

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.



December 2011

(269) 429-3281

VOLUME XX ISSUE XII

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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Seasons Greetings And Happy Holidays!

From the Berrien County Cancer Service



Claudia Brister
Ann Dondos

Barbara
Lynn Bruni

Julie Koch

Susan Lerke

Nancy Church

Carrie Klein

Herrath



United Way
of Southwest Michigan

Jasan, neuroblastoma and thyroid cancer survivor

My experience with survivorship starts in 1976. I was diagnosed at 6 months of age with neuroblastoma of the left neck. The tumor was excised and I was treated with radiation. I had regular checkups every 3 months until I was 5, and every 6 months thereafter. When I was 15, I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer, most likely caused by the radiation treatment for the neuroblastoma. I had a thyroidectomy and more radiation. Six years later, just after turning 21 and graduating from college, a recurrence of the thyroid cancer was detected. I was treated with still more radiation and given a clean bill of health. In the 11 years since, I've had some scares, but I'm otherwise healthy.

"Becoming involved in the advocacy community has allowed me to make a positive impact and has made what I've been through less painful."

It took more than 25 years for me to be able to speak freely about my health history. Something finally clicked in my mind and I realized that I needed to share my story to provide hope and inspiration. It was with this in mind that I entered the world of advocacy. I joined a young adult patient and survivor support group called Healthy Young Attitude (HYA). I didn't really speak for the first year's worth of meetings, but then I became more comfortable and sought out new ways to get involved.

I attended the inaugural Lance Armstrong Foundation's LIVESTRONG Summit in 2006 and was amazed to learn about the many great programs and organizations that were involved in cancer advocacy. I became inspired and searched for more opportunities to become involved. In August, 2007, I attended an informational meeting for The Wellness Community Silicon Valley (TWCSV), and I joined their Board of Directors a month later. Being involved with TWCSV has given me a broader audience with which to share my story to bring awareness to the organization, childhood and young adult support, and long-term survivorship issues. TWCSV is scheduled to open its doors in January of 2009, so I've also been able to be a part of the behind-the-scenes work, from fundraising to

spreading the word about the importance of psychosocial support.

Becoming involved in the advocacy community has not only allowed me to make a positive impact, it has also helped me come to terms with what I've been through and has made it less painful. I'm still becoming comfortable with sharing my story, but it gets easier every time. In the future, I would like to continue to share my story, both through speaking and writing. I enrolled in a writing workshop at the Stanford Cancer Center called Writing Through Cancer. Writing has been a great outlet for me to explore many of the repressed feelings that I have accumulated in my lifelong battle with cancer and its aftermath.

I would also like to get involved in survivorship research both to help myself and the long-term survivor community as a whole. I would even like to get involved with advocacy at the national level by participating in Capitol Hill briefings and meeting with my congressperson to provide education and enlightenment about childhood and young adult survivorship issues.

I'm making up for many years of lost time by trying to get involved with as much as I possibly can. I'm glad that I'm now more comfortable with sharing my story and have become involved in the cancer advocacy community. I hope to continue on that path, and in doing so, help other patients and survivors as well as myself.



Brooke, three-time melanoma survivor

As a teenager and young adult, I always felt more comfortable with people who were older than me. When I was diagnosed with my first early-stage melanoma at 18, I realized I had even more in common with older people..

My second melanoma happened when I was 23 and a waitress (with a college degree!). After graduating from college, I was no longer eligible to be on my father's insurance through his employer. My hours during the slow season didn't always add up to full-time work, so I was not eligible for group health insurance through the restaurant. I applied to several companies for individual [health insurance] coverage but was always turned down, most likely due to my history of melanoma. I felt very lucky to have supportive parents who helped me find and pay for health insurance. And my employer agreed to schedule me for outdoor shifts only at night so I wouldn't have to work all day in the summer sun.

At 26, at the beginning of the school year, I was diagnosed with my third and most serious melanoma. Each time I went in for a referral I saw a different doctor, and I would have to explain my history and my current biopsies. They all had a hard time believing that someone as young as me had a history of cancer and a good chance of having cancer again.

As many survivors know, having to summarize your medical situation again and again for providers unfamiliar with your case can be tough, and draining, when your cancer seems like a chronic health situation.

“I applied to several companies for individual [health insurance] coverage but was always turned down, most likely due to my history of melanoma.”

Although I was required to go to the student health center, they were not set up to deal with serious medical issues. During one biopsy I received contaminated stitches, and a few days later I developed a serious infection. The health center was closed so I went to the emergency room for treatment. I reacted poorly to the penicillin I was prescribed in the ER, so I went back to the health center (which was open by that time) — and they sent me to another ER for care.

Since the student health center was my primary care provider I also went there for follow-up care, like having stitches removed after biopsies. I spent a very frustrating 45 minutes with one physician assistant who insisted that the folks who had put my stitches in made them "too tight." I didn't know enough to ask for a doctor instead. When I finally started crying from the pain the PA inflicted by poking around in my surgical site, he called in a doctor. The doctor removed the stitches in less than 10 seconds. The unnecessary pain, frustration and subsequent scarring I experienced from that episode were small things compared to most cancer survivors' experiences.

In 2002 I accepted a job offer from the federal government. The prospect of a steady job and adequate health insurance was one of the many reasons I was interested in public service. I also relish that my job allows me to give back and work with the patient advocacy community.

At a time in life when my peers were looking for a dermatologist who could improve their skin, I was looking for one who was really good at spotting cancer and wouldn't lecture me needlessly about wearing sunscreen. At a time in life when my friends were worried about what to wear on a date, I was worried about what I could wear on a date that would cover up my most recent biopsy site. At a time in life when people my age were trying to figure out what to do with their lives, I was happy to have a life to figure out.

Rob, neuroblastoma and thyroid cancer survivor

As a one year old I nearly stopped breathing one day. I was rushed to the hospital where doctors found a small grapefruit size tumor in my back, which caused my lung to collapse. Shortly thereafter I was diagnosed with stage two neuroblastoma. I had surgery to remove the tumor, received radiation treatment and my mother administered

chemotherapy pills to me orally. Doctors reassured my mother that there would be no side effects of the radiation. Up until the age of 18 I had regular checkups to assess my overall health. At 18 I was fortunately told that I had a clean bill of health.

While in college in 2004 doctors found a colloid nodule attached to my thyroid gland. During spring break of senior year doctors removed this nodule. Also apparent were multiple tumors attached to my thyroid gland. Later I was told that my thyroid cancer could have resulted from the radiation treatment I received as a child. Six months after my total thyroidectomy I underwent radioactive iodine treatment, which forced me to be in complete isolation for three days due to the radioactivity.

Once again I was not told by my doctors about potential side effects of this treatment.

At the time of my second diagnoses I did not know the right questions to ask. Doctors were minimally helpful in providing me information on this disease

It seemed that doctors put more focus on healing the body and virtually no emphasis on what to do after the cancer is gone."

and on follow-up recommendations for coping. It seemed that doctors put more focus on healing the body, there was not adequate emphasis on what to do after the cancer is gone. I believe that oncology doctors also need training on what programs and services are available to their patients after treatment to address post-cancer issues.

I am currently giving back to cancer community and hope to start a cancer research related non-profit one day. I am the volunteer coordinator for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Light the Night event, and chair the Sonoma County ACS leadership committee. I believe that my volunteer and advocating efforts are just the tip of the ice berg. I can never pay back all those people who sacrificed time, money and much more to enable me to be alive and cancer-free today. However, I can join their efforts to help more people lead happy and productive cancer-free lives.

NOTICE TO DONORS

BCCS donations to Community Foundations

The Legislature of the State of Michigan has recently passed a law that will end the state income tax credit after this year for donations to community foundations, such as the Berrien Community Foundation and the Michigan Gateway Community Foundation. The Berrien County Cancer Service has a fund at both foundations, and donations can be designated to be put into those funds. Check with your tax preparer to see if you are eligible to take advantage of this great opportunity. Depending on your tax situation the actual cost of your donation could be far less than the amount of your donation.



Finding the Right Words

Via: Cancer Treatment Center of America

It can be difficult to know what to say to someone with cancer. Unless you've been there yourself, you can't possibly understand how it feels.

Many people say inappropriate things, with warm hearts. We often do the best we can but our efforts still fall short. How do we find the right words to talk to someone with cancer?

No Longer a Silent Disease

Years ago, people spoke in whispers about cancer. Today, despite its prevalence, advances in treatment, and increasing survival rates, the disease still carries with it a stigma.

People with cancer continue to face negative attitudes and stereotypes. The truth is, at some point, someone you know will likely get cancer. When it happens, you should be prepared to communicate appropriately about the disease.

Do's and Don'ts of Talking to Someone With Cancer

Many cancer survivors share similar stories of awkward encounters and upsetting comments made by well-meaning individuals. Their collective observations help us define "cancer etiquette," or rules of conduct for communicating with the cancer community.

Since each person experiences cancer differently, one approach does not necessarily work for everyone. This information serves as a starting point for talking to someone with cancer. There is no single right way. Just keep trying.

Pumpkin Roll

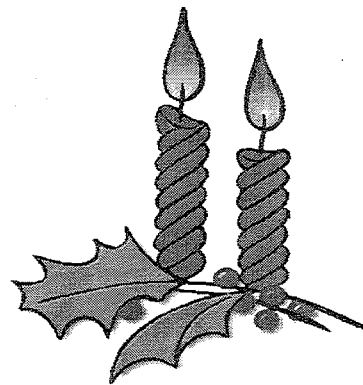
3 eggs
1 C. sugar
2/3 pumpkin
3/4 C. flour
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp soda
1 tsp salt
1 C. nuts

Beat eggs – add sugar – add rest of ingredients. Spread on greased & wax papered jelly roll pan. Sprinkle with nuts. Bake at 350. (15 – 20 minutes) Turn on powdered sugar towel – Roll and cool in towel.

Filling

8 oz. Cream Cheese
1 tsp vanilla
1 T. Oleo
1 C. powdered sugar

Cream together – unroll cake and spread with filling – reroll. Chill.



In Loving Memory

During October 2011, Memorial Donations were generously made by and for the following people

In Memory of Shirley Mae Boal

Jack & Esther Charleston, Stevensville
Dale & Mary Jane Dean, Berrien Center
Dave & Char Evans, Berrien Springs

In Memory of Allen Henry Cable

Joyce Cable, Davis & King Family, Benton Harbor
Central County Senior Center, Berrien Springs
Lee & Dolores Davis, Stevensville
Jerry & Cheryl Kalin, St. Joseph
Tammy Tollas, Baroda

In Memory of Therese M. Clement

Nancy Jeffery, Stevensville
William D. Marohn, St. Joseph
Carolyn Norton, Coloma
Patty Preuss & Chuck Witt, Manistee

In Memory of John "Jack" Erwin

Kenneth Brandt, Wheeling IL
Nancy Burns, Three Oaks
Gilbert & Pat Daniels, Chicago IL
Al Markunas, Three Oaks

In Memory Eliza Ellen Huston

Passaro & Kahne Law Office P.L.L.C., St. Joseph
Dick & Joan Stakley, Benton Harbor

In Memory of Elaine Koehler

Esther Cooper, Berrien Springs
Liz Cukrowicz, Kalamazoo
Deborah Frank, Coloma
Dan Koehler, St. Joseph
Paul Koehler, St. Joseph
Irene Ogonowski, Stevensville
Gary & LuAnne Schwank, Berrien Springs

In Memory of Stanley O. & Phyllis C. Miller

Stanley O. Miller Charitable Fund, St. Joseph

In Memory of Walter Schwarz

Jack & Barbara Dorgelo, Crossville TN
Larry Hinkelman, Benton Harbor

In Memory Of Scott Hylan Shugarts

Robert H. Imler Jr., Berrien Springs

In Memory of Debra Ann Silverthorn

Marian E. Phillips, St. Joseph

In Memory of Doris Sundblad

River Valley Band Booster
% Margaret Williamson, Sawyer

In Memory of Nancy Wank

Gloria Mance, St. Joseph

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.

In Your Honor

In October 2011, donations were made by and in honor of the following:

In Honor of Clayton Stakley

Dick & Joan Stakley, Benton Harbor



OPEN HOUSE
Please join us as we celebrate . . .

**BARBARA LANE'S
RETIREMENT
PARTY
37 Years**

**Friday
December 16, 2011
10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

**at
Berrien County Cancer Service
7301 Red Arrow Highway
Stevensville, Michigan**



Live United



The United Way is committed to advancing the common good by focusing on Education, Income and Health – the building blocks for a good life. The basic things that we all need for a good life: a quality education that leads to a stable job, income that can support a family through retirement, and good health. Along with those building blocks United Way has maintained Basic Needs – because emergencies happen and United Way is there to provide a hand up.

The Berrien County Cancer Service is a partner agency of the United Way. BCCS receives funding from the United Way of Southwest Michigan and the Greater Niles United Way.

JOIN US AS WE LIVE UNITED. We have dedicated part of a wall in our front office as our “Live United” project. Symbols will be pasted on this wall to represent the **STARS** of our lives as well as those we hold dear to our **HEARTS**.

Each symbol can be purchased for \$1.00 (higher donation amounts will certainly be accepted!). Then the name of the person being remembered or honored will be written on the symbol which will be pasted to our wall.

There is no limit to how many symbols you may purchase. There is no limit to how many times you may purchase symbols – you can do it for birthdays, anniversaries, Valentine’s Day, Boss’s Day, Ground Hog’s Day, etc! We’d love to fill our entire office!

Symbols may be purchased in person at our office, or you can mail this form. Tax receipts will only be mailed **IF** you request one with your donation. Be sure to include your address for a receipt.

Mail form to: Berrien County Cancer Service, 7301 Red Arrow Hwy., Stevensville, MI 49127

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

PRINT LEGIBLY below the name(s) to appear on each symbol(s):

Stars

Hearts

Thank you for helping the Berrien County Cancer Service Live United!

Please Consider...

Looking Ahead

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

December 6 & 20 – 1:30 p.m.

January 3 & 17 – 1:30 p.m.

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Niles

December 13 & 27 – 1:30 p.m.

January 10 & 24 – 1:30 p.m.

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

December 20 – 1:30 p.m.

January 17 – 1:30 p.m.

RAINBOWS OF HOPE– St. Joseph

Marie Yeager Cancer Center

.December 8 – 5:30 p.m.

January 12 – 5:30 p.m.

BEST OFFER WILL BUY – Cable Nelson Spinnet Piano, medium oak color with bench included. Proceeds will benefit BCCS. Phone 269-429-3281 for information.

DATES TO REMEMBER IN DECEMBER

- December 1 – Special Kids Day
- December 2 – National Mutt Day
- December 4 – National Cookie Day
- December 5 – AFL-CIO Day
- December 7 - Pearl Harbor Day
- December 10 – Human Rights Day
- December 14 – Monkey Day
- December 15 – Cat Herders Day
- December 16 – Underdog Day
- December 21 – World Peace
- December 24 – Christmas Eve
- December 25 – Christmas Day
- December 26 – National Whiners Day
- December 31 – New Years Eve

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.

Thank you!

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 _____

Thank you for your generosity!

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

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
STEVENSVILLE, MI
PERMIT NO. 129

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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Nancy Church, R.N.	Carrie Klint, R.N.

OFFICE STAFF:

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

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

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

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 Rd.

St. Joseph, MI 49085

Phone: (269) 556-7114

OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP

2nd Tuesday 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

3rd Tuesday of each month – 6:30 p.m.

Trinity Center

619 Main Street (use Main entrance)

St. Joseph, MI 49085

Phone: (800) 465-5244