

# Surviving Breast Cancer

How a positive, can-do attitude makes a difference in the lives of three women.

## A Poet is Born

Humana member Yvonne I. of Portland, Oregon, is also a survivor and writer. With a troubled past – that sometimes left her homeless – long behind her, 67-year-old Yvonne faced breast cancer just this year. Now that the disease is in remission, she's happily going back to work as a personal care assistant and feeling as good about life as ever.

She's written a detailed chronology about her experience – so detailed, in fact, that her words are serving to calm the fears of others. "That's what I had in mind when I wrote it," says Yvonne, who graduated from college when she was nearly 60. "To explain in everyday language what actually goes on. People hear about breast cancer, and they are afraid. People have told me that my words are reassuring."

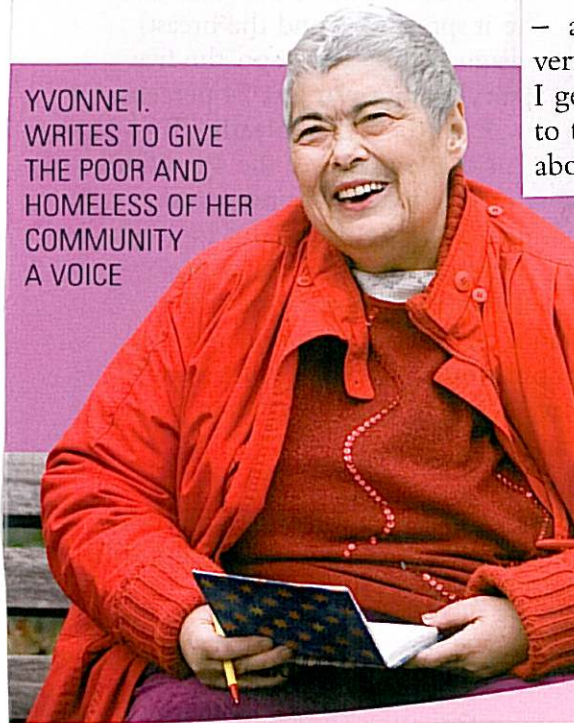
Although she's been writing since she was 16, Yvonne is more determined than ever to pursue her writing. Sober for nearly 25 years, she's been published only in the past five years. "I'm more conscious of how I spend my time, now," says Yvonne, who also recently took herself to a Smokey Robinson concert. "Now that I realize that my life might be shorter, I'm going to do the things that I really want to do."

Yvonne writes for *Street Roots*, a local publication that gives a voice to the homeless and low income community members where she lives. She's also involved with Write Around Portland, which is committed to bringing the power of writing to those who haven't had the opportunity to write due to income, isolation, or other barriers.

"I don't think anybody gets out of life without some kind of problem

– a burden that we all live with. I'm very pleased with the feedback that I get from my writing, and I hope to touch people to help them think about life," says Yvonne.

YVONNE I.  
WRITES TO GIVE  
THE POOR AND  
HOMELESS OF HER  
COMMUNITY  
A VOICE



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