

# The Mercury

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## Relay's 2008 Grand Marshall is a symbol of hope

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LIMERICK — It was prayer, optimism and the support of friends and family that helped Mae Mogul beat cancer and become one of hundreds of symbols of hope in the Pottstown community that cancer can be defeated.

"I'll be a 24-year-survivor April the second," said Mae Mogul, sitting with her husband, Pete, also a survivor, in their home in Limerick.

The two have been married for 50 years, withstanding time and cancer.

Mae recalled the day she was diagnosed like it was yesterday.

"I was 48 in '84," she said. "I had been doctored for three years before they discovered that it was breast cancer and at that time I had four diseased lymph nodes out of 10."

Mae said she spent 11 days in the hospital and underwent 6 months of chemotherapy in the ground floor of Pottstown Memorial Medical Center, which she said was a far cry from the facility there now.

She also underwent a mastectomy of



Daniel P. Creighton/The Mercury

**Mae Mogul is the 2008 Relay For Life Grand Marshall. She and her husband, Pete, are both cancer survivors.**

one of her breasts initially.

Mae said cancer ran in her family, with her mother, father, brother and three of her sisters, two of whom succumbed to the disease, being diagnosed.

When she first got the news that she too had cancer, Mae thought of her

family members, especially her sisters who died from the disease.

"How long was I going to live," she said, repeating the question that loomed in her head at the time of her diagnoses.

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# Pottstown Relay For Life 2008 Grand Marshall

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My sisters "didn't live long," Mae said.

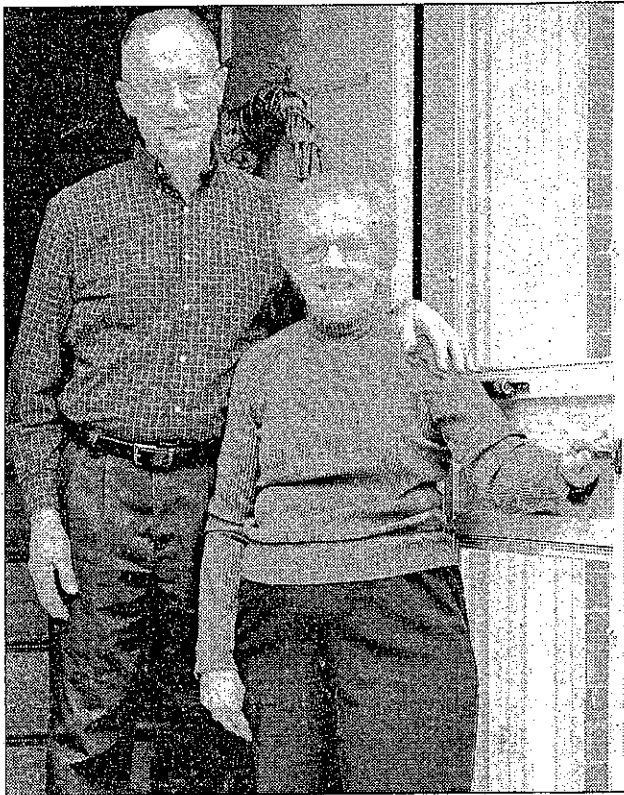
However, Mae made it through the diagnoses and the treatment before having

to have her other breast removed in 1991.

Additionally, in 2000, Mae discovered she had a patch of squamous cell carci-

noma a type of skin cancer, on her right index finger. She underwent a skin graft for that.

Mae's body is now cancer free, but so



Photos by Daniel P. Creighton/The Mercury  
**Relay For Life Grand Marshall Mae Mogul and her husband, Pete, are both cancer survivors. Mae has been involved with Relay For Life since 1997.**

## has become a symbol of hope

much of her life still revolves around the disease - rather her fight to help eradicate the disease.

Mae is an active volunteer with the Relay for Life of Pottstown and is the 2008 Grand Marshall.

Mae began volunteering at Pottstown Memorial Medical Center back in 1989 after seeing an article in The Mercury that the hospital was looking for volunteers. She's still there, only now her effort is concentrated at the cancer center.

"Now I'm working at the cancer center on Wednesday afternoons," Mae said. "I thought as part of my Grand Marshalling, it was something I should do."

Mae said she became involved in Relay for Life back in 1997, again as a result of an article she read in The Mercury.

She has spent time on several Relay for Life teams through the years, including the team she's currently a member of, The Great Strides, which she started through her church, St. James United Church of Christ in Limerick.

"In the five years we've raised \$99,983," Mae said.

Mae said she and her husband, who is a survivor of prostate cancer, have both been involved with Relay because it is an organization that is doing so much good.

"As it is now, the Relay for Life is such a top-notch organization," Mae said. "It's a closeness, it's about being amongst others who've been through what you

have and if they've not, they're all for the same cause."

Pete, Mae's husband, thanked Mae's insistence that he get a prostate cancer screening test for his being a survivor too.

"The hospital every year gives a free screening for the prostate," Pete said. He went for the free screening in 1992, and although it took two years and three biopsies to make the diagnoses, Pete found out that he had cancer.

Opting for what was the best choice for him, Pete had surgery. He's now cancer free.

"I had surgery on Valentine's Day of 1995," Pete said.

"It's almost your anniversary," Mae said.

The two agreed that the screening was a lifesaver for Pete, as he showed no symptoms of prostate cancer.

Mae said cancer is a scary thing, "there's no doubt about it." However, facing cancer, just as any other unpleasant thing in life, with hope and optimism, is the best approach.

"Cancer has always been a fearful word," Mae said. "When I was first diagnosed I thought if I live five years I'll be lucky. Years ago they didn't want to say the 'c' word," Mae said.

"They whispered it," Pete finished.

"And here we are, almost 24 years later" and cancer free, Mae said.

"With all the advancements, it's not as scary. Hope is the word," Mae said.