

VOICES OF THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Great Lakes Division, Inc.



Sharing Stories of Hope, Progress, and Answers Across Michigan and Indiana

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800.ACS.2345
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• community focus

Road to Recovery recruits new volunteers to help meet patients' transportation needs, more needed



A major goal of the American Cancer Society is to meet the needs of cancer patients, including finding rides to treatment.

Sometimes a cancer patient will live alone with no family or friends to drive them, or no one will be available to take them to a particular appointment. In all cases, cancer patients may be feeling side effects of their treatment after an appointment and need someone to help them back home. This is where the Society's Road to Recovery program steps in.

Road to Recovery is a program that matches volunteer drivers with cancer patients who need rides to and from their treatments. It is one of our patient services programs to improve their

quality of life. And since there are people in any given area that have cancer and need rides, there is always a need for volunteer drivers.

To find more volunteers, the Great Lakes Division had a Road to Recovery volunteer recruitment campaign from September 1-December 31, 2005. Staff worked together to get articles published in local newspapers, write Letters to the Editor, get pro-bono advertisements published, put up billboards, do talk radio shows, hand out flyers, partner with the AARP, and more to try to find more people willing to help.

Whitley County, Indiana, a rural area near Fort Wayne, participated in this campaign. When they started, they had 7 drivers. Now, because of the campaign, they have 17 drivers that are trained and ready to help, but more volunteers are always needed.

Experienced Road to Recovery drivers will tell you it's a worthwhile cause. Gail Martin (shown at left), from Columbia City, Indiana, joined 13 years ago. "I would tell people that I think it's a worthwhile service and it gives you a good feeling to be able to help," he says.

Mary Cornmesser, also from Columbia City in Indiana, is another volunteer. She is a retired nurse who has noticed other benefits from volunteering in addition to helping the patients. "I've met people who I would never have contact with before," she says.

If you would like to join the Road to Recovery efforts in your area, please call 1-800-ACS-2345 to get connected to your local American Cancer Society area service center.

Local networking connects community with Relay For Life, builds Society relationships

The American Cancer Society is always looking for people to make new relationships with in the community. Tamara Rummel, area executive director of the Huron Valley Area Service Center which serves Livingston, Monroe, and Washtenaw counties in Michigan, and her staff were looking for ways to do this in her area. She identified a community group called Leadership Ann Arbor, a Chamber of Commerce association devoted to developing leadership in the community.

The group broke into teams that were looking for community projects ideas. One team chose to work with Tamara and her staff on a project to raise

awareness about the Society, particularly Relay For Life. Relay For Life is a 24 hour Society event that raises community awareness, and community dollars, to help fight cancer.



They decided to put on a breakfast and enlist the help of their fellow Leadership Ann Arbor members to invite friends and family. Two team members, Jeff

Wilkins of DTE Energy Services and Lisa Dodge of Cleary University, made compelling speeches about their personal cancer experiences to inspire other members to join them.

"One of the gripping questions is when you ask how many folks have been touched by cancer," says Jeff as he recalls how everyone in the room raised their hand. It was a powerful moment that showed the need for the American Cancer Society, an organization so relevant because everyone is able to connect to the cancer issue.

• survivorship and patient services

Indiana survivor encourages all to use Society resources

Shirley Mullen of Clinton County, Indiana, was working in a doctor's office when she was diagnosed with breast cancer in the beginning of March, 2004. Within a week, she remembered TV advertisements and called 1-800-ACS-2345, the toll free number of the American Cancer Society.

"They were really supportive," she says of the call center's employees. "I vented a little about being in such a shock and they gave me the address and telephone number of the local American Cancer Society office and told me about programs like Look Good, Feel Better." Look Good, Feel Better is a program that gives female cancer patients wigs, makeup, and beauty tips to keep them feeling beautiful throughout their cancer treatments.



Then, she went on the website, www.cancer.org, because she knew she could read about cancer at her own pace and find information on support and breast cancer treatment options. She also visited Dawn Clinkenbeard, her local American Cancer Society quality of life director, who was able to help her find financial resources to pay rent, a gift certificate to get a wig, and books to read.

Shirley finished chemotherapy and radiation by November of 2004, and was cancer free. Since then, she signed up to become a volunteer with Reach to Recovery, a Society program that matches female cancer survivors with female cancer patients to give them encouragement and show them that they too can beat the disease.

Shirley wants to encourage anyone who may be hesitant to ask for information from the American Cancer Society to take the plunge, dial the number, or go online. "Even though you're scared," she says, "it's something you need to face. From my own experience the people [at the call center] were nice and primed and took time to explain things to you. For me, knowledge is power and the more you know about something, the more you feel better about it."

And the website? "Get on! It's very informative, it's easy to navigate around, even for someone who's not very computer savvy. It's very straightforward, it was easy. They have survivor stories so you can say, 'OK, they've been in my shoes and I'll get through it too, they know what I'm going through.'"

Remember, no matter who you are, we can help. Please take advantage of our 800 number and website, and encourage your family or friends to do the same.

• community focus (cont'd)

Local networking connects community with Relay For Life, builds Society relationships (cont'd from page 2)

In addition to raising awareness, the goal of the breakfast was to inspire people to get involved. Society staff put together a program to educate attendees about our research program, advocacy efforts, patient services information, a history of Relay For Life, a video scrapbook from last year's Relay For Life of Ann Arbor, survivor and caregiver speakers, and a mini-luminara ceremony similar to those held at actual Relay events. At that time, attendees were asked to light a small

candle and reflect on why they would have a passion for Relay.

The breakfast successfully built meaningful, long lasting relationships that will help to serve the Society's mission for years to come. A new Relay For Life of Ann Arbor chairperson and two new vice chair volunteers signed on to the committee for the next two years. Relay teams are forming on an ongoing basis, and the Society office found a new

\$1,000 sponsor for a Wall of Hope banner, which will be part of a major Society advocacy effort in September on the mall of Washington DC.

The Great Lakes Division wants to continue to reach out to more communities to share our lifesaving messages and cancer-eliminating mission, and we also invite everyone to come to us for help. "If you ever need the American Cancer Society," says Tamara, "please reach out to us."

Celebrating 60 years of progress through the Society's research program



The American Cancer Society's research program is celebrating our 60th anniversary this year! Since the beginning in 1946, we have funded promising,

and often groundbreaking, studies to pursue our mission of preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer.

We have contributed about \$3 billion dollars to our research program, the largest private, nonprofit source of funding in America for cancer researchers. As of January 1, 2006, \$10,753,000 were given to researchers in Indiana for current grants and \$12,059,144 were put to work in Michigan. Presently, the Great Lakes Division has 40 grants, totaling \$22,812,144.

The Great Lakes Division's research dollars are funding grants for local researchers such as Ignacio Camarillo, PhD, (shown above) of Purdue University, and his

team. They are studying the relationship between obesity and increased breast cancer risk and morbidity.

They hope to determine how fat cells cause cancerous tumors in the breast to develop and allow the disease to spread in the body. A better understanding of how fat cells interact with tumor cells will lead to new treatment options. This grant, specifically for junior faculty, is giving Ignacio the chance to gain new knowledge and pursue additional grant dollars in the future.

"It's very tough to get new and innovative research started," says Ignacio. "That's why this grant is so important to me. It enables us to develop a novel model of obesity and incorporate cutting-edge technologies into our research. Without it we would not be able to create the foundation of knowledge necessary to carry forward an area of study that holds great promise."

Giving grants to promising new investigators is an important part of our

research program. "Virtually every major development in cancer research in the last half century can point to a Society-funded researcher who played a key role along the way, with most of those investigators getting Society support early in their careers when funding is particularly difficult to get," says John J. Stevens, MD, American Cancer Society vice president of extramural grants.

Our research achievements have had nationwide impact on the medical community. We changed global views for acceptance of the Pap smear for cervical cancer detection, found the link between smoking and cancer, conducted the first successful chemotherapy treatment, and discovered the first gene mutation in DNA linked to cancer.

Sixty years ago, only one out of three Americans were still alive five years after their diagnosis. Today, two out of three cancer patients can expect to live through their next five years and longer.

local area spotlight

Spotlight on the Lakeshore Area Service Center: Reaching out to migrant workers

The American Cancer Society, Great Lakes Division, has 21 area service centers to reach out to all communities throughout Michigan and Indiana. Each month, we will spotlight one to introduce you to the work that the Society is doing in different communities.

This month's spotlight is on the Lakeshore Area Service Center, which works in Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, and Ottawa counties. This includes Holland, Michigan, where many Hispanic migrant workers come for the summer to work on the area's farms.

It is important that the Society strives to help low income groups who have inadequate health care, like the migrant workers, because they have a higher risk of dying from cancer. They often don't get the screenings they need to catch their cancer early and survive.

Kim Wernstrom, quality of life director at the Lakeshore Area Service Center, knew that the migrant women had no access to health care. "Every free moment that they have is spent working and it's very hard," Kim explains.



She worked with staff from the Lakeshore Alliance Against Domestic and Sexual Violence's DELTA project in 2004 to think of ways to reach these women. They organized The Women's Health Fair to treat the women to manicures, pedicures, facials, and child care services, as well as important health care information. The Society provided transportation to the fair and asked the women individually if they would like to come.

Continued on bottom of page 4

First recorded drop of cancer deaths in U.S. credited to lifesaving screenings

For the first time ever in recorded history, there has been a drop in the number of Americans dying from cancer! This exciting news was recently published in the 2006 edition of the Society's *Cancer Facts and Figures*. The report shows that 369 fewer people died from cancer in 2003 than they did in 2002.



One of the reasons for this drop is that more people know and understand the importance of the Society's cancer screening guidelines, so they are catching their cancer early before it becomes a terminal diagnosis.

"It's important to follow the guidelines because it really helps you with early detection," says Bernadette Darns-Jackson (shown above right) of Southfield, Michigan. "Early detection, for me, is the key to being a survivor." Bernadette found her cancer early with a mammogram and survived. She has been cancer free for over three years.

Gwen Traylor (shown below right) from Detroit, Michigan, also wants everyone to

know the importance of following the Society's screening guidelines. "I probably wouldn't even be here had I not taken the steps to do what I needed to do to take care of my health," admits Gwen who was also diagnosed with breast cancer after seeing her doctor.

Sometimes the fear of a cancer diagnosis stops a person from scheduling screening appointments, but to Gwen that is backwards thinking: "I would be afraid not to know. If there's gonna be fear, have the fear of not knowing. It can save your life! If you don't want to do it for you, do it for your loved ones! They want you here!"

"Cancer knows no race, creed, color, or age. Cancer is just cancer and it can affect anyone," she says. "Go get your checkups! Take charge of your life, it's yours!"

The cancer mortality rate has been dropping by about one percent since the early 1990s. A mortality rate is different than the actual number of cancer deaths

because the rate takes into account how many people are in the area so that numbers can be compared from place to place, or year to year.

A drop in mortality rates is good news, but less Americans dying from cancer is a milestone. Americans are living longer, so more people have cancer because it is a disease that you have a higher risk of getting as you age. The American population is also growing. With more people in the population that are at high risk for cancer and more people in general, we would expect the number of people dying from cancer would increase. But it didn't--it dropped! And that's why this finding is so significant.



Help us work towards maintaining this drop in cancer deaths. Read the American Cancer Society's screening guidelines and take a proactive approach to your health. You can also visit the Society's Dr. Len's Cancer Blog, or online journal, at www.cancer.org/drlen to read more about our drop in cancer deaths and other cancer topics.

• local area spotlight (cont'd)

Spotlight on the Lakeshore Area Service Center: Reaching out to migrant workers (cont'd from page 4)

At the fair, the women talked with representatives from hospitals and community organizations. Among the organizations was the Society, armed with bilingual hand-outs and Spanish-speaking volunteers. The key objective of our presence was to ask women to sign up for a free mammogram through the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program, or BCCCP. Of the 120 women who attended the 2004 health fair, 38 took advantage of this resource and enrolled.

Out of these 38 women, 2 were diagnosed. The Society followed up by scheduling meetings for them to speak with encouraging bilingual cancer survivors, found resources to help pay for surgery, gave a temporary prosthesis after the surgery, and worked with them to overcome challenges of not having U.S. citizenship.

The Society continues to gain the migrant workers' trust by returning each year. In 2005, another health fair took place and the 2006 event is being planned for July,

Migrant Workers Appreciation Month. This year, Kim is teaming up with the West Michigan Migrant Council to educate the entire migrant family about cancer risks.

The Great Lakes Division is excited that the Lakeshore Area Service Center is meeting the needs of the local community. Watch for an office near you to be highlighted in an upcoming VOICES issue!

A volunteer shares how statewide advocacy efforts can have an impact

Michigan's Celebration at the State Capitol, a major American Cancer Society advocacy event, is coming up on June 13, 2006! Indiana's advocacy event is called Indiana Lobby Day, and took place on February 7, 2006 in Indianapolis. The goal is to give volunteers from around the state a chance to speak with legislators about the importance of making cancer-related issues a priority.



Deb Walworth of East Grand Rapids, Michigan, is ready to go to Celebration at the State Capitol. Cancer has always been a part of her life; her family has the BRCA 1 gene, which makes them more susceptible to getting breast or ovarian cancer. Her mom battled cancer five times while taking care of other relatives. In 2002, Deb was in the middle of a career change and working towards getting her Master's degree when her doctor told her that she had it too.

She attended last year's Celebration at the State Capitol because she knows the important role advocacy plays in getting funding for important cancer research and laws. "It's only because money was made available for research and the word was getting out for cancer screening, that's why I ended up doing OK," Deb says.

When she was in Lansing last year, she felt the energy of everyone being together for a major cause. They prepared to speak with legislators by listening to Society staff talk about the bills, hearing survivors speak, and being coached on how to tell their stories in a short and strategic way. Volunteers were given examples of what to talk about and cards to write down notes if needed. When it was time to talk with the legislators, Deb wasn't intimidated and felt well prepared.

At the event, legislators talk with the advocates within a time span of two hours

and spend about ten minutes talking with them. Some went inside to speak with the legislators, while other representatives weren't available that day, so the volunteers left notes.

Deb is glad that she went to Lansing last year and plans to go again this June. "It's worth going because, by knowing the specific issues and seeing how your representative reacts, it can give you more insight if the right people are in office. Whether they are for you or against you, they should be listening."

So far, 150 people have registered to attend the 2006 event, but we are hoping for 400 more. Indiana set the example by having nearly 400 volunteers gather in Indianapolis to support non-smoking bills and increase the tobacco tax by 50 cents. This year's Michigan issues have not yet been defined.

Visit the Celebration at the State Capitol website at <http://www.acsgld.org/micelebration> for more information and register to join us in Lansing!

Investigating Medicare Part D, the new prescription drug plan



You may have heard about Medicare Part D, a new prescription drug plan. The American Cancer Society is working hard to understand the new law and how it will impact the life of cancer

patients. This is an example of how the American Cancer Society's advocacy efforts not only include effectively organized petitions or lobbying, but also careful consideration and observation of new laws to make sure that cancer patients' needs are taken into account.

An issue that the American Cancer Society has seen so far with Medicare Part D, and any prescription drug coverage plan, is the cost for patients. Drugs can cost \$500 or more, so co-pays can add up quickly.

There is also the question of the "donut hole", the time after a deductible is paid that the patient pays for 100% of prescription drugs,

without any assistance. In Part D, the patient pays a \$250 deductible, then Part D covers 75% of the costs until the patient reaches \$2,250. When that amount is reached, the patient enters into the "donut hole" area and pays 100% of the costs until it adds up to be a total of \$5,100. At that time, Part D will cover 95% of the bill until the end of the year.

Another Society concern is making sure the public understands their right to appeal so they can be sure to get the treatment that a physician helps them decide is best.

"We are monitoring and evaluating the effects of cancer patients. We've been doing a lot of press on co-pays and "donut holes" but have not been lobbying, more sharing info and concerns," explains Christy Schmidt, who works in the National Government Relations Department for the American Cancer Society.

The Society's concerns have been brought to the attention of the Centers for Medicare and

Medicaid Services, Congress, and major media outlets like the New York Times and Washington Post. Other strategies to spread the word include articles in regional newspapers, educating Society staff, and radio tours.

"We're certainly trying to get information out to the public," says Christy. A Medicare Part D primer is located on www.cancer.org (search for Medicare Part D) to help you find more information and resources to make informed decisions about your options. The primer has a tool where you can enter in the drugs you need to see which plans cover your prescriptions. You can also visit Medicare's website, www.medicare.gov, and call the toll free number, 1-800-MEDICAR (800-633-4227) to speak with a representative.

Whenever choosing a prescription drug coverage plan, make sure you choose one that fits your needs. Always talk with your doctor and determine if your specific prescriptions are covered in the plan.

• opportunities available

Camp Catch-A-Rainbow: Male or health care professional volunteers needed for summer camps

Volunteers needed! Applications still being accepted for campers and volunteers.

Fresh air, new friends and lots of camping fun is in store for children from Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio who take part in the Camp Catch-A-Rainbow program.

The American Cancer Society Great Lakes Division, Inc. services the residents of Indiana and Michigan and offers Camp Catch-A-Rainbow (CCAR), free of charge, to enrich the lives of children between four and fifteen years old who are being treated for cancer or who are in remission from cancer. A special one-day Young Campers Program is held for children ages four to six who may not enjoy an overnight camp-out, but still want to be part of the fun.



Camp Catch-A-Rainbow provides the opportunity for children to simply have a good time and enjoy the experience of exercise, recreation, and companionship through activities paced to meet the needs of kids with cancer. Campers enjoy swimming, archery, horseback riding, high adventure ropes courses, arts and crafts, canoeing, and much more.

CCAR is held at the YMCA Storer Camps near Jackson, Michigan, and will take place June 18—23, 2006, with the Young Campers Program on June 18. The campground's massive acreage provides the perfect backdrop to enjoy nature and develop new friendships.

Camp Catch-A-Rainbow is accredited by the American Camping Association (ACA) and is licensed through the state of Michigan. The ACA accreditation

indicates that the camp is managed with the highest standards. Camp staff includes physicians and nurses 24 hours a day to monitor each child's special needs. Medical staff administer general medications, chemotherapy as needed, take blood counts and coordinate any special dietary considerations. Emergency medical services are arranged through Ingham Regional Medical Center.

The registration deadline for the 2006 summer seasons of both Camp Catch-A-Rainbow programs is May 19, 2006. Applications are processed in the order they are received and campers will be notified of their acceptance. Physician approval is required to attend. To receive an application or if you are male or a medical professional interested in volunteering, call Katie Wilson at 517-332-2222 or e-mail her a request at kathleen.wilson@cancer.org. You may also download an application by visiting www.cancer.org/camprainbow.

Young Adult Retreat

Mark Your Calendar: Young Adult Retreat needs volunteers!

Sponsored by the Great Lakes Division of the American Cancer Society, the Young Adult Retreat (YAR) is offered each summer for cancer survivors and patients between the ages of 16—20 years old. This free, four-day summer retreat offers young adults from Indiana and Michigan the opportunity to meet and hang out with others who have shared similar experiences.

The retreat will be held again this year at St. Mary's College in South Bend, Indiana, from July 6—9, 2006. Some of

the activities offered may include: swimming, miniature golf, recreational sports, card tournaments, a day trip to Chicago, shopping on Michigan Avenue, late night movies and plenty of time to relax with new friends.



YAR is supervised by medical and non-medical volunteers who participate in all day and evening activities and provide care. The entire group will stay at St. Mary's College for a fun dorm experience.

The registration deadline for the 2006 summer session is May 19, 2006. To receive an application or if you are male or a medical professional interested in volunteering, call Katie Wilson at 517-332-2222 or e-mail her a request at kathleen.wilson@cancer.org. You may also download an application by visiting www.cancer.org/retreat.