



**SCLERODERMA  
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**SCLERODERMA  
FOUNDATION  
OREGON CHAPTER**

**May 2009**

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# *Oregon Angels*

**12th Annual Plant Sale May 2 & 3 at Keith's Auto, 3530 SW Multnomah, in Portland**

**“Blaze” the Trail Cat is super pumped for appearance at Oregon’s *Stepping Out to Cure Scleroderma* walk in July !!**

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**Portland Trail Blazers’ Official Mascot “Blaze” the Trail Cat**

**May 9  
Support Group  
Meeting**

Acupuncturist Edward Chiu , LAC, DAOM is set to speak at 10am Sat. May 9 at Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital, Wistar Morris Room, 1st floor.

More info. at  
Donna Stone,  
360-887-2360  
donnaepeterstone@  
yahoo.com

The place will definitely be rockin’ on Saturday, July 11 in Southwest Portland when Blaze the Trail Cat, official mascot for the NBA Portland Trail Blazers, struts his stuff during a much-anticipated appearance at this year’s kick-off ceremony for the chapter’s 4th Annual *Step-*

*ping Out to Cure Scleroderma* benefit walk.

“With the Blazers back in the playoffs, excitement in Rip City is just off the charts,” Blaze exclaimed. “I’m totally ready to help bring some of that same electricity and fun to my special appearance at the

start of Oregon’s annual *Stepping Out to Cure Scleroderma* benefit walk this summer. I can’t wait!”

According to his keepers, Blaze is the one and only Trail Cat, a unique mountain lion sub species.

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## Living with scleroderma: Connie Osbon shares her experience

At *Oregon Angels*, we intend to occasionally share the stories of our members and associates who live with scleroderma. That way, others might learn from these experience, and understand that they are not alone.

Connie Osbon of Beaverton, Oregon lives with scleroderma and has generously agreed to share her story.

**Q:** What was your reaction when you were first diagnosed with scleroderma?

**A:** “Number one, ‘What is that?’ and number 2, ‘Why didn’t my rheumies pick up on this rather than a new internist???’ This was in 1997. Number 3, I learned more through Bob Saget’s movie on his sister later on.

“I already knew I had Lupus in 1985, a heart defect with surgery in 2006, severe osteoporosis and arthritis, IBS, and fibromyalgia. Actually, I think the sclero is the least of my problems.”

**Q:** What is your current condition?

**A:** “Holding. Though I’ve had a terrible winter with the Raynaud’s. Getting older, too, so I had minimal energy.

“I am recovering from many injuries in the last 2 years coupled with severe osteo. I’ve had 2 foot injuries including a broken toe on New Year’s Day this year (What a great start!), cracked ribs last June and subsequent rib sprains from coughing and doing household tasks.

“My connective tissue is not holding my joints very well and my left hip has slipped slightly out of socket causing horrendous pain and more immobility.

**Q:** How are you coping now and what is your outlook for the future?

**Q:** “Day by day, sorta like addicts.



**“With our northwest weather, it seemed I could never stay warm.”**

“Down to about 2 good days a week, then totally worn out. I have had no luck getting services from my county Aging & Disability agency. I was on the Oregon Project Independence for seniors and disabled, but the last case worker decided I was in real good shape; thus the end of help.

“The strain has been very difficult for me as I am unable to do much and am very far behind. I barely can keep up the dishes and have had severe loss of appetite. It is too much to cope with the tasks necessary when living alone. It is another experience that depresses

me.

“This winter I was so weak I thought I was going to die.

“Additionally, I got a ½ flu shot the end of October for the first time in thirty years. I refused taking them because I had very bad reactions including pneumonia and severe bronchitis.

“Sure enough, in two weeks time I had a fever and flu symptoms and from there it was downhill.

“The Raynaud’s was even worse and with our northwest weather, it seemed I could never stay warm. I felt life was just living each day to survive.

“My outlook at present is much better. I resumed A and B complex vitamins and have more strength again.

“Thankfully I can look forward to a better spring than the past winter.

I miss the support group very much but early mornings have gotten very bad for me.”

*Oregon Angels* wishes to express its sincere thanks and appreciation to Connie for expressing her concerns and daily struggles.

Despite her situation, Connie is regularly researching topics of interest to the scleroderma community — issues like parking permits, drug company over charges, and heating subsidies for scleroderma patients.

Connie is a great resource on these topics, and the entire Oregon chapter community salutes her efforts on behalf of all those who live with scleroderma.

(continued from page 1)

## Portland Trail Blazers' Mascot "Blaze" the Trail Cat to help kick off the 4th Annual *Stepping Out to Cure Scleroderma* Walk on July 11!

Blaze is scheduled to appear about a half hour before the start of the 11am *Stepping Out to Cure Scleroderma* benefit walk at the Multnomah Art Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy., just prior to the actual walk through Multnomah Village and into Gabriel Park.

The event will include entertainment, food, and family activities, in addition to the 2-8 mile-walk (shorter loop available) through the picturesque Gabriel Park grounds.

Awards will be given for individual and team categories. Walk participants 14 and older pay a registration of \$20 (\$25 day of walk) and are encouraged to recruit fundraising sponsors to support their walk.

A Scleroderma Walk T-shirt will be provided to every paid registrant.

Blaze will appear at the kick-off to shake paws, pose for photos, and motivate the assembled crowd as they prepare to Walk to raise research funds and public awareness for the Oregon chapter's largest and most visible annual public event.

To register online, please visit and follow the easy instructions at <http://www.firstgiving.com/scleroderma-oregon>

Blaze is appearing at the event courtesy of the NBA Portland Trail Blazers at no cost to the chapter. "We truly wish to thank the incredible people at the Trail Blazers for their kind and generous assistance to make



**Blaze is ready for the Walk to benefit Oregon Scleroderma research and awareness !**

**Join Blaze for all the fun on July 11, 2009.**

Blaze's appearance possible," Lawrence Maushard, Oregon Chapter Communications Director, remarked. "The community service efforts of the

Trail Blazers is long standing and well known. This is another incredible example of that commitment to the people of the metro region, and we appreciate it beyond words."

As for the story behind Blaze, it's said that "not long ago, among the towering pines deep in the Oregon Cascades, a family of mountain lions welcomed a new litter of cubs. Two of the cubs were normal in color and appearance, but the third was different.

"His fur was a unique two-toned silver and his ears and tail looked like blazing flames. Playful and friendly, the young lion cub tried hard to fit in with the other cats, but to no avail. While they had fun scaring hikers and chasing elk, he was left to play on his own."

For the rest of the tall tale, please visit Blaze's Bungalow at [http://www.nba.com/blazers/sights\\_sounds/Blaze-53788-41.html](http://www.nba.com/blazers/sights_sounds/Blaze-53788-41.html)

And remember, you can create your own fundraising and awareness web page in preparation for the Walk when you register online at <http://www.firstgiving.com/scleroderma-oregon>

Please call 503-246-0235 or email [Orchapter@scleroderma.org](mailto:Orchapter@scleroderma.org), or visit [www.scleroderma.org/chapter/oregon](http://www.scleroderma.org/chapter/oregon) for more information.

(Blaze photos courtesy of Portland Trail Blazers)

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Join the fun at the 4th Annual *Stepping Out to Cure Scleroderma Walk*, on Sat. , July 11, 2009 in Portland. Register at <http://www.firstgiving.com/scleroderma-oregon>

**12th Annual Plant Sale May 2 & 3 in Portland's Multnomah Village neighborhood continues to raise funds and awareness**

The Oregon Chapter's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Benefit Plant Sale is set for Saturday, May 2 and Sunday, May 3, 2009 in the parking lot of Keith's Auto Service Center, 3530 SW Multnomah Boulevard (at SW 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue), Portland.

The Plant Sale — scheduled for 10am to 5pm Saturday and 10am to 2pm Sunday — arrives just before Mother's Day in order to honor the incredible women and their families living with scleroderma.

The benefit sale is the chapter's longest running annual fundraiser, one of the two major scleroderma benefit events in the state to raise

awareness and funds for research and member support.

A big part of the success to date behind the plant sale has been its location and site benefactor in Keith's Auto Service Center at SW 35th and Multnomah in the busy heart of Portland's Multnomah Village.

"We've always been at Keith's Auto. He has been extremely generous to the chapter, letting us use his parking lot in a place that's seen by a lot of traffic," plant sale organizer Liz Orem-Bedel explained.

That heavy traffic strategy has paid off. "People look forward to the plant sale. Every year they say,

'We've been waiting for you!' So we're very happy with the response from the neighborhood over the years," Orem-Bedel said.

The 12th Annual Plant Sale offers hanging baskets to Calla lilies to Petunias and much much more. Veggies too!

Our suppliers include Al's Nursery, Fessler's Nursery, Egan Gardens, Clackamas Greenhouses, Blooming Baskets and Keyser's Nursery.

For more information, contact 503-245-4588, [SDForegon@comcast.net](mailto:SDForegon@comcast.net), or visit [www.scleroderma.org/chapter/oregon](http://www.scleroderma.org/chapter/oregon).