



## Woman sees her breast cancer as the turning point of her life

*She tells her story to survivors at Furman conference*

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Catherine Prevost remembers asking her doctor the dreaded question: "Does this mean I have breast cancer?"

She recalls him putting his glasses on top of his head, closing his eyes and saying, "Yes."

The surgery that followed nearly killed her, but her survival allowed her to join other cancer survivors at Furman University on Sunday for a conference, "Cancer as a Turning Point."



Beating cancer: Pamela Bradshaw, right, beats a drum Sunday with One World Taiko, a Japanese drum ensemble, during the Cancer as a Turning Point conference at Furman University's McAlister Auditorium.  
HEIDI HEILBRUNN / Staff

The two-day event wrapped up its second year in Greenville with a drum performance by One World Taiko. The conference billed itself as "a Broadway show for the soul," offering about 800 survivors advice, education and entertainment.

"We hope to see you again in two years," said organizer Jan Adrian.

Prevost, of El Granada, Calif., said that before her diagnosis 11 years ago, she sold real estate franchises for a living and always "wanted to be at the top of the heap."

At first, Prevost thought she would be able to take chemotherapy treatments one week and go on a three-week business trip the next, she said.

But the chemotherapy was tougher than she thought.

Prevost remembers being alone in a Chicago hotel room as her hair began to fall out.

Suddenly, the woman who thought nothing could slow her down had to learn to trust other people and allow them to help her, she said.

With her disease in remission, Prevost said she now spends much of her time helping other women go through cancer, even as they approach death.

She tries to lighten their moods, telling them, "There's no Nordstrom in heaven." Her life, she said, is devoted to service to others.

"I love life now more than I did when I was in my 20s," Prevost said.