



Press Release

18 January 2010

### **Cancer Buddies Network Reaches out to its 3000<sup>th</sup> member**

From its humble beginnings in 2006 based on the simple idea that putting people together can help with those feelings of helplessness and anguish, Cancer Buddies Network has recently welcomed its 3000<sup>th</sup> member. Every day new members join the website and find a new family of friends with whom they can share their experience.

[www.cancerbuddiesnetwork.org](http://www.cancerbuddiesnetwork.org) is a resource where anyone who has been affected by cancer can go and find some respite and friendly cheer and support from people who understand what they are going through, because they've been there too.

Often it is a complete stranger whose words can make all the difference to your day to day life when cancer strikes, something that Jan Rutter, the founder of the website, knows only too well.

“People who have been hit by cancer in some way, often go out of their way to cover up their suffering so it is these people who really need understanding and support. Frequently it is the spouse or close friends of the cancer sufferer who get overlooked, but they are the ones who often need the most support because of the emotional and physical strain of caring for someone who has the disease and the accompanying feeling of helplessness, can be so hard on them,” says Jan.

The website is free to join and open for anyone and everyone regardless of how they are being affected by cancer. Two women who joined the network and found the support they needed in each other are Denise Bartup and Suzie France.

Denise Bartup, 48, was first diagnosed with cancer when she was just 37 and then told she had secondaries two years later which was said to be inoperable and incurable and that her prognosis was poor. “I really didn't know where to turn for help. The medical profession, rightly or wrongly, puts all the emphasis on the

treatment of a patients cancer, and doesn't offer much if any, support for a patients emotional or psychological well being.”

Denise says that at the time of her secondary diagnosis she became suicidal and struggled to cope. She says, “since I found CBN I have met a number of lovely ladies and one in particular, Suzie, who is now one of my closest friend as a result. Despite not having met her physically yet, I feel that I know her well and we have become very close as a result of our introduction on the site.”

Suzie France, 49, was diagnosed with primary breast cancer in 2005 and went through surgery, chemo and radiotherapy. She was then diagnosed with bone secondaries two years later and having four young children, the youngest of which was just six, Suzie felt real sorrow at the idea of leaving them. “I went to CBN specifically looking for someone else with a similar diagnosis and found Denise. Finding someone else with secondaries, a similar age, especially who had been diagnosed back in 2001, and was still going, was a huge comfort to me. It meant it was possible to live with this,” says Suzie. “Just knowing Denise is an email away is always a comforting thought and she has helped me no end. Her emails were warm, supportive, empathic and encouraging right from the start. Your family and friends are huge sources of support and comfort but they don't truly know how it feels.” Denise and Suzie are really looking forward to their first meeting in 2010.

[www.cancerbuddiesnetwork.org](http://www.cancerbuddiesnetwork.org) is waiting to welcome more people to its nurturing community, so if you know of anyone who could benefit, please spread the word.

Ends

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

- Cancer Buddies Network (CBN) is a registered charity no 1120207.
- Jan Rutter and the two women featured in this release are available for interviews
- CBN has the support of Macmillan Cancer Support, Millennium Grants UnLtd, Google, and has links with other major cancer charities and hospitals up and down the country.
- The patron of the charity is the eminent cancer specialist Professor Ian Smith MD, FRCP, FRCPE, Professor of Cancer Medicine at The Royal Marsden Hospitals, Sutton and London.

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