were at Mercy asking how they could help carry out Sandy’s vision and start a race. Sandy’s employer, General Mills, and Mercy Medical Center joined forces to make that vision a reality. In only three short months, the first *Especially for You* Race Against Breast Cancer was held in October 1991. The goal was to attract 500 participants. More than 1,000 people took part.

Since that first year the race has grown exponentially. Last year, in 2009, a record 11,575 participants raised more than \$233,000 for the *Especially for You* fund. The fund pays for breast care services for local women and men in need. To date, more than 4,300 people have utilized \$1.2 million in services from the fund, which is administered by Mercy Women’s Center.

Sandy’s dream is alive and well in 2010 as the race celebrates its 20th year. Her family has participated every year.

“It’s bittersweet to attend the race,” says Cindy. “It’s been part of the healing process for us. We want to be there to pay tribute to Sandy. If she saw the scope of the race today, I’m sure she would be astounded. It’s a remarkable tribute to her.”

Sandy’s family will be front and center at the race this year on October 10, with her father leading the way in the pace car. Sandy would surely be pleased.



Cindy S. Young
20-year EFY participant and
sister of Sandy Knight



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