



## **Chris Hook presented Broad Shoulders Award**

by Beverly Denver

Chris Hook, a two-time breast cancer survivor who has utilized her breast cancer journey to help and inspire breast cancer survivors and their families is the recipient of Houston Woman Magazine's 2008 Broad Shoulders Award.

Hook is one of the founders of the Care, Share and Be Aware Breast Cancer Support Center at Northwest Medical Center. And, according to Esther Valdez who nominated Hook for this award, "her positive attitude and loving smile has been the source of strength for many walking the same journey."

Valdez said, "One of the many reasons for nominating Chris for the Broad Shoulders Award is the special gift she has given her best friend, Denise Veillon, who lost her battle with breast cancer five years ago. Denise and Chris shared the breast cancer journey and, along with finding friendship and understanding together, they shared a love for family and life. I witnessed their camaraderie firsthand, and it was truly magical."

After Veillon passed away, Hook wanted to do something to keep the memory or spirit of her friend alive. With the help of two other breast cancer survivors, Hook proposed a library be started at The Breast Center — the Denise Veillon Memorial Library. Today that library is a reality. It has been used by many, providing help to other survivors, family members and staff, giving them access to information about breast cancer, nutrition and chemotherapy.

Valdez added, "Chris has taken on the responsibility of accepting donations, buying new books and, most importantly, writing personal letters of gratitude to those making donations. She also writes letters to the survivor or person whose life is celebrated by a donated book in the library. She does all this as a volunteer!"

Additionally, Hook and her husband continue to visit Denise Veillon's family. Hook befriended Denise' daughter and spends many hours with her, picking her up from school and sharing.

Hook has also served as a volunteer for the M.D. Anderson Children Art Project — Adopt A Store and has served as an American Cancer Society Reach to Recovery volunteer and trainer.

"Chris has assisted many breast cancer survivors through difficult times and helped them deal with their anxiety and vulnerability. She continues to be an active and important part of the Care, Share and Be Aware Breast Cancer Support Group and is always willing to share her journey to make sure other survivors know that there is hope. Chris is truly deserving of this award," concluded Valdez.