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A Column for the Week of:
March 23, 2009

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Free Program Sets Out to Protect Missouri Women

Early detection is the key to battling many diseases, and cancer is no exception. The [Show Me Healthy Women Program](#), part of a nation-wide effort aimed at reducing the number of breast and cervical cancer cases, provides free breast and cervical cancer screenings to age and income eligible women.

The Missouri General Assembly is continuing to work to fund essential health initiatives such as the Show Me Healthy Women Program. Throughout the past two years, the Legislature has been able to increase funding for this program, providing crucial breast and cervical cancer screenings to under-served women across our state.

Women who are between 40 and 64 years old who have not received their yearly mammogram and who do not have health coverage are eligible to participate in the Show Me Healthy Women Program. Women with incomes at or below 200 percent of the poverty level with no other source of income are eligible for this life-saving program (click [here](#) to see income guidelines, also found on the Show Me Healthy Women Program website).

Show Me Healthy Women services are provided at more than 165 locations throughout our state. Physicians' offices, community health centers, university-based teaching institutions, public and private hospitals, and clinics for the uninsured participate and support the Show Me Healthy Women Program.

According to the [Department of Health and Senior Services](#), there are more than 91,000 women in our state who meet the age and income guidelines for the Show Me Healthy Women Program. Approximately 4,000 Missouri women will be diagnosed with breast

cancer in 2009, and sadly, statistics reveal that nearly 900 of those women will lose their battle with this devastating disease. Even though there is not a known way to prevent breast cancer, early detection is critical and can provide a patient with a greater chance of survival with more treatment options.

For more information on this important program, please visit www.dhss.mo.gov/BreastCervCancer. I urge those who are eligible to take advantage of the Show Me Healthy Women Program. This program just might save a life — whether it is yours, a family member's, friend's, or neighbor's. We must help reduce the devastating burden of breast and cervical cancer on those not only affected by these diseases, but those who love and care for these individuals.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please feel free to contact me at (573)751-8793 or by e-mail at: delbertscott@senate.mo.gov.

Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.

