

EVERYDAY WAYS WE CAN
ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE

» **READ MORE ABOUT DONNA'S BATTLE** with breast cancer in her new memoir, *Through Rose Colored Glasses: A Marathon From Fear to Love* (Closet Books). The first \$100,000 of proceeds will go to the race, as well as 10% of the proceeds after that.

NAME **Donna Deegan** AGE **48**

CAUSE **26.2 with Donna: the National Marathon to Fight Breast Cancer**

HOMETOWN **Jacksonville Beach, FL**

FAMILY **Husband Tim; daughter Danielle Hicken, 17; and son Drew Hicken, 14**


AS A NEWS ANCHOR FOR FIRST COAST NEWS

in Jacksonville, Florida, Donna Deegan was used to the spotlight. But after her breast cancer diagnosis in 1999, she became known for more than her broadcasts as locals watched Donna go through the illness on the air. "While I had support and medical care, a letter from a viewer made me realize some women aren't so lucky," Donna says. "No one should have to choose between putting food on the table and buying medication."

She created the Donna Foundation in 2003 to provide funding for financially challenged women undergoing breast cancer treatment. While brainstorming new ways to raise money and awareness, Donna and her doctor, Edith Perez of the Mayo Clinic, realized there was no national marathon for the cause. "Running a marathon is a metaphor for going through a difficult time in life," Donna says. "There are at least two points in every race where you want to sit down and cry but you keep pushing. That's the same mentality you need to have as a cancer patient. You have to believe."

It took years and the help of the Mayo Clinic and sponsors to create 26.2 with Donna: the National Marathon to Fight Breast Cancer. In February 2008 more than 7,000 people ran the first race. Since then, athletes from every state and 15 countries have participated, as well as 350 breast cancer survivors, raising \$1.6 million. The Mayo Clinic receives 70% of the money for research and the Donna Foundation—which has served more than 2,000 women—gets the rest.

Donna hopes the marathon will continue to expand and raise even more money. "My dream is to one day announce during a broadcast that we have found the breast cancer cure," Donna says. "It's events like these—and the people behind them—that will get us there." ●



To register for the next marathon, on February 21, 2010, or to make a donation, visit breastcancer.marathon.com.



Know someone who's helping to change your community?

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