

Soul Survivors

by Virginia Butler
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"When you're singing, you're happy; you're not thinking about going through chemo, or radiation, or surgery. You're just sharing with people -- it's a universal language."

Marilyn Nierenberg-Shaoul
Member, Soul Survivors



SUPERSTAR SURVIVORS

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. It is a disease that will strike about 216,000 American women this year.

Because of recent improvements in treatment methods, most will live at least 10 years after their diagnosis. Treatment usually involves some combination of surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy and/or hormonal treatment.

WHO ARE THE SOUL SURVIVORS?

One group of Arizona women battling breast cancer receives the typical types of treatment but has also found a way to treat the soul. It's a form of music therapy, and thousands of dollars in funding for research and scholarships is one result. These women are "The Soul Survivors." The singing group began when Laura Fial, a professional singer, was diagnosed with breast cancer four years ago. At first she was devastated and questioned her will to live. Then she was enlisted to lead a fundraiser, an opportunity that gave her hope and a sense of purpose. She gathered more than a dozen breast cancer survivors in her community under the banner "The Soul Survivors."

Since then, the group has volunteered for various cancer organizations and performed in the greater Phoenix area. With the help of musicians, they've put together three CD's that they sell. Between the sales, performances, and other sponsorships, they've raised around 20 thousand dollars.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Breast Cancer CD 2000, Inc., the non-profit organization affiliated with the "Soul Survivors," gives at least one \$1000 scholarship every year to help someone fulfill a personal educational need or project to assist cancer patients and their families. If you're interested in applying for a scholarship, click on the link.

