



**MIDWEST MUSIC
FOUNDATION**
MUSIC HAPPENS HERE

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Present Magazine

Hope is Her Middle Name

Forward By Pam Taylor

I had lunch with Abigail Henderson at Potpie yesterday. It was two of the most uplifting hours I had all week.

A lot of our conversation was about the harsh realities of cancer. Hers and mine. Even though we talked breast scars and doctors, upcoming mastectomies, our mothers' own hard experiences, the horrors of treatment, and the crushing medical expenses, I felt at least three feet higher when I left.

I left full of hope. Abigail Hope, to be precise.

She and I commiserated about the beast that has tried to kill us both, but in every sentence, Abigail embodies and radiates the hope, grit, and single-minded willfulness it takes to be tougher than something that is doing its damned best to kill you.

You know she's scared. Scratch that. I know she's scared, and if you have been through cancer treatment, you know she can't help but be scared. But she does something remarkable with that fear: She tackles it with determination, melds it with spirit, and then galvanizes it into action. Yet, she stays real. Earth with grit enough to get traction for a journey of endurance.

Even as we were talking about cancer with the color and intensity of those initiated, Abigail kept bringing me back to something—she doesn't just want to survive, she wants to get back to what inspires her—and that's helping out other folks. She is passionate about accessible health care and financial protection for her fellow musicians (and those who support them).

For years, she has been doing more than talking, she has been working to help others meet the often overwhelming challenges of paying medical bills—whether it be playing in benefits or actively participating in the process of creating opportunities for affordable health care.

This year, Abigail needs all of us to stand with her in hope and support her as she has supported so many others. After you read her inspired and inspirational blog, you will want to know how you can help, so here are some suggestions:

- 1) [Read about IBC.](#)
- 2) [Be responsible about your own breast health \(guys, you too!\).](#) Do regular breast self-exams and make sure you keep your annual breast exam appointments. Make sure those you love and like are doing the same.

3) Put [Apocalypse Meow](#) on your calendar. November 8 at Davey's and November 9 at recordBar. Listen to the eighteen bands who have come together to support Abigail. Bring your wallet for the auction!

4) [Donate](#). *Keep Hope Alive*, as we say!

5) Read Abigail's journey, [Hope is My Middle Name](#), as PresentMagazine.com publishes it in installments leading up to the Apocalypse Meow benefit.

With thanks and in hope,

Pam Taylor

PS. Abigail, I have met my hero and she's not an asshole. Thank you.