

DEAR EDITOR,

Although I agree 100 percent with everything else Laura Peters said in the article, which appeared on page 1 of the Oct. 26, 2012, issue of the Delphos Herald, except her comment, "Breast cancer isn't considered a life-threatening disease anymore. They're calling it a chronic illness." I don't know who they are who told her this and maybe it was to put her mind at ease but that is totally not true. I was diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer of a more rare type that doesn't always show on a mammogram or until it is an advanced stage. Stage 5, you die. I had surgery, a year of very aggressive chemo from which I was told may take 10 years to recover, if ever completely, and 2 1/2 months of daily radiation. Breast cancer or any type of cancer is a serious and sometimes life-threatening or fatal disease. It should not be minimized or taken lightly.

Let me share the most current information on breast cancer:

BreastCancer.org

- About 39,520 women in the U.S. were expected to die in 2011 from breast cancer, though death rates have been decreasing since 1990 — especially in women under 50. These decreases are thought to be the result of treatment advances, earlier detection through screening, and increased awareness.
- For women in the U.S., breast cancer death rates are higher than those for any other cancer, besides lung cancer.

Women's Wellness Center, St. Rita's Medical Center, Lima

- One woman dies from breast cancer every twelve minutes in the U. S.
- Breast cancer is the leading cause of death among women 35-54 years of age.
- Cancer is the No. 2 cause of death in the U. S.
- Recurring cancer may not be breast cancer or the type of cancer a person initially had.

American Cancer Society (cancer.org)

Cancer Facts & Figures 2012 report by the American Cancer Society

- An estimated 229,060 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected in 2012, of which 39,920 people will die. An additional estimated 63,300 new cases of non-invasive breast cancer are expected to occur among women in 2012.

Please don't trivialize the seriousness of breast cancer or any type of cancer. Wonderful advancements have been and continue to be made in the field of cancer treatment but it is still a life-threatening and often fatal disease. Survivors need to stress that it is a life-threatening disease and should be considered as such. Everyone needs an annual mammogram and to do monthly self-exams. Like Mrs. Peters, I feel fortunate to be a survivor but you can only be a survivor when something has threatened your life, not just been chronic.

Debbie Mayes

Delphos