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**MRS. ILLINOIS ZARA JOHNSON LAUNCHES *ON THE WINGS OF HOPE*
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN AT RIBFEST IN NAPERVILLE
JULY 1 – 4**

Backed by Cicero's Development Corp. and Business Machine Agents, Johnson will reach out to the public to raise awareness for early detection, family history and the power of a second chance

Naperville, Ill., June 29, 2011 – [Zara Johnson](#), the reigning Mrs. Illinois, and a 58-year-old grandmother of two, will launch **On the Wings of Hope**, a breast cancer awareness and recruitment campaign at the Naperville Exchange Club's annual Ribfest July 1 – 4.

Johnson, a breast cancer survivor, is sponsored by her employer of more than 20 years, Plainfield-based [Cicero's Development Corporation](#) and Burr Ridge-based [Business Machine Agents](#) (BMA). Her goal is to recruit the public to join Team Zara at the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure this September.

At Ribfest, Johnson will autograph color copies of her Mrs. Illinois pageant portrait and will meet one-on-one with families, friends and the broader public. She also will be assisted by a team of volunteers who will distribute pink On the Wings of Hope T-shirts and bags containing important information on breast cancer detection during the four-day event.

According to the [National Cancer Institute](#), nearly 40,000 women in the United States died last year from breast cancer and more than 207,000 women were diagnosed with the disease. Men in the United States also fell victim in 2010, with 390 deaths and nearly 2,000 new cases diagnosed last year.

But Johnson says we have compelling reason to be hopeful thanks to the Susan G. Komen Foundation and other national high-profile breast cancer awareness organizations and campaigns that have raised visibility for the importance of early detection.

“We see more women getting mammogram screenings, performing self-examination, asking about family history and making healthy lifestyle choices,” Johnson said. “But we need to reach so many more women, men and families. Our goal in launching On the Wings of Hope is to improve awareness and communication about breast cancer, and to let folks know that more people diagnosed are surviving longer.”

Johnson is the reigning Mrs. Illinois and represented the state at the nationally televised Mrs. America pageant in April. In addition to serving as Corporate Officer and Office Manager for Cicero’s Development Corp., Johnson provides counseling and guidance to recently diagnosed breast cancer patients with the [Y-Me](#) organization.

For more information or to schedule on-site media interviews at Ribfest, please contact [Jim Engineer](#).

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