

Be Inspired by the Rare Chair Affair

By Tara Wilke, McNabb & Risley on Friday, October 14, 2011 at 12:00:00am

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It's time for the *Rare Chair Affair*, one of my favorite fundraisers for the Wisconsin Breast Cancer Coalition. It is a truly fun and inspiring event. Gather up family and Friends and get ready for a memorable evening tonight.

The live auction is amazing because you will have the opportunity to bid on unique, hand painted chairs created by breast cancer survivors. This year they have expanded the event by adding additional hand painted items such as tables, chests and mirrors. There's even a raffle for a one-of-a-kind piece painted by Milwaukee pop artist Reginald Baylor.

I became familiar with the event in the summer of 2000 when I read an article in the *News Graphic* featuring Sheryl Williams and her best friend, Patti Mahon, a young breast cancer survivor. In the story they mentioned how they needed more chairs and hoped local interior designers would paint a chair and donate it to the event. I was so inspired by Sheryl and Patti's story that I impulsively called Sheryl and offered to paint a chair. Once I hung up, the panic set in; I had not painted anything since my college years; could I really do this? Well that's just what I did and it was so much fun that I painted another chair the following year, and have been donating chairs and product from McNabb 7 Risley every year since.

My husband, Jim, and I have fond memories of attending the first fundraiser at the *Private Gardener* hosted by Victoria Vonier in Milwaukee and being fortunate enough to meet both Sheryl and Patti that evening. The night of the event was magical; it was so much fun! Jim and I purchased four children's chairs that night; we donated two of them to "Kathy's House", a hospital hospitality house for medical patients and their care givers in Wauwatosa. The other two chairs, painted by Patti, are proudly used in our kitchen by our grandchildren. These two chairs are Jim and my favorite pieces of furniture in our house.

So if you haven't been to the *Rare Chair Affair*, it's time to go, bid on something wonderful and feel great doing so. I also want to say how luck Wisconsin families are to have an organization like the Wisconsin Breast Cancer Coalition.

If you would like to learn more, please visit www.standupandspeakout.org or www.rarechairaffair.org or call (414) 963-2103. The event will be held from 6 to 10:00pm at the historic Pritzlaff Building, 325 N. Plankinton Ave., Milwaukee, with dancing until midnight.

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