

LOCAL

# Dinner honors cancer survivors

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Seventy-five cancer survivors signed up for the Relay for Life's 8th Annual Survivor Dinner held at the Patrick Center last Thursday night, but over 100 people packed the room. Rogers BBQ in Grover provided the free meal to this special group. Billy Hicklin provided the piano accompaniment. Kings Mountain Fire Department served the food.

"All of the people sitting around this room are survivors and the reason why we do what we do," said Survivor Dinner Co-Chair Tammy Hogue to the crowd. Little prizes, gift bags and T-shirts were given in recognition to the strong and courageous people who have beaten or who are fighting this disastrous disease.

Sandy Hovis Martin, was asked to speak about her 4-year-struggle with melanoma cancer. According to the University of Maryland Greenebaum Cancer Center's website (www.umm.edu/cancer/ov

erview/melanoma.html), "melanoma is a disease of the skin in which cancerous cells develop in the melanocytes, the cells that produce color in the skin. Melanoma is not the only type of skin cancer, but it is the most serious type. Melanoma is curable if it is found early. However, unlike other forms of skin cancer, it can spread very quickly to other parts of the body through the blood or the lymph system. As a result, it accounts for nearly 79 percent of skin cancer deaths, even though it comprises only 4 percent of skin cancer cases."

She was diagnosed in September 2002. Since then, she has tried chemotherapy, radiation and normal treatments to no avail. Martin is now using an experimental drug. The cancer had spread to her lungs and a tumor was found behind her left eye. A little over a week ago she was informed that the tumor behind her eye is gone. Her lungs appear to be clear. She has fought and won these battles but the war is not



EMILY WEAVER / HERALD  
Barbara Adams is one of the many cancer survivors who showed up for the Survivor's Dinner at the Patrick Senior Center. She signs her name to the 2006 Survivors banner.

over. Proceeds from Relay for Life events go to the American Cancer Society, helping people like Martin and searching for better ways to fight this disease.

Tammy White, Co-Chair for the Survivor Dinner, said that there are two events coming up at the Relay for

Life that everyone should not miss: the Survivor Lap and the luminary Service. Relay for Life will take place on April 28th, starting at 6 pm at the Walking Track off of Cleveland Avenue. Over 1,000 people showed up last year to support this American Cancer Society's fund-raiser. It will be open to

the public. "You do not have to be a team member or a survivor to participate," White said. "We want to encourage everyone to come out."

For more information on Relay for Life and upcoming events call Tammy Hogue at 704-692-1086.

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