



# Cancer Support Group NEWSLETTER

[www.bccancerservice.org](http://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.

October 2010

(269) 429-3281 or (269) 683-7460

VOLUME XIX ISSUE X

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.

.....

### Weaves the Autumn Scene

Autumn's woven once again  
Colors bright & bold,  
High upon the mountaintop  
Valleys just below.

Seems there's loveliness to see  
Everywhere I look,  
Like an artist paints the scene  
In a picture book.

Colors chosen for each tree  
Crimson beauty bold,  
Followed by the artist's brush  
Dipped in purest gold.

Still a vision to behold  
Hints the color green,  
Rarest loveliness of earth  
Weaves the Autumn scene.

Katherine Smith Matheney



what matters.™

# Cancer Will Change Your Life

## Control and Self-Esteem

When you first learn that you have cancer, you may feel as if your life is out of control. You may feel this way because:

- you wonder if you will live or die
- your daily routine is disrupted by doctor visits and treatments
- people use medical words and terms that you don't understand
- you feel like you can't do things you enjoy
- you feel helpless
- the health professionals treating you are strangers

Look beyond your cancer. Many people with cancer feel better when they stay busy. You may still go to work, even if you need to adjust your schedule. You can also take part in hobbies such as music, crafts, or reading.

As one woman with cancer commented,

"Once I started to feel better, I found myself looking for new outlets for creativity. I had always promised myself that some day I would take a photography course. My satisfaction with my new hobby helped me feel better about other areas of my life as well."

## Sadness and Depression

Many people with cancer feel sad or depressed. This is a normal response to any serious illness. When you're depressed, you may have very little energy, feel tired, or not want to eat.

Depression is sometimes a serious problem. If feelings of sadness and despair seem to take over your life, you may have depression. The box below lists eight common signs of depression. Let your health provider know if you have one or more of these signs almost every day.

### Early Signs of Depression

Check the signs that are problems for you:

- a feeling that you are helpless and hopeless, or that life has no meaning
- no interest in being with your family or friends
- no interest in the hobbies and activities you used to enjoy
- a loss of appetite, or no interest in food
- crying for long periods of time, or many times each day
- sleep problems, either sleeping too much or too little
- changes in your energy level
- thoughts of killing yourself. This includes making plans or taking action to kill yourself, as well as frequent thoughts about death and dying.

Depression can be treated. Your doctor may prescribe medication. He or she may also suggest that you talk about your feelings with a counselor or join a support group with others who have cancer.

## Guilt

Many people with cancer feel guilty. For example, you may blame yourself for upsetting the people you love. You may worry that you are a burden to others, either emotionally or financially. Or you may envy other people's good health and be ashamed of this feeling. You might even blame yourself for lifestyle choices that could have led to your cancer. For example, that lying out in the sun caused your skin cancer or that smoking cigarettes led to your lung cancer.

These feelings are all normal. One woman with breast cancer said,

"When I feel guilty that I caused my cancer, I think of little children who have cancer. That makes me realize that cancer can just happen. It isn't my fault."

Your family and friends may also feel guilty because:

1. they are healthy while you are sick
2. they can't help you as much as they want
3. they feel stressed and impatient

They may also feel guilty when they don't think they can give you all the care and understanding you need.

Counseling and support groups can help with these feelings of guilt. Let your doctor or nurse know if you, or someone in your family, would like to talk with a counselor or go to a support group.

### Loneliness

People with cancer often feel lonely or distant from others. You may find that your friends have a hard time dealing with your cancer and may not visit. Some people might not even be able to call you on the phone. You may feel too sick to take part in the hobbies and activities you used to enjoy. And sometimes, even when you are with people you love and care about, you may feel that no one understands what you are going through.

You may feel less lonely when you meet other people who have cancer. Many people feel better when they join a support group and talk with others who are facing the same challenges.

Not everyone wants or is able to join a support group. Some people prefer to talk with just one person at a time. You may feel better talking to a close friend or family member, a social worker or counselor, or a member of your faith or spiritual community.

### Gratitude

"I do have a lot of bad days, but you know, I don't talk about those. I forget those. I think about all the good things, and I have a lot of nice times when I'm with my grandchildren, when I go to church, and when I'm with my friends."

Some people see their cancer coming back as a "wake-up call." They may realize the importance of enjoying the little things in life. They go places they've never been. They finish projects they had started but put aside. They spend more time with friends and family. They mend broken relationships.

It may be hard at first, but you can find joy in your life. Take note of what makes you smile. Pay attention to the things you do each day that you enjoy. They can be as simple as drinking your morning coffee, sitting with a pet, or talking to a friend. These small, day-to-day activities can give you comfort and pleasure.

You can also do things that are more meaningful to you. Everyone has special things, both large and small, that bring meaning to their life. For you, it may be visiting a garden in your city or town. It may be praying in a certain chapel. Or it could be playing golf or some other sport that you love. Whatever you choose, embrace the things that bring you joy when you can.

### Summing Up: Learning You Have Cancer

You will have many feelings as you learn to live with cancer. These feelings can change from day to day, hour to hour, or even minute to minute.

Feelings of denial, anger, fear, stress and anxiety, depression, sadness, guilt, and loneliness are all normal. So is a feeling of hope. While no one is cheerful all the time, hope is a normal and positive part of your cancer experience.

## **Ovarian Cancer Study Could Speed Early Detection**

Can a simple blood test detect early signs of ovarian cancer? This question has been asked repeatedly over the last decade, and an answer may finally come this summer.

In a closely watched study, five research groups are validating their most promising ovarian cancer markers using high-quality blood samples from the Prostate, Lung, Colorectal and Ovarian (PLCO) cancer screening trial, including some prediagnostic samples from women who developed ovarian cancer during the trial. The validation study, coordinated by NCI's Early Detection Research Network (EDRN), could show whether panels of markers can detect ovarian cancer in blood collected 6 months or more before cancer was discovered. If markers do predict ovarian cancer, the question then becomes: How long before a clinical diagnosis are the markers informative?

Earlier is always better, and for this disease in particular. Ovarian cancer has been called a "silent killer" because the vast majority of cases go undetected until the later stages, when women have few treatment options. The hope now is that a blood test for early detection is within reach.

"Everybody has a real sense of urgency now," said Dr. Daniel Cramer of Brigham and Women's Hospital, who leads one group. "We've been saying for years that we'll get a marker for ovarian cancer, but it hasn't happened yet. This is the first good test to see if we can come up with a panel of markers for ovarian cancer from PLCO samples."

The PLCO is one of several large, randomized studies that have been making limited samples available for biomarker research based on proposals from investigators. These studies have rare prediagnostic samples that were collected before anyone knew that a person had a particular cancer. Such samples are considered "more pure" and may more accurately reflect the biology of ovarian cancer than other specimens.

The vast majority of prediagnostic blood samples for ovarian cancer are collected from women just prior to surgery for a suspected ovarian tumor. But impending surgery and anesthesia, for example, might alter at least some potential markers in women with the cancer but perhaps not in a comparison group. The PLCO biorepository has serial blood samples from 150,000 people collected at 10 sites across the country, making it a veritable gold mine for biomarker research. Because samples were collected and stored before a diagnosis was known, the researchers minimized the chances of inadvertently introducing a bias or systematic difference between the cancer and comparison groups.

The validation study is being managed by Dr. Christos Patriotis of NCI's Cancer Biomarkers Research Group with Dr. Sudhir Srivastava, who heads the EDNRN program.

The study could yield a variety of markers, including some that improve the sensitivity of the protein CA-125 test. This marker is routinely evaluated when diagnosing ovarian cancer, but it cannot be used alone because only some women with ovarian cancer develop elevated levels, and levels can be elevated for reasons other than cancer.

"Many potential biomarkers have been proposed to be added to CA-125 for the early detection of ovarian cancer, and the PLCO samples will help us select the most promising of those markers," said Dr. Robert Bast, Jr., of the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, who discovered CA-125 and is an investigator in the study.

Beyond early detection and diagnosis, markers are needed to assess risk and guide difficult clinical decisions. For instance, some women with genetic risk factors for breast and ovarian cancers have their ovaries and fallopian tubes removed as preventive measures after childbearing years.

The validation study could yield markers that identify women without the risk genes who nonetheless have a high risk of the disease within 5 to 10 years. Other markers could identify women who have a family history of ovarian cancer but are at such low risk that they could safely avoid preventive surgeries, at least in the short term.

Before any of these markers can be used in the clinic, they would need to be tested prospectively, and the challenges of early detection are substantial.

"It may be helpful to think about what we're trying to do," said Dr. Nicole Urban of Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, another lead investigator. "With a screening program, a woman comes in and you get a blood sample and try to predict if she's going to be diagnosed with cancer. You're trying to find cancer that would kill the woman, but you're trying to find it early enough that you can cure it. And this is tough."

Dr. Urban is nonetheless optimistic that screening for ovarian cancer using markers will ultimately succeed. She predicts that serial blood samples from randomized trials may be required to discover the markers and track their changes over time.

"There is no single marker that will be sensitive enough to distinguish all the ovarian cancer patients from healthy women," said Dr. Gil Mor of Yale University, who leads the fourth group. His team has developed panels with two types of markers - proteins produced by ovarian tumors and proteins produced by the body in response to very early changes associated with ovarian cancer.

All of the groups have taken essentially similar strategies, noted Dr. Anna Lokshin at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, the principal investigator for the fifth study group. "We are all now waiting for the results." The data are being analyzed, and answers could come within months.

"A lot of people around the country are holding their breath to see the results," said Dr. David Ransohoff, a cancer epidemiologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who consulted on the project.

"These are some of the best groups in the country; they are investigating an important question; and the specimens are among the best available to answer it," he continued. "If the results are positive in these samples, it will be enormously good news for the field."

—Edward R. Winstead



# *In Loving Memory*

During August 2010, Memorial Donations were generously made by and for the following people:

**In Memory of Shirley Adams**

Pat McTague % Ed Emrich, St Joseph

**In Memory of Ruth Marie Binger**

Passaro & Kahne Law Office P.L.L.C., St Joseph

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Gladys Martin % Mike Martin, Niles

Joe & Judy Saratore, Buchanan

Wayland Chamber, Wayland

Patricia Wyland, Niles

**In Memory of Elizabeth "Liz" Embrey**

Kenneth L Ansley, Nokomis FL

**In Memory of Raymond (Pete) Harfert**

American Legion, New Troy

Mr & Mrs James Veldman, Sawyer

**In Memory of Arlene Lindquist**

Mr & Mrs James Veldman, Sawyer

**In Memory of Dale Thomas McGuffin**

Julia Stegeman, Kaukauna WI

**In Memory of Wilma McLaughlin**

Katherine Phillips, St Joseph

**In Memory of James Middleton**

George & Pat Schneider, Lawrence

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Shirlee Benford, St Joseph

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**In Memory of Duane Rock**

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Mary Sears, Benton Harbor

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Chuck & Kim Forker, Benton Harbor

Kim, Amanda, Kayla & Ryan Forker, Benton Harbor

Rose Fuller, St Joseph

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Paul A Marsala & Family, Benton Harbor

Venita Piner, Benton Harbor

Mr & Mrs Bill Schadler, St Joseph

Buddy & Shirley Tyler, St Joseph

Marnell Tyler, St Joseph

Joyce A Wood, St Joseph

## *In Loving Memory (continued)*

### In Memory of Louise V Udem

Jeanette Arnt, Niles  
Brian Q Berndt, Stevensville  
Virginia Byers, St Joseph  
Gertrude Childs % Woodland Terrace Retirement Community,  
Bridgman  
Dennis G Chronister, Kingston NY  
Karen & Dennis Chronister, Coloma  
Patricia A Hill, Benton Harbor  
G M Holmes, St Joseph  
Betty Ann Kesterke, Benton Harbor  
Passaro & Kahne Law Office P.L.L.C., St Joseph  
Linda Zick, St Joseph

### In Memory of Mrs Doris Vanderboegh

Joseph & Lucille Vyzral, Stevensville

### In Memory of Lee C Wallis

Carolyn & Harold Corteville, Benton Harbor

### In Memory of Duane Ward

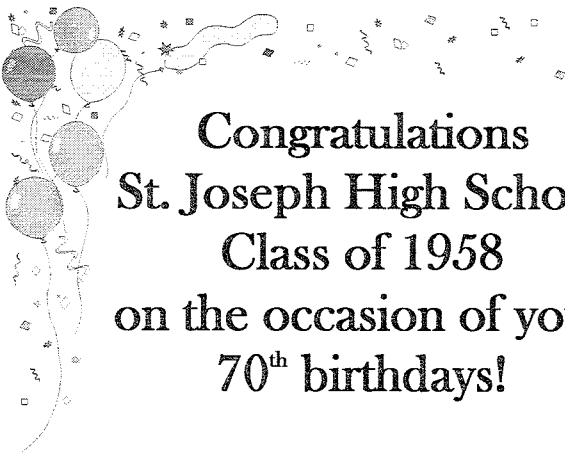
Mary Lou Ward, Eau Claire

### In Memory of Gene Winans

Ed & Judy Campbell, Coloma

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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**Congratulations  
St. Joseph High School  
Class of 1958  
on the occasion of your  
70<sup>th</sup> birthdays!**

Thank you for your generous group gift from your birthday picnic this past summer!  
May you continue to gather together for many future special occasions.  
Thank you for helping others through your donation to BCCS.

Happy Birthday to all the new 70 year olds!

**Community Forum  
Everyone Invited**

**Palliative Care for  
Cancer Patients  
Better Data, Better Options**

**November 3, 2010  
6:30 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres  
7:00 Program**

**Hospice at Home  
Community Room  
4025 Health Park Lane  
St. Joseph  
269-429-7100 / 800-717-3811**

# Looking Ahead

## **BCCS SUPPORT GROUP - Stevensville**

October 5 & 19 – 1:30 p.m.  
November 2 & 16 – 1:30 p.m.

## **BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Niles**

October 12 & 26 – 1:30 p.m.  
November 9 & 23 – 1:30 p.m.

## **UOA SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville**

October 19 – 1:30 p.m.  
November 16 – 1:30 p.m.

## **RAINBOWS OF HOPE – Stevensville**

October 14 – 5:30 p.m.  
November 11 – 5:30 p.m.

### **OPEN HOUSE**

### **QUILT RAFFLE**

October 21 – 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Raffle Drawing @ 4:30 p.m.

**TICKETS** available at BCCS

### **COMMUNITY FORUM**

### **Palliative Care for Cancer Patients**

Better Data, Better Options

Hospice at Home

November 3 – 6:30 p.m.

### **DATES TO REMEMBER IN OCTOBER**

*October 1<sup>st</sup> – International Day of Older Persons*

*October 4<sup>th</sup> – Child Health Day*

*October 12<sup>th</sup> – Columbus Day*

*October 13<sup>th</sup> – Emergency Nurses Day*

*October 15<sup>th</sup> – Boss's Day*

*October 18<sup>th</sup> – National Chocolate Cupcake Day*

*October 24<sup>th</sup> – United Nation's Day*

*October 27<sup>th</sup> – Cranky Co-workers Day*

*October 30<sup>th</sup> – National Forgiveness Day*

# *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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Honoree's Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please send notification of my gift to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

How would you like the card to be signed?

\_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your generosity!*

A grandfather was delivering his grandchildren to their home one day when a fire truck zoomed past. Sitting in the front seat of the fire truck was a Dalmatian dog. The children started discussing the dog's duties.

"They use him to keep crowds back," said one child.

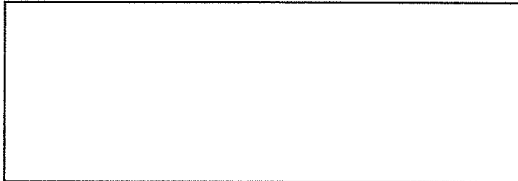
"No," said another. "He's just for good luck."

A third child brought the argument to a close. "They use the dogs," she said firmly, "to find the fire hydrants."

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

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**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) 683-7460

**RAINBOWS OF HOPE GROUP** – Stevensville Office  
2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month – 5:30 p.m.  
**Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc.**  
7301 Red Arrow Highway  
Stevensville MI 49127  
Phone: (269) 429-3281 or (269) 465-5257

**THE CANCER CONNECTION CAFE**  
1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month  
**First United Methodist Church**  
132 S. Oak Street  
Buchanan, MI 49107  
Phone: (269) 695-2706