



Moxy Woman- October 2010- Alisa Savoretti



Las Vegas Showgirl, Dancer, Entrepreneur, Breast Cancer Survivor, Founder and President of My Hope Chest

Madeira Beach, Florida and Las Vegas, Nevada
USA

"If at first you don't succeed...so what?!" ~ Alisa Savoretti

Moxy Women wishes to recognize and support **National Breast Cancer Awareness Month**. National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM) educates women about the importance of early detection for breast cancer. Since NBCAM's inception, mammography use has doubled, and breast cancer death rates have declined. Still, many women do not utilize mammography at regular intervals. In recognition of the fact that mammography is the best available method of detecting breast changes that may be cancer, long before physical symptoms can be seen or felt, and that breast cancer deaths could decline further if all women age 40 and older received mammograms at regular intervals. <http://nbcam.org/>

The Dance of Life

By: Jean Harper

Moxy Nomination By: Kathleen Hubbard McDole

"Women agonize... over cancer; we take as a personal threat the lump in every friend's breast."

~Martha Weinman Lear, Heartsounds

Growing up in Madeira Beach, Florida, Alisa Savoretti, an admitted tomboy, hung out with her older brother. A fishing pole in one hand and a bucket in the other, she recalls some very special times fishing from the dock by her home. She also has an older sister and lived in the same house with 3 generations of family. This humble beginning doesn't seem like the logical path of a Las Vegas showgirl but for Alisa a path with many twists and turns was her path to take.

A showgirl is thought of as a physically beautiful female dancer in an often lavishly produced theatrical revue. If glamour and glitz are what you want, then life as a Las Vegas showgirl may be your calling. It was such a calling for Alisa Savoretti who began studying dance, including tap and ballet, at the age of 4. Soon after Alisa added jazz to her repertoire. *(The video below provides us with images of such glamour and glitz associated with Las Vegas Showgirls)*

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The role of a Las Vegas showgirl is so much more than just a glamorous and glitzy lifestyle. It demands hard work, patience, endurance, and dedication. To become a Las Vegas showgirl, a tremendous amount of dancing instruction and experience is necessary. Training generally begins when a girl is young and has the opportunity to enroll in numerous dance classes. Learning to dance in many different styles is what makes one dancer stand out from another.



Alisa's professional dance career took off right out of high school and ultimately landed her in Las Vegas dancing in some of the biggest shows the notorious city had to offer. For many years, life was good and Alisa felt blessed to be able to make money doing something she loved but her entrepreneurial spirit was nagging at her. She decided to take a break to play an active role in her brother's business and eventually, build her own. In fact, Alisa took a break 5 different times but she just kept coming back to her dancing roots.

At the age of 38, Alisa Savoretti found a lump in her breast. Initially, she ignored it, thinking she was too young to have breast cancer. Months later, a caring and persuasive friend talked her into visiting a doctor and in early 2002, she found out she had Stage II breast cancer. On top of being faced with a terrifying diagnosis and the need for a mastectomy followed by chemotherapy, Savoretti faced a reality shared by more than 46 million Americans: she was uninsured.

After chemotherapy and a mastectomy, Alisa took another 5 month break from dancing but on March 10, 2003 she returned to Las Vegas to dance, once again. After only 6 days following her arrival in Vegas she was back on stage as that same beautiful and glamorous, 5'9" showgirl that Vegas had come to know and love. What began as a career in her twenties would continue as she turned 40 in June of that same year.

The path for Alisa Savoretti continues to twist and turn and today she has an important question for the world to think about. With all of the money to raise awareness of breast cancer and the continued search for the cure, she asks- "when the mastectomy is over- what's next for those women who don't have insurance or the ability to get breast reconstruction?" To that she adds, "Losing a breast changes your life....getting it back is LIFE changing"

Below you can learn more of Alisa's story and in her own words:

Life is what happens after you make the "master plan" ... I grew up as the daughter of a plumber and housewife, living on the water in Florida in a 900sf home with 3 generations. I had a loving family and a great childhood and I had been give a gift... I began to dance and studied tap, jazz and ballet every week from the age of 4 until college, dance was my first love. So after a brief tenure at college, I left school to pursue my career as a professional dancer and spent the next two decades traveling the world doing what I loved. I felt very blessed.

An entrepreneur by nature, I took a leave of absence several times during my dance career to pursue my interests in business. I had dreams for the next decades and I had a plan. My time and efforts for nearly two years until the end of 2001, had been working diligently on a business of my own. In August of 2001 however, I found my lump and everything changed.

Following my cancer diagnosis and a 2 1/2 year tenure without my breast as the LopSided Showgirl, I learned I was not alone as an uninsured mastectomy survivor and became motivated to help others who shared this horrible predicament. I have dedicated the last 6 years of my life to the cause of this grassroots effort and hope that this year, number 7, will be as lucky for My Hope Chest too.

Since our beginning, My Hope Chest has changed lives, but just not enough for me yet. As our wait list grows, my only true reward is crossing a woman's name off the list, I want us to do more every year .

My continued effort for this charity is to pursue the means necessary to fund as many surgeries as we can and address this gap in society at last. This will only happen I now realize, when the operations of the business are sustained so we can make progress beyond the grassroots level. This isn't about me or for me... but for you, your family and friends, wives, mothers, sisters, aunts and daughters...and I hope you will help me help others by getting involved in dollars or actions.

My dream is for My Hope Chest to exist as long as needed until there is a cure for the disease. I thank my mother Betty for supporting me all of these years so I could work on this project. *(Review video interview of Alisa Below)*

Please visit Alisa's website, learn more about her organization and help support breast reconstruction @www.myhopechest.org

Facebook- Join the cause
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