

Column The Crowd: Joan Lunden shares her survival story at Hoag Family Cancer Institute's 30th anniversary



By **B.W. Cook**

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“The No. 1 reason women don’t want to go to the doctor is because they don’t want to get on the scale,” offered television journalist **Joan Lunden** addressing a sold-out audience for the 30th anniversary gathering of Circle 1000 supporting the Hoag Family Cancer Institute.

Lunden, the former long-running co-host of “Good Morning America,” was diagnosed with stage 2 triple negative **breast cancer** in June of 2014, requiring chemotherapy, surgery and radiation.

With a “take no prisoners” attitude and optimistic spirit, Lunden has used her experience in surviving cancer as a platform to encourage other women that a cancer diagnosis is not necessarily a death sentence.

Her memoir, written and published last year titled “Had I Known: A Memoir of Survival,” reflects on a number of cancer related issues specifically detailing the relatively unknown concept of breast density.

Lunden went on at length sharing with her audience facts pertaining the significance of breast density as it relates to women’s overall breast health and the treatment of breast cancer if and when diagnosed.

Many in the crowd shared that they were not aware of the significance of breast density as a major factor in the screening process for breast cancer.

Perhaps most important was Lunden’s telling that a customary mammogram may deliver clean results, which could be a misdiagnosis, again based on breast density factors.

In her case, an ultrasound followed her mammogram, which revealed her stage 2 cancer condition. Without the ultrasound, she might not have known until it was too late.

The Circle 1000 Founders Celebration brunch is all about hope.

It is an annual gathering of survivors and supporters coming together to tell the world that cancer is something to be overcome, and with advanced medical research and treatment, it will one day be a thing of the past.

The 2017 chair of the Founders Committee was **Sheryl Anderson**, assisted by **Heather Gaughan**, handling underwriting, **Francis Applegate**, **Gini Robins**, **Ginny Ueberroth**, **Vicki Booth** and **Lin Auer**. Also, prominent members of the committee include **Jill Aschieris**, **Mary V Buckingham**, **Pam Schmider**, **Tara Shapiro**, **Katie Flamson**, among other generous women.

Some 400 guests came together for brunch at the Balboa Bay Resort to meet Lunden and to celebrate another year of freedom from cancer. An honored tradition of the event is calling for cancer survivors to stand and be recognized based on how many years they have been cancer-free, beginning with those for more than 30 years, 20 years, 10 years, 5 years and so forth.

Major support for the morning confab comes from a huge cross section of community involvement.

Major underwriting comes from **Janet Curci**, **Sandy Sewell**, **Dee Dee Anderson**, **Laura Khouri**, **Tom Larkin**, **Michael Hayde**, **Laurie Cappello**, **Serena** and **Jeff Sewell**, **Ginny** and **Peter Ueberroth**,

and **Sue Werner** and **John Hagestad**.

Also, supporting Circle 1000 were **Jackie Glass, Karen** and **Tom Linden, Ann** and **Robert Lucas**, and **Mike** and **Tara Shapiro**.

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ron Suskind addresses Heritage Pointe luncheon

Senior national affairs journalist for The Wall Street Journal, **Ron Suskind**, is familiar to readers across America following decades of reporting out of Washington, D.C.

His long career has covered serious issues focusing on race, poverty and class struggles in America, earning him a Pulitzer in 1995.

Suskind came to Orange County last month as a guest of Heritage Pointe, a senior residential community in Mission Viejo that provides vital care services for elderly residences of the Jewish faith.

The facility is a nonprofit that is able to operate based on contributions from donors providing some \$1.5 million annually in assistance to senior residents in financial need.

The May 10 luncheon was Heritage Pointe's 27th annual gathering.

The event was created around a shopping boutique that helped raise record sums from a sold-out crowd at the Irvine Marriott Hotel. The event was co-chaired by **Donna Markovitz** and **Gail Taleisnik**.

Suskind shared his personal story about his family's lifelong struggle with his youngest son, **Owen**, who battled autism from a very early age losing his speech at age 3.

In one of Suskind's books titled "Life, Animated: A Tale Of Sidekicks, Heros, and Autism," he detailed the path of his family's attempt to find answers to Owen's condition, which relates today to so many Americans sharing a similar challenge with their own autistic child.

More than 400 guests from all over Orange County attended the luncheon and shopping boutique.

Luncheon guests included **Judy Binder, Nancy Chase, Jill Edwards, Roberta Feuerstein, Jane Fischel, Hannareta Fishman, Alison Goldenberg, Ellie Gordon, Adrienne Green** and **Jodi Greenbaum**. Also supporting Heritage Pointe were **Ellie Jaffy, Lauren Klein, Dorothy Leshner, Debbie Margolis, Nancy Meyer, Cindy Mirsky, Ann Moskowitz, Allison Pinsky, Meryl**

Schrinner, Sonia Silverstein, Roz Vogelfanger, and Charlene Zuckerman.

B.W. COOK is editor of the Bay Window, the official publication of the Balboa Bay Club in Newport Beach.

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