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South Mississippi's Health & Lifestyle Magazine

Giving Back

Grateful to be a mom of healthy twins, local lawyer speaks in support of the March of Dimes

By Maryan Pelland

Elizabeth “Sugar” McCormick stands before an audience telling her simple, eloquent story. McCormick began a painful odyssey six years ago with her husband, Beaux, when they lost their first children, a set of twins, to prematurity.

Losing a child is unthinkable. Losing two, unimaginable. Facing the same situation when she got pregnant a year later was almost unbearable, McCormick tells the group of mothers and fathers who have come to this meeting of the March of Dimes. But her second set of twins, Jonathan and Kate, now 5, did survive, and with the help of the March of Dimes, they are healthy today.

That’s why McCormick, her husband, and their children take valuable family time to volunteer and work for the organization. It’s their way of giving back what she says is the miracle and blessing of her life: being a parent.

“I had cervical cancer before our first pregnancy,” explains McCormick, a practicing attorney. “My body wasn’t strong enough to carry babies to full term. A year after I lost my twins, my doctor told us I was pregnant. We were so excited!”

“It wasn’t about us. It was about those babies.”

When he told her she was carrying twins again, she felt her world rock. “First, I cried,” she recalls. “We were always waiting for the other shoe to drop. Our prayer was, please, let us make 28 weeks this time. We pulled each other up, so determined, doing everything right. I went to a specialist immediately.”

Early on, her doctor put her on bed rest to prevent another premature delivery, but her twins were born three months early.



Elizabeth “Sugar” McCormick and her twins, Jonathan and Kate.

“Kate came first, at 1 pound, 11 ounces. Jonathan, a minute later, was 1 pound, 15 ounces. The twins spent 11 critical weeks in the neonatal intensive care unit at Memorial Medical Center in New Orleans,” she says. The family relied on prayers, their medical team, and March of Dimes research.

“Like being caught in a storm, the situation is awful, but you don’t dwell. One foot in front of the other. Refuse to focus on fear. Later, you look back and say, ‘That was really bad,’” McCormick says. “We had to do it for our children. It wasn’t about us. It was about those babies. We made friends—grieved with some families and shared joy with some. That experience is what brought me to this extraordinary organization.”

Today, she’s a board member, committee member, and activist for March of Dimes. “March of Dimes research and drug

development gave me my children,” she says. “It’s not a big chore for us to spend time with others and their children. Our children are 5 now, and neither has health issues. We’re so fortunate—so lucky. They really get the importance of Mommy and Daddy’s work with sick babies.”

Jennifer Parker, March of Dimes division director, says, “Sugar has boundless energy. She’s truly a phone call away if you need her. The children are precious—they happily share her.”

McCormick says, “I work with places that make life possible for children, including my children. I may not be the pickiest housekeeper; my desk isn’t perfectly organized. But my kids and I won’t remember laundry not folded. We’ll remember time we spent together and the good things we saw and did.” **BHL**

Elizabeth McCormick