

# BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE NEWSLETTER

www.bccancerservice.org

In honor of the committed service of Olove Colcord, R.N.

## THE MISSION OF THE BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE:

To provide free skilled home nursing services, equipment, information and supplies at cost for cancer patients and their families in Berrien County.



January 2013

(269) 429-3281

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ISSUE I

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The **BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SUPPORT GROUP** is a group for patients, family members and care givers. Come share successes, feelings, fears and practical methods of coping with the physical and emotional aspects of living with the diagnosis of cancer.

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## **MEDITATION FOR THE NEW YEAR**

Give us through the coming year  
Quietness of mind,  
Teach us to be patient  
And always be kind,  
Give us reassurance  
When everything goes wrong  
So our faith remains unfaltering  
And our hope and courage strong.  
And show us that in quietness  
We can feel Your presence near  
Filling us with joy and peace  
Throughout the coming year.



United Way  
of Southwest Michigan

## My story

When I was diagnosed with stomach cancer in April 2005, it came as a complete shock. I was 48 at the time, and I thought I was pretty healthy. The biggest health problem I had was trouble swallowing. I felt like things got stuck in my throat when I ate. Otherwise, I had no pain. But my wife Patty was concerned. She got me to see a gastroenterologist. He did an endoscopy and found a nasty spot, which he biopsied for testing. When the test results came back, I got the news that it was cancer.

The gastroenterologist then sent me to a local hospital, where I scheduled an appointment for surgery. But Patty and I really didn't like the way we were treated there. We felt like cattle...just a number.

### Fighting stomach cancer

All along, my doctors were very good at explaining things and keeping me informed. They told me how my tumor markers were doing, how the scans looked, etc. They spent a great deal of time with me. As long as I had questions, my doctors would stay there and give me all of the information I asked for and more. That made a big difference. They were truly concerned about me.

My treatment plan consisted of chemotherapy first, then surgery. In addition, I received radiation treatment. I appreciated how thorough my doctors were with my treatment. I remember telling Patty, "I've already had chemo and surgery. Why do I need radiation too?" But then my radiation oncologist, explained everything to us. He told me the cancer could come back, but if I received radiation therapy, it would reduce the chances of it returning. That's all he needed to say to change my mind.

The holistic approach they took to help me fight cancer was much more than simply treating the disease. For example, I learned about what to eat from dietitians. My naturopathic oncology provider also recommended vitamins and other natural supplements to ease treatment side effects and keep me strong. The pastoral care team at the hospital was fantastic too! They prayed with me, which meant a lot.

When I went through chemotherapy, Patty and I traveled to the cancer center every three weeks. For the six weeks I went through radiation treatment, I stayed in the outpatient lodging the hospital offers. Staying there was helpful because it was affordable and close to the hospital. Everyone else staying there was going through cancer treatment too. We motivated each other.

### Cancer opened a new door

I feel better now. Everything is good! I leaned on God and my faith to get through it. And I had great support from Patty. She was always there for me. One thing she always said when I needed to go for treatment was, "We're going up for chemo" or "we're going up for radiation." She truly went through it with me.

Cancer brought a world of change for me. For a long time, I felt stuck in my job. I felt an obligation to the people that worked there to keep things going, so I stayed. When I got too sick to keep going and managing the business, I got out of the job. Once I got better, I didn't want to go back. There was a lot of stress and I figured I was ready to move on and try something new. Eventually I started my own business.

Cancer definitely gave me a new outlook to see what's important, and the important thing is family and doing things you want to do. Money is not important...things are not important.

I firmly believe God still has work for me to do, and a lot of that is giving hope to other people. I am a pastor at my church. To help others, give them hope and let them know there is light at the end of the tunnel is awesome.

Since I completed treatment, I've gotten to enjoy some incredible moments in my life. I officiated at my daughter's wedding. I got to walk her up the aisle, then turn around, stand up there and marry her off too. Patty and I also celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In June 2010.

I continue to manage my own electronic security business, in addition to do handyman jobs and woodworking. My life is full of faith and love for my family.

## **Stomach Cancer Facts**

Definition of stomach cancer: Cancer that forms in tissues lining the stomach. Also called gastric cancer. Estimated new cases and deaths from stomach cancer in the United States in 2012:

New cases: 21,320

Deaths 10,540

More than 13,000 men and 8,000 women will be diagnosed with stomach cancer in the United States. Most will be over 70 years old.

The wall of the stomach has five layers:

Inner layer or lining (mucosa): Juices made by glands in the inner layer help digest food. Most stomach cancers begin in this layer.

Submucosa: This is the support tissue for the inner layer.

Muscle layer: Muscles in this layer contract to mix and mash the food.

Subserosa: This is the support tissue for the outer layer.

Outer layer (serosa): The outer layer covers the stomach. It holds the stomach in place.

### **Cancer Cells**

Cancer begins in cells, the building blocks that make up tissues. Tissues make up the stomach and other organs of the body.

Normal cells grow and divide to form new cells as the body needs them. When normal cells grow old or get damaged, they die, and new cells take their place.

Sometimes, this process goes wrong. New cells form when the body doesn't need them, and old or damaged cells don't die as they should. The buildup of extra cells often forms a mass of tissue called a growth, polyp, or tumor.

Tumors in the stomach can be benign (not cancer) or malignant (cancer). Benign tumors are not as harmful as malignant tumors:

- Benign tumors:
  - are rarely a threat to life
  - can be removed and usually don't grow back
  - don't invade the tissues around them
  - don't spread to other parts of the body

- Malignant tumors:
  - may be a threat to life
  - often can be removed but sometimes grow back
  - can invade and damage nearby organs and tissues
  - can spread to other parts of the body

Stomach cancer usually begins in cells in the inner layer of the stomach. Over time, the cancer may invade more deeply into the stomach wall. A stomach tumor can grow through the stomach's outer layer into nearby organs, such as the liver, pancreas, esophagus, or intestine.

Stomach cancer cells can spread by breaking away from the original tumor. They enter blood vessels or lymph vessels, which branch into all the tissues of the body. The cancer cells may be found in lymph nodes near the stomach. The cancer cells may attach to other tissues and grow to form new tumors that may damage those tissues.

The spread of cancer is called metastasis. See the Staging section for information about stomach cancer that has spread.

### **Risk Factors**

When you're told that you have stomach cancer, it's natural to wonder what may have caused the disease. But no one knows the exact causes of stomach cancer. Doctors seldom know why one person develops stomach cancer and another doesn't.

Doctors do know that people with certain risk factors are more likely than others to develop stomach cancer. A risk factor is something that may increase the chance of getting a disease.

Studies have found the following risk factors for stomach cancer:

- Helicobacter pylori infection: H. pylori is a bacterium that commonly infects the inner lining (the mucosa) of the stomach. Infection with H. pylori can cause stomach inflammation and peptic ulcers. It also increases the risk of stomach cancer, but only a small number of infected people develop stomach cancer. You may want to read the NCI fact sheet Helicobacter pylori and Cancer.

- Long-term inflammation of the stomach: People who have conditions associated with long-term stomach inflammation (such as the blood disease pernicious anemia) are at increased risk of stomach cancer. Also, people who have had part of their stomach removed may have long-term stomach inflammation and increased risk of stomach cancer many years after their surgery.
- Smoking: Smokers are more likely than nonsmokers to develop stomach cancer. Heavy smokers are most at risk.
- Family history: Close relatives (parents, brothers, sisters, or children) of a person with a history of stomach cancer are somewhat more likely to develop the disease themselves. If many close relatives have a history of stomach cancer, the risk is even greater.
- Poor diet, lack of physical activity, or obesity:
  - Studies suggest that people who eat a diet high in foods that are smoked, salted, or pickled have an increased risk for stomach cancer. On the other hand, people who eat a diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables may have a lower risk of this disease.
  - A lack of physical activity may increase the risk of stomach cancer.
  - Also, people who are obese may have an increased risk of cancer developing in the upper part of the stomach.

Most people who have known risk factors do not develop stomach cancer. For example, many people have an H. pylori infection but never develop cancer.

On the other hand, people who do develop the disease sometimes have no known risk factors.

## Symptoms

Early stomach cancer often does not cause symptoms. As the cancer grows, the most common symptoms are:

- Discomfort or pain in the stomach area
- Difficulty swallowing
- Nausea and vomiting
  
- Weight loss
- Feeling full or bloated after a small meal
- Vomiting blood or having blood in the stool

Most often, these symptoms are not due to cancer. Other health problems, such as an ulcer or infection, can cause the same symptoms. Anyone who has these symptoms should tell their doctor so that problems can be diagnosed and treated as early as possible.

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## Trivia Question

Boston, Massachusetts, has the oldest commissioned navy ship in the United States. What is its name?

- U.S.S. Arizona
- U.S.S. Monitor
- U.S.S. Constitution
- U.S.S. Missouri
- The Green Monster

# *In Loving Memory*

During November 2012, Memorial Donations were generously made by and for the following people

**In Memory of Malvine Burke**

Dolores & Jeanette Fester, Benton Harbor

**In Memory of H H Critchfield**

Stacy Crist, Fort Wayne, IN

**In Memory of JoAnn Dixon**

Toni Rosetto, St. Joseph  
United Federal Credit Union

**In Memory of Ray C. Emerick**

Janette A. Kelley, Michigan City, IN

**In Memory of Lillie Mae Lambert**

Carolyn Butterbaugh, Stedman, NC

**In Memory Freddy W. Rantz**

Dolores & Jeanette Fester, Benton Harbor

**In Memory of Donald Reed Stevens**

Marilyn Stevens, St. Joseph

**In Memory of Mary Ann Thompson**

Jeanne W. Cur, St. Joseph  
Evelyn M. Rambo, Bridgman

**In Memory of Cameron E. Watkins Jr.**

Dolores & Jeanette Fester, Benton Harbor

**In Memory of Micheal T. Welihan**

Ann Welihan, St. Joseph

**In Memory of Florence Youngblood**

Mike & Sue Doherty, Traverse City  
Karen Ann Ricketts, Flushing

Berrien County Cancer Service sends our sincere sympathy to all those who have recently lost loved ones. We thank all of our generous donors. Your donations are very much appreciated and will help cancer patients in Berrien County.

Thank you.

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Winner of the October Quilt Raffle was

Cheryl Weise

Our thanks goes out to all those who supported our raffle and to those who donated the quilt.

**DRIVERS NEEDED:** Some cancer patients are in need of transportation to treatment. If you are available to drive, please call BCCS at 269-429-3281.

Ask for Claudia.

***Half the joy in life is in little things taken on the run. Let us run if we must -- even the sands do that -- but let us keep our hearts young and our eyes open that nothing worth our while shall escape us.***

***Victor Cherbuliez***

**Crab dip**

8 oz. cream cheese, softened  
1 pound lump crab meat  
1/4 cup cooking sherry  
1/2 tsp. Old Bay seasoning  
1/4 small red onion, fine dice  
1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
1/2 cup carrots, thin cut  
1 tomato, cored and diced  
2 scallion stems, chopped paprika

Methods/steps

Place softened cream cheese in mixing bowl and whip. Fold in crabmeat, sherry, Old Bay and onion until well-blended. Fold in cheddar cheese. Use tomatoes, carrots, scallions and paprika for garnish. Serve with crackers.

**Answer to Trivia: U.S.S. Constitution**

## Looking Ahead

### **BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville**

January 15 - 1:30 p.m.  
February 5 & 19 - 1:30 p.m.

### **BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Niles**

January 8 & 22 - 1:30 p.m.  
February 12 & 26 - 1:30 p.m.

### **OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville**

January 15 - 1:30 p.m.  
February - 19 - 1:30 p.m.

### **RAINBOWS OF HOPE– St. Joseph**

Marie Yeager Cancer Center  
January 10 - 5:30 p.m.  
February 14 - 5:30 p.m.

### **Ostomy Support Group**

Lakeland Regional Medical Center  
January 10 - 6:00 p.m.  
February 14 - 6:00 p.m.

### **Man to Man – Prostate Support Group**

Trinity Center, St. Joseph  
January 15 – 6:30 p.m.

#### **DATES TO REMEMBER IN JANUARY**

January 1 - NEW YEARS DAY  
January 2 - National Motivation & Inspiration Day  
January 4 - World Braille Day  
January 8 - Bubble Bath Day  
January 10 - League of Nations Day  
January 12 - Fruitcake Toss Day  
January 14 - National Clean off Your Desk Day  
January 15 - Humanitarian Day  
January 18 - National Sanctity of Human Life Day  
January 19 - Popcorn Day  
January 21 - Martin Luther King Day  
January 25 - Fun At Work Day  
January 29 - Free Thinkers Day

#### **Newsletters available online**

Our newsletters are available on our website:  
[www.bccancerservice.org](http://www.bccancerservice.org). If you would like to be removed from this mailing list, please call our office at 269-429-3281 or send us an e-mail: [staff@bccancerservice.org](mailto:staff@bccancerservice.org).

## Please Consider...

Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc., is a non-profit organization funded primarily by the United Way, private donations and fund-raisers. We receive no Medicare, Medicaid or other insurance payments. To continue our free services to Berrien County cancer patients, we need your help. Any donation is greatly appreciated.

Donations to our General Fund will help balance our current budget. Donations to our Endowment Fund will help guarantee that the Cancer Service will be available for as long as needed. Your contribution to our non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation is tax deductible – an acknowledgment and receipt for tax purposes will be sent.

Donations can be made in honor of someone or in memory of a loved one. In these instances, we would also like to send acknowledgment to the honoree or next-of-kin so please provide that information when making your donation.

\_\_\_\_\_ General Fund \_\_\_\_\_ Endowment Fund

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

OR

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please send notification of my gift to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your generosity!*

Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc.  
7301 Red Arrow Highway  
Stevensville, MI 49127

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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**NURSING STAFF:**

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Carrie Klint, R.N. Susan Lerke, R.N.  
Ruth Walker, R.N. Marilyn Dopp, R.N.

**OFFICE STAFF:**

Julie Koch (Accounting Manager)  
Claudia Brister (Office Manager)  
Henrietta Hein

**CANCER SUPPORT GROUP** – Stevensville Office

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month - 1:30 p.m.

**Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc.**

7301 Red Arrow Highway  
Stevensville, MI 49127

Phone: (269) 429-3281 or (269) 465-5257

**CANCER SUPPORT GROUP** – Niles

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month – 1:30 p.m.

**Niles Senior Center**

1109 Bell Road  
Niles, MI 49120

Phone: (269) 429-3281

**RAINBOWS OF HOPE GROUP-** St. Joseph

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month – 5:30 p.m.

**Marie Yeager Cancer Center**

Ward and Kinney Room  
3900 Hollywood Rd.

St. Joseph, MI 49085

Phone: (269) 556-7114

**OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP**

2nd Thursday of each month- 6:00 p.m.

**Lakeland Regional Medical Center**

Community Room  
1234 Napier Ave

St. Joseph, MI 49085

Phone: (269) 983-8804

**MAN TO MAN** – Prostate Support Group

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month – 6:30 p.m.

**Trinity Center**

619 Main Street (use Main entrance)  
St. Joseph, MI 49085

Phone: (800) 465-5244