

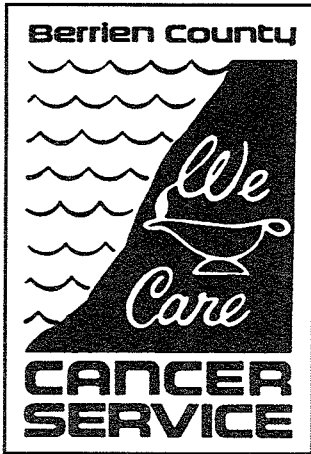
BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE NEWSLETTER

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.



February 2011

(269) 429-3281

VOLUME XX ISSUE II

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.

Life's Little Gifts

Sometimes life brings a lamp of gold
And puts it in our hands to hold,
Sometimes she brings a step toward fame
And leaves it somewhere near our name.

Sometimes she brings true love to share
With someone who was waiting there,
Sometimes she brings strength anew
To finish tasks that we must do.

But the greatest of gifts she brings
Is a heart within that always sings,
No matter what its fate may be
A heart that's glad, a heart that's free.

A heart that knows if raindrops fall
The marigold will then grow tall,
A heart that takes what comes each day
And makes the most of it some way.

Content to feel a higher power
Rules over every single hour,
A heart that knows as time goes by
It must not ask just how or why.

When life walks swiftly by its doors.
And gives a fellow traveler more,
A heart that knows some good shall come
Not as it seems to come to some,
But slowly surely from above
In God's own time by his own love.

Mrs. David Covington



what matters.™

Cancer Support Group for Caregivers

Posted in Health on November 8th, 2010

Cancer is a harsh and terrible disease for both the person diagnosed and his/her family members. Apart from being a life-changing experience for the patient, caregivers also need help going through this hard time. Cancer support can be of fantastic help, both the one found online and its real life counterpart. Sharing your experience with other people that are going through the same thing can provide comfort and relieve stress.

Cancer Support Groups

Just like patients, caregivers also need cancer support groups to share situations that they're going through daily. Talking about these issues with people that know and have had the same experience can help a caregiver cope with pain and mixed emotions. Moreover, it's not a simple thing to support cancer patients and help them if you don't know what to expect. By being part of a group, a caregiver will be able to learn from others' experiences and will not panic in various situations. Also, people who know what to expect will react differently and be cooler, as well as be prepared to cope with certain events before they even happen.

At a certain point any caregiver resents the burden that comes with the responsibility of care giving and sometimes some might even start fearing the things they will have to do in the future to support cancer patients. Support groups will help you overcome this dread and it will also give you the opportunity to help others. You can guide another caregiver through the process once you've experienced it yourself and help him/her become a better caregiver than you were at that time.

Support Cancer Patient by Dealing with your Emotions

If a caregiver wants to give the best care possible and support cancer diagnosed patients and their friends/family members, the first thing that he/she should do is deal with his/her emotions. Although a caregiver feels that he/she is doing the right thing by helping the ill person, sometimes this feeling of satisfaction will be accompanied by frustration, resentment and even helplessness. These emotions are absolutely normal and the only thing to do is accept them and gain more strength to support cancer patients.

Before these feelings overwhelm the caregiver, it's best that he/she joins a cancer support group and hear other group member's tales. It's also indicated to step up and share your own tale in this friendly and familiar environment.

How to Join a Support Group

If you are trying to find that nurturing environment provided by a support group for cancer caregivers then you should look around the World Wide Web and join online groups. People that are busy might feel like they don't have enough time to attend support group meetings, so for these individuals the online solution is the best one there is. For others that not only want to make some new friends but also be a part of a group, then it's advisable to question social workers, doctors or even nurses for cancer support groups in their local area.

Who Are the Caregivers

Are you taking care of a loved one with cancer? You are not alone. More than 1.3 million cases of cancer are diagnosed each year. Studies suggest that at least 50 percent of those diagnosed with cancer will be cared for by someone in their immediate family.

Who are the cancer caregivers?

- 82 percent are female
- 71 percent are married
- 61 percent have been providing care for less than six months
- 54 percent live with the patient for whom they are caring
- 47 percent are more than 50 years old
- 36 percent reported care giving took more than 40 hours of time per week

A Day in the Life of a Cancer Caregiver

What don't you do? As a cancer caregiver, you spend your days preparing meals, cleaning, providing transportation, talking to health care providers, administering medication, and making sure their loved one gets everything they need. Cancer caregivers find the time to do it all...everything but take care of themselves.

Consequences of Cancer Caregiving

The Journal of Family Nursing study detailed the impact of providing care on cancer caregivers' physical, emotional, and financial health. The results are staggering, and indicate that the caregiver needs to take care of himself or herself.

Physical

- 70 percent reported taking between 1 and 10 medications per day
- 62 percent said their own health had suffered as a result of caregiving
- 25 percent reported having significant physical limitations of their own

Emotional

- 85 percent reported that they resented having to provide care
- 70 percent said their families were not working well together
- 54 percent visited friends and family less since assuming their caregiving role
- 35 percent said they were overwhelmed by their caregiving role
- 97 percent said their roles were important
- 81 percent stated that they wanted to provide care and could not live with themselves if they did not assume caregiving responsibilities

Financial

- 46 percent reported inadequate financial resources
- Caregivers frequently missed as many workdays as those patients for whom they were caring, according to a survey conducted by the Fatigue Coalition (a multidisciplinary group of medical practitioners, researchers and Patient advocates).

The Benefits of Caregiver Support Systems

Evidence shows that community-based education and support for caregivers may help relieve the stresses associated with providing care for a loved one with cancer.

In fact, caregivers who participated in, and evaluated the University of Pennsylvania program, reported significant increases in the degree to which they felt informed about and confident in their ability to provide care.

If you are a caregiver of a loved one with cancer, be sure to care for yourself. You are too important to suffer stress-related illness.

September 7, 2007

I am a caregiver for my mother-in-law, who was just diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and my father-in-law who has dementia. Even though there are other family members involved, I am the one who deals with their medical care and makes the decisions. I feel a lot of responsibility and pressure. My mother-in-law has been ill since Oct. and even though they ran all kinds of tests, she wasn't diagnosed until this month. I feel as though I failed somehow. Today she asked me how bad the situation is and I explained it to her. One of the hardest things I have ever had to do. Right now I feel sad because I don't have anyone to talk to. I try to stay strong for the rest of them as it is their mother we're talking about. My husband is very caring and gets the burden off of me when he sees I need a break. But he is having a hard time with this too and I want to comfort him. I don't feel it's fair to put my thoughts, fears and sadness on them. Thanks for giving me a place to do that.

Cancer doesn't come with a manual

June 11, 2007

People say that babies don't come with a manual; it is learn as you go. And, I am finding, that is also true of cancer. I am not new to "care-giving". Every decent person who has been a parent, spouse, child or sibling in a family has, at some time, sacrificed their own desires for the needs of loved ones.

When we have a baby, we don't get a "manual", but we usually get at least 9 months to mentally and physically prepare for the changes. And, it is a positive experience, though time and recourse intensive.

Nothing that I have ever done in my life could have prepared me for the "kick in the stomach" feeling that my husband and I both felt when the colon cancer was first diagnosed a month ago. Since then, it has been one disappointing test result after another. Surgery has been scheduled and canceled; Radiation and Chemo have been scheduled and canceled. Today, a month and three days later, we are finally getting his first treatment, a combination of folfox and avistan, that the Oncologist has told us he has a 70% chance of reducing or eliminating the tumors and cancer cells, albeit with a high risk of recurrence.

Dennis was symptom free when he had his first colonoscopy. In hindsight, I know we overlooked some things....he had become increasingly tired and sleeping during the day....but we thought it was "out-of-shape" -- and vowed to go to the gym. He was having intermittent pains in his upper abdomen...at one time I suggested he get his gall bladder checked. But we had no idea this could be cancer. Bowel problems seemed a "part of aging" too, as there was not at that time, any bleeding.

I am overwhelmed, with sadness, responsibility, concern for my husband's comfort, fear of the known and the unknown, and my own tiredness and sickness as I am a 58 year old female with my own set of health problems and a full-time job to maintain, since our insurance is through my work and we need my income.

I don't sleep much....and I am writing this at 3:25 am. Today, for Dennis, the healing starts; finally, my sweet husband will get some treatment for this disease.

Live Your Life Despite Illness

via: HealthSmart, The Doctors

Why a team approach like palliative care may be best.

You hear "palliative care" and you think "end of the road," but it's actually far from it. When you're diagnosed with a serious illness, you seek relief---from pain and from stress. You seek information--- about your condition and treatment. And you seek ways to keep living your life--- for yourself and your loved ones.

That's what palliative care is: It's a service that coordinates a team of specialists and your primary doctor, and the goal is improving your quality of life.

Palliative care is available at any time during your illness, and it can be provided along with curative treatments. It works to meet individual needs—from pain management and anxiety to spiritual and psychological needs.

If you're interested in palliative care, ask your doctor for a referral. Most insurance plans will cover all or part of the palliative care treatment received in a hospital; you also can receive palliative care at home.

In Loving Memory

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

In Memory of Catherine Appel
Joseph & Wilma Appel, Benton Harbor

In Memory of Richard O Aungst
Ronald & Marion Fritz, St Joseph

In Memory of Dave Baker
Roy Shoemaker, Benton Harbor

In Memory of Charles Bruins
James & Emma Bruin, Benton Harbor

In Memory of Johnnie Bruins Jr
James & Emma Bruin, Benton Harbor

In Memory of Mamie DiMatteo
Robert W Schultz, St Joseph

In Memory of William (Bill) Gobert
William G Miller
% Papasan-Mamasan Assoc., Berrien Springs

In Memory of Sophie Goldner
Robert C Cronk, St Joseph

In Memory of Edward Gruss
Charmain & Ronald Hanners, St Joseph

In Memory of Walter Hildebrand
Ruth Hildebrand, Stone Mountain GA

In Memory of Alma Hildebrand
Ruth Hildebrand, Stone Mountain GA

In Memory of June & Don Kemeny
Pat Macias, Chico CA

In Memory of Marvin Kraft
Therese Kraft-Moore, Lewisburg TN

In Memory of John Kuss
Ofilia A Kuss, Sodus

In Memory of Lynda Lou Lowry
Irma D Reed, Niles

In Memory of Marilyn Norris
Douglas & Jacqueline Tiefenbach, Stevensville

In Memory of Leroy Russell
Rudy & Dorothy Koshar, St Joseph

In Memory of Vivian Schiek
Hannah Noble, Three Oaks

In Memory of Claudia Strefling
Roberta Warnke, Buchanan

In Memory of Gerald L "Red" Swears
Joseph B Kovar, St Joseph
Richard & Dee Potter, New London CT

In Memory of Bernice Wagner
Rich & Jann Hedbert, Shelby Township
Joyce Kretchman % siblings:
Karen, Kurt, Kendra, Kolette, Kim, St Joseph
Janice & William Lange, St Joseph
Ronald & Arline Zehnder, Ypsilanti

In Memory of Michael Welihan
Ann L Welihan, 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

During December, 2010, donations were made by and in honor of the following people:

In Honor of Dr. Keith Bailey

Julia Szabo, Watervliet

In Honor of Nancy Hauch

Debbie McCartney, Sodus

In Honor of Michael Moore

Charmain & Ronald Hanners, St Joseph

In Honor of Jean Rakauski

Debbie McCartney, Sodus

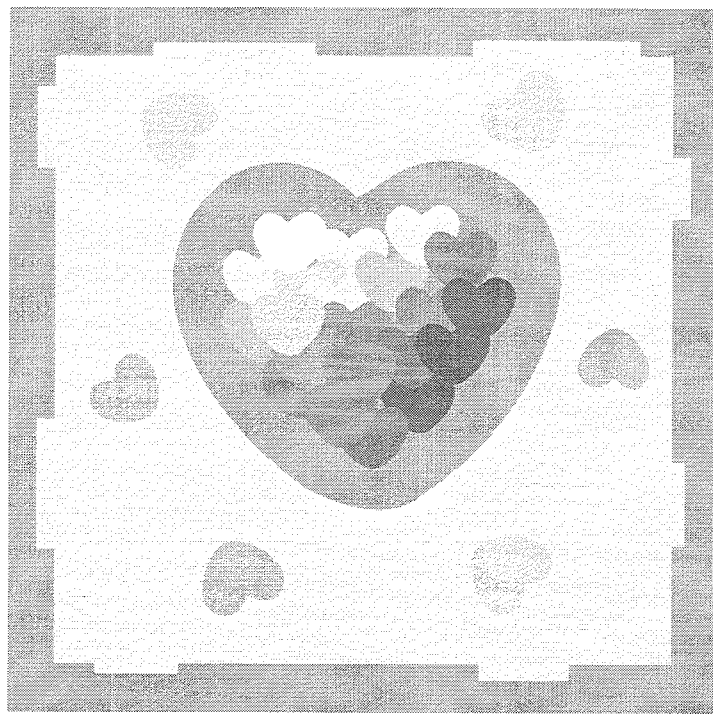
In Honor of James Ruhoff

Vance & Betsy VanderBurg, Niles

In Honor of Denise Starks

Bob & Carol Starks, St Joseph

Happy Valentines Day!



Looking Ahead

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

February 1 & 15 – 1:30 p.m.

March 1 & 15 – 1:30 p.m.

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Niles

February 8 & 22 – 1:30 p.m.

March 8 & 22 – 1:30 p.m.

UOA SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

February 22 – 1:30 p.m.

March 22 – 1:30 p.m.

RAINBOWS OF HOPE – Stevensville

February 10 – 5:30 p.m.

March 10 – 5:30 p.m.

PENNIES FOR PATIENTS™

Thursday - May 5, 2011

BCCS BIKE RIDE

Sunday – June 26, 2011

HELP, HOPE, BELIEVE

DATES TO REMEMBER IN FEBRUARY

February, 1 – Spunky Old Broads Day

February, 2 – Ground Hogs Day

February, 3 – Chinese New Year

February, 4 – World Cancer Day

February, 5 - Ice Crème for Breakfast Day

February, 6 - Super Bowl XLV

February, 9 – Stop Bullying Day

February, 11 – National Shut-in Visitation Day

February 12, - Lincoln's Birthday

February, 14 – Valentine's Day

February, 19 – Chocolate Mint Day

February, 21 – President's Day

February, 22 – George Washington's Birthday

February, 28 – National Tooth Fairy 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 _____

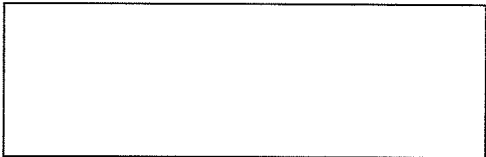
How would you like the card to be signed?

Thank you for your generosity!

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
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Connie Demler, R.N. Nancy Church, R.N. JoAnn Pullen-Bruni, R.N. Susan Lerke, R.N. Carrie Klint, R.N.

OFFICE STAFF: Kathy Karnik (Office Manager) Claudia Brister 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 – Stevensville Office
2nd 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 CAFÉ
1st Wednesday of each month
First United Methodist Church
132 S. Oak Street
Buchanan, MI 49107
Phone: (269) 695-2706

MAN TO MAN – Prostate Support Group
3rd Tuesday of each month – 6:00 p.m.
Trinity Center
619 Main Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (800) 227-2345