



**GOSHEN
CENTER FOR CANCER CARE**

200 High Park Avenue, Goshen, Indiana 46526

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The Link for Hope

A newsletter of the Goshen Cancer Survivors Network March 2009

photo by Tony McNair, surviving spouse



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Get it done! by Jim Illes

"Jim, you have prostate cancer." I was going 70 down the highway when I heard those words and they hit me like a ton of bricks. I immediately went into denial. Then I started doing a lot of on-line research and denial quickly turned into fear. Much of the information I read on-line sounded like horror stories. Then I talked to Dr. Avallone at Goshen Center for Cancer Care and my fears were put to rest. He spent two hours with me, telling me what to expect before, during and after surgery. Once I made the decision to have Dr. Avallone perform my surgery, I just wanted to get in and get it done! I underwent a very successful robotic surgery in November of last year and although I still can't lift much weight or shovel snow, I'm well into my recovery process. I'll admit, though, every sensation is different after prostate surgery. Not bad, just different. It's been three months since surgery and I'm back to enjoying my life, my wife and most of all, I'm finally sleeping through the night without those extra trips to the bathroom! ■



Jim welcomes phone calls from other men struggling with their decision about prostate cancer treatment.

SAVE THE DATE
True Celebration
May 17, 2009
Speaker: Peggy Fleming

From Cleveland to Goshen: a Massive Miracle

by Darlene Hochstetler

The day my heart fell to the floor and rolled out of sight was July 22, 1999.

Al and I were at the Cleveland Clinic awaiting my test results. For the past several months, I had been experiencing strange sensations starting in my head and rippling through my body. Just briefly, colors became muted and sounds were muffled. I tried to ignore them but it was time to face the truth.

“You have a massive mass on your brain.” Those words sounded like a death sentence. Two weeks later I had surgery to remove that massive mass. I was so disappointed to learn they were unable to get the entire tumor because it was too close to my brain stem. I had another disappointment shortly after



Darlene and Al with granddaughter Hannah

returning home. I became that one person in 100 who develops an infection after surgery. I immediately went back to Cleveland for another surgery, and a third just a few months later. My faith rarely wavers, but I began to doubt. Was God with me? Was He taking care of me? I tried to keep my sense of humor in tact,

though. Before my third surgery, I asked the doctor to please not shave so much of my hair. I reminded him of the last time when he gave me a four lane highway and asked, this time, if he could just keep it to a little country path!

Once the tumor started growing again, I spent a year on oral chemotherapy. When that failed, my doctor recommended chemo and radiation but suggested I get the treatment closer to home. After researching all of the cancer centers in this area, he recommended the Goshen Center for Cancer Care. Although it was convenient, I wondered how I'd be treated. I had been so blessed with wonderful doctors and nurses in Cleveland and felt sure I'd never find that anywhere else. I was wrong. Dr. Wheeler, Rita Gingrich, my nurse Sara and everyone else couldn't have been nicer. They talked and prayed with us, helping ease our fears.

Dr. Wheeler explained TomoTherapy and how it should hit the tumor hard and make it sit dormant for a while. I wanted that tumor dead, not dormant. My faith in Dr. Wheeler opened my mind to the procedure, though. My first treatment was at the end of November 2007 and I finished the last one on January 14, 2008. During the past year, I have had several MRIs and the results have been nothing short of a miracle. The tumor is now gone. All that can be seen at the surgery site is an indentation, which will always be there. Well, let me clarify—all that can be seen, other than my brain, is the indentation!

As for my doctors, my family and I, we believe in miracles. I'm living proof. Never again will I put life on hold. I trust God and live each today knowing that He'll take care of all the tomorrows. ■

getting a good night's SLEEP



According to Kristan Rheinheimer, nurse practitioner at the Goshen Center for Cancer Care, insomnia is a common side effect of cancer that affects nearly half of all cancer patients. While lack of sleep or poor quality of sleep are strongly associated with fatigue and a reduced quality of life, Rheinheimer says most cancer survivors rarely address the issue with their doctor.

Those who suffer from insomnia may experience difficulty getting to sleep, frequent awakenings, or early morning awakenings. Cancer survivors are more likely to experience insomnia due to physical illness, pain, hospitalization, drugs and the psychological impact of having cancer.

There are many different types of insomnia:

Acute or situational insomnia: occurs during traumatic events or impending deadlines and typically lasts less than four weeks. It is likely to disappear when the cause is eliminated.

Chronic insomnia: defined as inadequate quantity or quality of life that lasts for at least a month. It often starts out as situational insomnia upon receiving the diagnosis of cancer and then progresses to a chronic state.

Marcia Pregel, naturopathic physician at the Goshen Center for Cancer Care says “developing and maintaining good sleep hygiene is often the best way to treat insomnia.”

Try the following to get a good night's sleep:

- Eliminate caffeine, nicotine and alcohol.
- Eat regularly scheduled meals and avoid heavy, late-night snacks.
- Limit evening fluids to a glass of warm milk or chamomile tea before bedtime.
- Exercise regularly during early morning or late afternoon.
- Take a hot bath before bedtime.
- Try essential oils and botanical and hormonal supplements.
- Use guided imagery to create safe and calm feelings.
- Use progressive relaxation to help release muscular tension.
- Meditate to clear the mind of excessive worry.
- Take deep breaths, sigh and yawn to prompt relaxation.
- Sleep in a dark, cool room.
- Maintain regular sleep and wake times, even on weekends.
- Limit time spent in bed to approximately eight hours.
- Use the bedroom for sleep only. Do not read, watch television or eat in bed.
- Avoid daytime naps. If necessary, nap in early afternoon for no longer than 30 minutes. ■

Events & Education

Spring 2009

Lunch & Learn – New!

Employment rights of the cancer survivor
February 26, noon - 1 p.m.
Arbor Conference Center
Goshen General Hospital
Dean Leazenby, Warrick & Boyn Attorneys
Free light lunch, reservations:
574.535.2922

Workshop: Someone I Love Has Cancer

Helping children deal with cancer
in the family
March 18, 4 - 6 p.m.
Arbor Conference Center
Goshen General Hospital
Free, reservations: 1.888.492.4673 - Rita

Lilly Oncology on Canvas Art Exhibition

April 14-16
Hospital lobby – open to the public

Healing Through the Arts Speaker

April 14, 7 p.m.
Arbor Conference Center
Goshen General Hospital
Free, reservations: 574.535.2922

Spring Session: Living with Cancer Support Groups

Tuesdays, April 14 - June 16,
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Free, information: 1.888.492.4673 – Rita

True Celebration:

Join us for our annual cancer
survivor celebration
Speaker: Peggy Fleming
Save the Date: May 17
Watch for more information

After Thanksgiving, daffodil bulbs were planted in the infusion garden in memory of Ann McNair who passed away May 9, 2008 from melanoma. The McNair family had previously planted a tree by the canal bridge in her memory.

More than 150 yellow daffodil bulbs were transplanted from Ann's garden at her former home in Grabill where thousands of daffodils bloom every spring. Yellow daffodils, which were Ann's favorite flower, are the traditional cancer flower.

The survivor network is hoping to plant additional daffodils in the future, as they are a sign of hope for all cancer patients. Several groups of pink daffodils were also planted as a tribute to the courage of breast cancer survivors.

Anyone interested in creating a memorial for their loved one may contact Sandra Carbone, survivor network coordinator. ■



From left - Sarah McNair Vosmeier, daughter of Ann McNair (deceased), Sandra Carbone Survivor Network Coordinator, Granddaughters: Rachel McNair, Annabelle Vosmeier, Emily McNair and surviving husband Tony McNair.

Healing through the arts... April 14

Join us at the Arbor Conference Center for a welcome reception on April 14 at 7 p.m. to celebrate the arrival of the Lilly Oncology on Canvas: Expressions of a Cancer Journey. The evening will include classical piano selections, refreshments and a cancer survivor speaker at 7:30 p.m. Brought to Goshen Health System as part of National Cancer Registry Week, the biennial

competition is a collection of juried art pieces on a world tour. This reception will also be open to the public. The collection will be at Goshen General Hospital from April 14 -16 for the general public at no cost. ■

Lilly Oncology on Canvas:
Expressions of a Cancer Journey.
April 14-16
Main Lobby, Goshen General Hospital



Coordinator's Corner

Hello everyone! In this issue I ask for your cooperation with something very important: the cancer registry. The registry collects data about your diagnosis and treatment which allows us to compare our outcomes with regional, state and national statistics. Pat Gregory and Wendy Manchester are our cancer registrars who collect, manage, analyze and report the cancer data for Goshen Health System. These two extra-ordinary ladies compile cancer data, maintain follow-up with thousands of cancer survivors, keep us on track for Commission on Cancer accreditation and manage our name and address database. It is one BIG job and I am glad they are doing it instead of me!

If you should receive a follow-up letter from the cancer registry, please take a moment to fill it out and return it. We assure you that your information is kept confidential. Also, if you have moved, or if a loved one has died, the registry is the place to call at 574.535.2586. Thank you for your help.

*Looking forward to blooming daffodils,
Sandy*

CONTACT INFO

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