



Stunning Ann Dunning battles brain tumor after brain tumor.

Provided by: Liz Holzemer

Contributed by:Liz Holzemer

There's something extraordinary about local resident, **Ann Dunning**--her attitude. Dunning, 53, has overcome **and** survived 9 craniotomies to remove the most prevalent, yet least known brain tumor called a meningioma. Ann hoped her latest surgery in July had removed her last, the 18<sup>th</sup>--meningioma she's had, forever.

But six weeks ago, she received the grim news that in spite of multiple brain surgeries, chemotherapy and radiation treatments, a new tumor has surfaced. Number 19. It's aggressive, unforgiving and doctors believe they've done all they can do.

Yet Ann, who has been battling meningiomas for nearly a decade, remains just as optimistic as she always has. *'Why lament what you can't control?'* is a motto all too familiar to her son and primary caregiver, Jared Ewy.

And Ann's most recent setback, total blindness hasn't stopped her enthralling storytelling skills either. On a recent visit to Ann's home, I watch Ann clutch a worn teddy bear, decorated with bandages representing the location of each of her surgeries. There's not an exposed spot on the bear's head.

Before we begin, she insists I try some of her niece's frozen mango.

Ann's eyes reveal a spirit so vibrant that no knife or powerful chemo concoction could ever dull.

"I remember cutting my own wood and boiling water so my kids could bathe," she recounts. "Didn't you know I was one of the original pioneers? I was already tough to begin with," she continues without apologies about the sacrifices she made to raise a family in Gould, CO.

I ask about the scars that run across her petite head and frame.

"Oh these?" she muses. "They show I've lived a life." And she certainly has--mom, school teacher, lifeguard, grandmother, brain tumor survivor,...

She does admit she misses seeing her loved ones' faces and throwing hoops with her four-year-old grandson, Tyler.

Ann presses on. She offers me more mango and says, "What else do you do? Give up and die?"

Certainly not for Stunning Dunning.