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2012 TOP SHOP
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The 2012 TOP SHOP® Retail Excellence Awards are currently open and looking for retailers in the following categories*

FOOD AND BEVERAGE – SPONSORED BY TELECOM

Includes cafés, bottle stores, delicatessens, grocers and convenience stores.

SPECIALTY – SPONSORED BY GE FINANCE

For example: home appliances, flooring coverings, lighting, bathrooms, furniture, home furnishings and any other store which doesn't fit into the other categories.

START UP – SPONSORED BY PAYMARK

A new shop concept and new shop brand that has commenced trading after 1 January 2011. New stores of existing franchises or chain stores are not eligible.

SUSTAINABILITY IN RETAILING – SPONSORED BY MERIDIAN ENERGY

This award recognises the effort and true commitment of a retailer to be as 'green' in as many aspects of the business as possible.

RETAIL MODERN APPRENTICE – SPONSORED BY RETAIL INSTITUTE

The Retail Modern Apprenticeship programme is a government-funded, work-based training programme for people aged 16 to 21. It aims to make it easier for employers to recruit and train talented young staff to eventually be supervisors or managers.

Does your business fit into one of these categories and do you believe you are the best of the best in your particular retail area?

Let us know by entering the 2012 TOP SHOP® Retail Excellence Awards.

Enter online at www.retail.org.nz call **0800 24 25 24** or email TOPSHOP@retail.org.nz to receive an entry form.

*Please check out www.retail.org.nz for further categories

promoting excellence in retailing

















Delighted with break

By JULIE KAIO

Courageous young mother of three Sonja Mravicich has been granted a much-welcomed reprieve from her battle with breast cancer.

The Franklin Silver Lining Trust has awarded Sonja, of Pukekohe, with a special break – a night away from the worries and stress of ill health at an Auckland hotel.

“I was blown away,” said Sonja, on hearing of her break. “It’s really lovely and it will be so nice to get away for a night.”

Sonja is recovering from breast cancer, having her final dose of radiation last Tuesday.

Chemotherapy concluded in April, five months after Sonja’s life-changing double mastectomy.

She is now, she said, on the slow road to recovery and tests over the next year will reveal if the treatment has been successful in completely eliminating the cancer.

She’s taking it day by day, her immediate goal is to feel well enough to spend more time “being a mum” and get back to work, part-time at first, at the pre-school business she launched before she fell ill.

Sonja, now 36, was diagnosed with breast cancer in October last year. During self examination months before, she had detected a small lump, the size and texture of a frozen pea.

Sonja assumed it was a blocked milk duct from feeding her youngest son. It wasn’t until the lump increased in size and began to cause pain that she sought medical attention.

“I went to the medical centre and they referred me to the super clinic and I was diagnosed within three hours. It was all so very quick,” she said.

“It was complete disbelief. I couldn’t believe what they were saying.”

Sonja was told she needed surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, and depending on the tumour’s type, continuous drug therapy.

Telling her sons was tough, but because her diagnosis was in October, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the boys had some familiarity with breast cancer.

“A lot of the information was



REPRIEVE: Sonja Mravicich, who is recovering from breast cancer, has received a special break from Franklin Silver Lining Trust.



THE TRUST

The main objective of the Franklin Silver Lining Trust is to provide Franklin families facing adversity with special breaks on a continuing basis. This adversity could include anything from the loss of a loved one through suicide, to someone suffering postnatal depression, to a loved one with a brain tumour, to a family who has lost a baby to cot death or stillbirth. For more details on the Franklin Silver Lining Trust go to franklinsilverliningtrust.co.nz.

there in front of them and I chose to keep things simple. I told them I was sick and doctors were going to take my breasts away to help me get better.”

After her surgery, Sonja began arduous chemotherapy which caused her hair to fall out. She expected it to happen and had cut her long blonde hair into a bob style to help her prepare but the experience was heart wrenching.

“I cried and cried and cried. I felt like I had lost part of my identity because your hair reflects so much of your personality.”

When *Franklin County News* saw Sonja last week, her hair was growing back, slowly but fast enough for her to notice and hope the worst was over.

Sonja is indebted to her support network of friends, her “wonderful” medical team and most of all her beloved mother

Pat for giving her the strength and courage to cope with treatment over the past six months and help look after her boys.

“Throughout the whole experience I knew I had to beat this, I simply had no choice. I’ve got three young kids; losing this fight was never an option.”

Sonja now is urging all women to self examine regularly and if they detect a lump, don’t ignore it, seek medical attention immediately.

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