

A letter to the President of AWA Rome.

Hope this finds you well. I'm disappointed to be missing out on some of the recent activities with AWAR. The problem is that I had surgery for breast cancer. I receive labs in 10 days, but all seems hopeful at the moment.

The reason for my writing is that I learned through my ordeal that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month in the USA. I think it would be helpful to remind the membership of their yearly mammograms and especially self exam.

I found my lump after a self exam on Aug 15; my last mammogram was October 2004 (not even a year). I was fortunate that my gynecologist is associated with a team of surgeons at Gemelli who specialize in this area and made an appointment immediately.

It surprised me to learn when I visited the surgeon (Dr. Daniella Terribile), that she knew and worked with breast surgeon experts in Philadelphia. She also attends the International conferences specific to breast cancer; the results of these conferences achieved standardized treatment world-wide for breast cancer. Dr. Terribile speaks English as did the Director of the Surgical Unit, the assistants and the anesthesia physician.

I share this information with you because it is important to women living outside of the USA to understand the resources available here in Italy should they need it. Quite honestly, before Aug 15th when I found my lump, I knew nothing about any of these resources.

There is an excellent web site www.komen.org that provides well designed and responsible information on this topic. As well, they provide www.komen.it for those who speak Italian.

I also share this information because it is consistent with your visions of "empowerment." Knowledge is power. Susan B. Komen Foundation provides the knowledge necessary for women to make informed decisions about breast cancer screening and treatment.

As President of AWAR you have the power to share this information with the membership. I don't know what support of this type there is for other countries. Komen Foundation provides information for both Italy and Germany.

Best regards,

AWAR Member