

SWEET Connection

Your latest news and inspiration from Sweet Louise



Natalie and Zoe



Zoe on the farm



Natalie's mum with Zoe

Thank you for the positivity

“Sweet Louise has made a world of difference to me. Thank you for helping make this happen for me and my family,” says Natalie, who was diagnosed with incurable breast cancer at 37 years old.

“One day back in July 2019 I was holding my little girl, Zoe. She was four at the time. She bumped my chest and it really hurt. When I felt where it was painful, I found a lump.

“Initially I was told I was too young for a scan but my GP pushed for it. My mum was with me for the results. It showed a 12cm lump in my chest and that the cancer had spread to my liver. My mum was a mess. It was all a blur. But I knew I had to be strong for my mum and the family.

“At first I didn’t know what to tell Zoe. She was hearing bits of conversation and I could tell she was frightened. So I decided to include Zoe in everything I was going through. Now she even

comes to the hospital appointments with me when she can, which she loves. She’s been so brave.

“One of the hardest things is living with the ongoing anxiety. The anxiety with every scan – what will it say this time? And especially the anxiety about leaving Zoe.

“When Nadine from Sweet Louise came to visit me at home on the farm, we didn’t talk about the cancer at all. It was all about me. Nadine brought so much positivity.”

“She talked about women from all walks of life, all ages, who are living with incurable breast cancer. Women who’ve lived with it for years and are coping well. Hearing

that gave me such a huge boost.

“Last October, Sweet Louise organised for Zoe and I to go on a trip to Butterfly Creek. They sorted everything out. It was a real treat and just what we needed at that point.

“To the generous Sweet Louise donors, I want to let you know just how valuable your support is. It makes a world of difference to have Sweet Louise arrive at my home and talk about me. Not the diagnosis – just me and how I’m feeling.

“Sweet Louise has helped me realise there is one thing cancer can’t control and that’s how I think. And I want to keep on thinking positive.”



Sweet October success!

This Sweet October saw events taking place right across the country. From dying bras blue, to V8 car cruises to samba dancing – we were blown away by your creativity and compassion for incurable breast cancer support.

Thanks to you, Sweet October raised over \$83,000! All the funds raised will help provide the practical and emotional support that Kiwis with incurable breast cancer need.

Thank you to all those who joined us this year and we look forward to you being part of Sweet October 2021!

Divide & share

When Rendell McIntosh heard we needed support to provide reusable face masks, he was motivated to do something extra special.



Following a garden tidy up, Rendell sold winter roses and clivia outside his home to raise an amazing \$656. He's now hoping to launch this as a nationwide fundraiser next year.

"My sister died of breast cancer and I know of others who are living with the diagnosis. The plant sale was a great way to do something positive during the uncertainty," said Rendell.



Masking with love

When Auckland entered level 3 Covid-19 restrictions in August, many women living with incurable breast cancer didn't have access to a face mask and were finding it difficult to cover the cost of a reusable mask. So we asked for urgent help.

Thanks to all who made reusable masks or donated to provide a Covid compassion kit.

One Sweet Louise member said: "Thank you so much for our beautiful masks. It wasn't just the masks, but the fact that people care enough to support us like this...that put a smile on our faces!"

Emotional support. Practical help.
A better life thanks to your support.



Janet (left) with Louise (right) and Louise's husband, Scott (centre).

A lasting difference

Janet Mikkelsen is Louise's older sister and has been on our Board of Trustees since Sweet Louise began almost 15 years ago.

Janet says: "We were a close family growing up. Louise was fiercely independent and full of life. Not many people knew how sick she really was. After Louise died, her experience inspired us to help other Kiwis with incurable breast cancer.

"Today, Sweet Louise is much bigger than my sister and my family. Because of supporters like you, we have grown from a small charity to one that is helping hundreds of families.

"I want Sweet Louise to continue long into the future and I am committed to those we support. That's why I decided to leave a gift in my Will to Sweet Louise.

"If you can think ahead, please leave a gift in your Will to Sweet Louise. Your gift will be used with great integrity to make a lasting difference to the lives of Kiwis with incurable breast cancer."

To find out more visit: www.sweetlouise.co.nz/gift-in-will



Marina's marathon

In November, Marina Fowler completed the Auckland Marathon 11km Traverse in memory of her mum, Laural. With the support of friends and family, she raised over \$970!

Marina said: "We were blown away by the support mum received from Sweet Louise. Mum was the only one of her friends going through stage 4 breast cancer, so meeting other women in the same situation was invaluable.

"This whole process with Mum made me realise the important work that Sweet Louise does. I thought the least I could do was raise some money for an organisation that helped my mum so much".



Marina (right) with her mum, Laural (centre).

Find out how you can fundraise for incurable breast cancer at:
www.sweetlouise.co.nz/fundraise

Join us at Gibbs Farm!

On Saturday, 20 February 2021, we're holding a fundraising event at Gibbs Farm in Auckland. Enjoy a family day out at the park admiring the sculptures and exotic animals! Buy your tickets today for this unforgettable experience. Visit:

www.sweetlouise.co.nz/gibbs-farm-2021

SWEET
Louise

SUPPORT FOR
INCURABLE
BREAST CANCER

Sweet Louise provides practical and emotional support for New Zealanders with incurable breast cancer, helping them to live as well as possible, for as long as possible.

Compassion comes first

“Being a Sweet Louise Support Coordinator is no ordinary job,” says Nadine Morton, Support Coordinator for the Auckland region.

“Every day is unique. I have a background in occupational therapy and counselling and this framework helps me to support our members who are living with incurable breast cancer. We help in whatever way a member needs. I don’t always have the answers but I help where I can.

“Often women can feel shunted from hospital departments and to endless appointments with strangers. We can help them feel connected and be their anchor.

“Sometimes women can be so consumed by pain and exhaustion that even simple

things become difficult. I might help a member organise an appointment with their oncologist or contact family members for them because they need support.

“Other days I might arrange a day out so women can enjoy precious time with their children. That gives the whole family a real boost.

“Life is about living with suffering and joy. I absolutely love working with Sweet Louise because of the time I spend connecting with the women I support. And because compassion always comes first.”



Nadine (pictured left and second left above) loves the connection with those she supports.

Just doing it!

Thanks to you, our June appeal telling Karen’s story raised over \$25,000, which was matched by a generous donor bringing the total to a fantastic \$50,000! Your wonderful generosity provides the practical and emotional support that women like Karen need.

We also shared with Karen and other Sweet Louise members the beautiful messages of hope you sent.

Karen said: “Life is too short, so I am just dealing with what happens along

the way. I have started training again, as well as dragon boating and power lifting! I’m doing what I want while I can – and even aiming for a body building competition in 2022. I am just doing it.”

Thank you for your care and compassion. You make it possible for women like Karen to live their best life.



thank you

To all the organisations, sponsors, clubs, trusts, community heroes, bakers and donors who make our work possible – thank you!

We rely entirely on your generosity to continue our vital work. We’d like to say a special thank you to Foodstuffs and Agpac for their support.

SWEET Louise

**SUPPORT FOR
INCURABLE
BREAST CANCER**

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Sweet Louise is registered with the New Zealand Charities Commission CC31706

