

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 compassionate in home skilled nursing care
and supportive resources for those affected by cancer
or related illnesses



September 2014

(269) 429-3281

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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.

Indian Summer

Frost, in brief apology
For all it had to do
To every bush and plant and tree
Gives us a scenic view.

Sets the autumn woods on fire!
Paints the gardens bright:
Gilds the weed patch and the briar
With sudden golden light

War bonnet beauty stomps the fields
As ruddy leaves outrun
The morning chill and Jack Frost yields
To Indian summer sun.



United Way
of Southwest Michigan

BCCS Bulletin Board

Come Celebrate with Us! BCCS OPEN HOUSE Thursday, October 23



This year is our 66th year of being the Berrien County Cancer Service! We will be celebrating this mile stone during our Open House on

Thursday, October 23 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. So be sure to **SAVE THE DATE!** We will have a table full of refreshments, so **stop by for lunch or come between 5p 6p when we will have a pizza party!** Bring the family and enjoy the fun. In the meantime, come see our quilt on display and buy some raffle tickets. **The quilt raffle will be held after the pizza party at 6:00 p.m.**



We

QUILT RAFFLE TICKETS

Make our **QUILT RAFFLE** a Success! We have lots of raffle tickets that need homes. **The tickets are only \$1 each or 6 for \$5.** You may view the beautiful queen-sized quilt on our website at bccancerservice.org. If you do not have internet access, call our office at 269-429-3281 and we will mail you a picture. **In addition to buying tickets, we are looking for volunteers to sell tickets.** Call or stop by to pick a packet of tickets up and give your friends, family, social club, etc. the opportunity to win a quilt and help someone with cancer. Remember each ticket is a winner by providing in-home nursing support to the cancer patients of Berrien County, however, only 1 ticket wins the quilt! The drawing will be held at our Open House on Thursday, October 23 at 6 pm.



Falling for Quilts

This is certainly the quilting season! Berrien Towne and Country Quilt Guild is having a mini-quilt silent auction to benefit BCCS. This auction will be held on Friday, October 17 from 1pm – 7pm and on Saturday, October 18 from 9am – 5pm at the Vineland Center located at 1155 Vineland Road, St. Joseph. There will be over 200 beautiful quilts on display as well as Handmade American Girl Doll items, vendors, and raffle items. View antique quilts and demonstrations. Admission is \$6, but if you stop by the BCCS office, you may pick up an information postcard for \$1 off regular admission. You may also view quilts at the Lincoln Township and St. Joseph Public Libraries during September. Come view the fabric artwork of local artisans!



Tara's Story

PLEASE NOTE: This story is being shared with us by Tara's Mom, Jessica. Tara is an amazing girl, an artist, and one of our precious patients.

In the fall of 2012, Tara started first grade at Roosevelt Elementary. She was a very excited 6 year old! After the first month of school, she started not feeling well. Tara would wake up and vomit every morning. Sometimes it lasted throughout the day. We took her into the doctor office and they did some blood work. They put Tara on an antibiotic to help her. This did nothing to help her and it eventually turned into a problem with her not being able to even keep the medicine down. As the weeks went by, Tara started getting headaches on top of the vomiting. She started missing half days of school and it turned into the whole school days. We continued to go to the doctor's office to try different things to help her feel better. Around Christmas, Tara developed a red streak across her eye. We went back into her doctor for this and we were referred to an eye doctor. The following day we had the first appointment of the morning. During the exam they discovered that there was high pressure behind her eyes. They told us we needed to get into an MRI right away. Since Tara needed to be sedated to have the MRI we were unable to get her in that day. The next day, which was a Friday, we had the first MRI appointment. We were only home a half an hour when we received a call from the doctor telling us they found a mass in her brain and we needed to pack up and get to Comer Children's Hospital at the University of Chicago as soon as possible. Our world was turned upside down and panic set in. We made arrangements for our older daughter Kayla to stay in town so she could go to school. We left for Chicago a couple hours later. When we got to the hospital we met with the surgeon team. We went over the MRI results and they told us she needed to have surgery first thing Monday

morning. Tara was admitted to the ICU until surgery time. She was having pretty severe headaches and a lot of vomiting at this time. Monday was the longest day of our lives. Tara was in surgery for 9 hours. The surgeon told us it was a successful surgery. They were able to remove everything except for a film that he had to leave on the brain stem. We had to wait 3-5 days for the official pathology report but the preliminary results were that the tumor was cancerous. Shock set in then we walked down the hall to see Tara after surgery. It was so hard seeing her all bandaged up, hooked up to everything, and not knowing what side effects she would have from the surgery itself. When she first woke up she was mad, as expected. She also talked very fast and it was hard to understand what she was saying. Over the next couple weeks she had to re-learn how to do everything. She had physical therapy and occupational therapy every day. She improved quicker than they expected her to. We were able to come home ten days after surgery. Tara was going to do radiation and then chemotherapy. But, for some reason, the back of her head took a lot longer to heal than it should have. Her wound kept re-opening so the surgeon called in a plastic surgeon to come in and close her incision. After this finally healed, weeks later than planned, we had an MRI done. The tumor started growing back and was half the size it was before. We consulted with the surgeon who told us he didn't want to go back in there and remove it because of the length of time it took to heal. The oncology team wanted to adjust her treatment for Medullablastoma slightly. Instead of doing radiation then chemotherapy they changed to doing 3 rounds of chemotherapy before starting radiation then finishing with

3 rounds of chemotherapy before starting radiation and then finishing with 3 rounds of chemotherapy. She would be getting the same treatment just in a different order because the tumor was so aggressive.

A typical round of chemo consisted of Tara being admitted to the hospital for 5 or 6 days. We would go home for 3 days and then make a trip to the oncology department in South Bend for blood work and a short chemo treatment. Then we would be home for another couple days and Tara would develop a fever and we would go back to Chicago to be admitted for another 7-10 days. We would be home about a week and then it would start all over again. When she was in the hospital, an art therapist would come in and work with her every day. Tara would work on all different kinds of art. It seemed to help her during her treatment time and we found out she really enjoyed painting. When we were home if she felt up to it she went to school. She was doing everything she could to be a "normal" kid.

For Tara's radiation, we had proton therapy at a facility in Warrenville, IL. We stayed in a hotel and came home when we could. Tara ended up having 31 treatments so we were there for 6 weeks. Once a week we went to Naperville to get a chemo treatment as well. During this time school ended so I made sure I took Tara back for the last day of school and some other important events that she wanted to go to. Her sister was busy with sports and school so it was difficult to see her as often as we wanted to. Tara graduated from radiation at the end of June. We were given the month of July off which was great! We were able to spend time as a family and prepare for the final chemo treatments. Tara started chemo in August and she ended up getting dehydrated when she came home from the chemo. They started sending us home with IV bags for a few days after each treatment. At first we had an

at home nurse come in to draw labs and make sure the IV was okay. Then, she told us about Berrien County Cancer Service. We had the nurse come over for a trial run to see how Tara would do with her. Tara became comfortable with her very quickly!

When Tara finished her final chemo treatment the doctors started her on a pill that she will end up taking 12 cycles of. While on this medicine she has to have blood work done monthly. She will also have an MRI every 3 months. Since Tara is more comfortable having her port accessed and blood drawn at home we have her nurse Connie from the Berrien County Cancer Service come in to do that for us. Tara really likes Connie and looks forward to seeing her (after she is done poking her anyways). Tara's last 4 MRI scans have come back stable with no new growth! She has a long road ahead of her. The chemotherapy caused her to lose her high frequency hearing and we just got her hearing aids at the beginning of June. It has taken all summer but she is getting used to them and she can really notice a difference with them in. At the beginning of August she got her glasses. She still isn't happy about wearing them and is trying to adjust to having them. Hopefully once school starts she will get used to wearing them more. Tara will start second grade in September. This summer has been filled with a lot of doctor appointments so she might be glad to be getting back into school. We are very thankful for our family and friends for all of their support during this journey. We couldn't have done this without you! We also would like to thank the Berrien County Cancer Service for being able to send Connie to us to make Tara comfortable with her blood draws that need to be done. Every time Connie comes, Tara's anxiety is a little bit better! We also would like to thank our wonderful community that we live in. You have been there with us supporting us in any way that you can and we are grateful for that! Thank you all!

SPAGHETTI DINNER BENEFIT

There will be a Spaghetti Dinner Benefit and Silent Auction for Tara to help the family with expenses associated with her medical care. This will be held on Saturday, October 18 from 4 – 8pm at the Lakeshore Middle School at 1459 W. John Beers Rd., Stevensville. Suggested Donation at the door: \$8 for Adults; \$3 for Children age 5 and under. For more information, please see the facebook page “Prayers for Tara Deam” or call the BCCS Office at 269-429-3281. Come join us in showing Tara how much she is valued by our community.



Support Groups

Having cancer is often one of the most stressful experiences in a person's life. However, support groups help many people cope with the emotional aspects of cancer by providing a safe place to share their feelings and challenges as well as learning from others who are facing similar situations. We offer several support groups throughout each month. On the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month, a group meets from 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at the BCCS Office at 7301 Red Arrow Highway, Stevensville. There is also a group that meets from 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at the Niles Senior Center at 1109 Bell Rd, Niles. An evening group meets monthly at the Marie Yeager Cancer Center from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of the month. Please feel free to join any of these cancer support groups. For further information please call the BCCS Office at 269-429-3281



HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

We love to have testimonies of how we have helped people in our community on our website. If you have a story to tell about how BCCS has helped you and would like to share it, please email staff@bccancerservice.org or mail us your story along with a statement giving us permission to post it on our website, www.bccancerservice.org



In Loving Memory

During July 2014, Memorial Donations were generously made by and for the following people

In Memory of Joseph Blake

M. & CR. Hohnstein, Stevensville
Robert & Rosemary VanArkel, St. Joseph
Elaine Lavander, Benton Harbor
Steve & Laura Marquardt, St. Joseph
Sue Wood, Benton Harbor
Barb Karstens, St. Joseph
Joyce & Dale DeLong, Benton Harbor
Julia & Jodi Ballard, Benton Harbor
Starks & Menchinger Chapel, St. Joseph
Lonna & John Salnoske, Benton Harbor
Dan & Suzanne Fortenbacher, St. Joseph
Ruby Sprague, Stevensville
Ronald & Paula Schroeder, Sodus
Henry & Patricia Breyen, Eau Claire
Iris Vanderhoof, Stevensville
Beatrice Kimball, St. Joseph

In Memory of Evelyn Byers

Mark & Brenda Haueisen, St. Joseph

In Memory of Ervin Gerschoffer

Stevensville American Legion
Auxiliary Unit 568

In Memory of Tomas A. Kubath

Ruby Sprague, Stevensville

In Memory of Juanita Phillips

Victoria Kidwell, Niles

In Memory of JoAnn Pullen-Bruni

Anonymous

In Memory of Florin Rettig,

Sylvia Durham, Stevensville

In Memory of Ruth Hess & Richard Harroff

John & Marge Yetzke, Watervliet

In Memory of Cindy Shelton

Sue & Daris Stimson, Foyil, OK
Charlotte O'Quin, Inola, OK

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.

Thought for the Day

All like the purchase,
Few the price will pay;
And this makes friends
Such miracles today.

Edmund Young



Looking Ahead

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

September 2 & 16 – 1:30 p.m.

October 7 & 21 – 1:30 p.m.

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Niles

September 9 & 23 – 1:30 p.m.

October 14 & 28 – 1:30 p.m.

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

September 16 – 1:30 p.m.

October 21 – 1:30 p.m.

RAINBOWS OF HOPE– St. Joseph

Marie Yeager Cancer Center

September 11– 5:30 p.m.

October 9 – 5:30 p.m.

Ostomy Support Group

Lakeland Regional Medical Center

September 11 – 6:00 p.m.

October 9 – 6:00 p.m.

DATES TO REMEMBER IN SEPTEMBER

September 1 – Labor Day

September 4 – National Wildlife Day

September 5 – Bring Your Manners to Work Day

September 7 – Grandma Moses Day

September 8 – Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses Day

September 11 – Patriot Day

September 12 – Stand Up to Cancer Day

September 14 – National Hug Your Hound Day

September 16 – Trail of Tears Commemoration Day

September 18 – National Respect Day

September 19 – POW/MIA Recognition Day

September 22 – American Business Women’s Day

September 23 – Voter Registration Day

September 27 – Ancestor Appreciation Day

September 28 – World Heart Day

September Stone - Sapphire

September Flower - Aster

Newsletters available online

Our newsletters are available on our website:
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.

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

JOIN THE NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL

Help us save postage, call 269-429-3281
or email us at staff@bccancerservice.org.
If you are not reading the newsletter, you
may contact us to be removed also. We
value our readers & hope you enjoy it.

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Julie Koch (Accountant)
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CANCER SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville Office

1st and 3rd 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

RAINBOWS OF HOPE GROUP- St. Joseph

2nd Thursday of each month – 5:30 p.m.

Marie Yeager Cancer Center

Ward and Kinney Room
3900 Hollywood Road
St. Joseph, MI 49085

Phone: (269) 556-7114

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP – Niles

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

Niles Senior Center

1109 Bell Road
Niles, MI 49120

Phone: (269) 429-3281

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