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## Signed Sports Bras Support Cancer Cause

Co-organized by a West Cobb family, this weekend's MZ & Emmers Sports Bra Auction for Breast Cancer will feature athletic undergarments from professional competitors in the United States and abroad.

By [Michael Stone](#) | [Email the author](#) | April 6, 2012

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A West Cobb family has helped round up sports bras from female athletes around the world to raise money for the fight against breast cancer.

Starting Saturday, eBay bidders in the MZ & Emmers Sports Bra Auction for Breast Cancer will be putting their money down on sports bras from Olympians, boxers, car and boat racers, lingerie football and basketball players, at least one barrel racer, and just about every other sport imaginable.

Many of [the nearly 200 donated garments](#) are decorated; all are signed.

Donors include [Lassiter](#) alum Melanie Moore of Northeast Cobb, [who won Season 8 of So You Think You Can Dance](#); actress Jane Fonda; 2003 Miss Universe Amelia Vega, wife of Atlanta Hawk Al Horford; 1984 U.S. gold medal gymnast Mary Lou Retton, who was the first woman to appear on a Wheaties box; and tennis legend Billie Jean King, who instead donated her book *Pressure Is a Privilege* and an autographed picture.

The auction was started last year by the Bayer family—Dave, Carey and their 5-year-old daughter, Emma, a student at [Kemp Elementary](#)—and family friend [McCall Zerboni](#), a professional soccer player.

Dave, a 52-year-old accountant, heard a professional soccer team, the Atlanta Beat, was coming to the area in 2010 and wanted to collect autographs for Emma. So he mailed the request and a photo of Emma to McCall, who replied with a signed photo.

McCall met the family for the first time in person after spotting Emma at the Taste of Marietta.

"She recognized us right away," Dave said, "and from there, the friendship developed."

A California native who was drafted by the Los Angeles Sol in 2009, McCall left her family and friends behind when she moved to Atlanta to join the

Beat. Meeting the Bayers, she said, eased the transition.

“Before I knew it,” the 25-year-old said, “I was part of their family, which was really valuable for me because I was away from home.”

The Bayers attended Beat home games, McCall came to Emma’s birthday, and the foursome would go out for dinner. One night, Dave noticed a tattoo on McCall’s shoulder of a butterfly with a pink ribbon.

McCall, it turns out, had lost an aunt to breast cancer.

“Dave was trying to think of something that we could do to give back because she had given a lot as far as mentoring and being a really great role model for Emma,” said Carey, 35, a professor at [Morehouse School of Medicine](#).

In 2010, the team raised about \$300 for [Susan G. Komen](#) by auctioning signed sports items at an awareness event in Roswell. Soon after, Dave was mowing the lawn of their Amberton subdivision home, brainstorming what they could do for their next fundraiser, when it hit him.

Reflecting on the hoopla stemming from Brandi Chastain taking off her jersey in the 1999 World Cup and revealing her sports bra, Dave figured the athletic undergarment would grab more than enough attention to have a successful fundraiser.

McCall “loved the idea,” Carey said. “It was something unique. So she started reaching out to women’s professional soccer teams.”

Signing with the West New York Flash in late 2010, McCall continued to help organize the auction after her northward move and find bras from soccer players.

In total, 84 were donated for the 2011 MZ & Emmers auction (named after McCall’s initials and Emma), resulting in about \$4,500 for Komen.

And this year, with more than double the amount of bras available for bidding, the team is dividing the money between three breast cancer organizations: the [Breast Cancer Survivors’ Network](#), [Keep a Breast Foundation](#), and a California branch of Komen, where McCall’s family lives.

Bringing in bras from Sweden, Germany, China and several other countries, the auction has gained its international steam through word of mouth and networking, the Bayers said. Being mentioned by [ESPN](#), [USA Today](#), [CBS Atlanta](#), and the websites and Facebook pages of dozens of players and teams hasn’t hurt either.

“Many of these athletes have been impacted in some way, whether it’s a family member or friend,” Carey said. “The Olympic water polo team [did a special event](#). One of the player’s moms was a survivor and had press coverage around and donated a bra to us ... in her honor.”

The auction is set to go live Saturday morning at 6:55 on [eBay’s Giving Works page](#), and bidding for each bra will begin at intervals through Sunday. Bids will be accepted for exactly one week. Meanwhile, the selection can be seen on the [MZ & Emmers Facebook page](#).

McCall and the Bayers plan to make the auction an annual event and hope to eventually find donors who will match bids.

Along with supporting the fight against breast cancer, McCall said she’s also happy that the auction keeps her in close contact with her good friends from the Peach State.

“It’s nice to have a little baby together,” she said, “that we work on and we find a lot of pride and joy in.”

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