

VOICES OF THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Great Lakes Division, Inc.



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

v.11, August 2007

LOCAL AREA SPOTLIGHT

The West Michigan Area Service Center is reaching out to the Latino community. Read their story in the local area spotlight.

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OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

The American Cancer Society Tell A Friend program is designed to help increase breast cancer screening and early detection through regular mammograms. Trained volunteer callers contact five friends or acquaintances to encourage them to get their yearly mammogram.

For more information about becoming a Tell A Friend volunteer or enlisting your organization as a Tell A Friend partner, contact your American Cancer Society toll-free at 1-800-ACS-2345.

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

The Great American Eat Right Challenge takes place August 16. Find out what you can do to reduce your cancer risk in this month's resource highlight.

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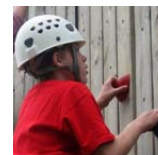
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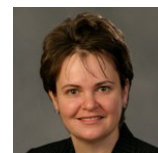
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ACS research program funds ovarian cancer researcher in Indiana

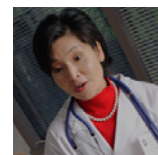
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community focus and volunteerism

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Relay offers everyone a way to get involved

As the signature event of the American Cancer Society, Relay For Life is about a community coming together in the fight against cancer. For LaGrange County, Indiana, this meant making sure every community member had a chance to take part.

A Special Needs Relay was held in March for disabled students. Approximately 200 kids took part in the event, raising more than \$1,000 while enjoying games and a lunchtime luminaria ceremony.

“It was a pretty neat event and just one more way LaGrange County tries to be inclusive,” said Marty Kiskaden, ACS community representative.

LaGrange County’s main Relay kicked off in June with a “Prelay” live auction. “We really wanted to get the Amish community involved and let them know the American Cancer Society was there for them too,” explained Suzanne Priestley, mission delivery specialist and chairman of the event.

The Amish donated a variety of items, such as handmade quilts. The auction



raised more than \$10,000 while giving the Amish, who make up one-third of the county’s population, a chance to participate.

The community outreach continued when Sue Keenan, a physical education teacher at Lakeland High School, came up with the idea to invite her classmates, the class of 1967, to the Relay For Life for their 40th reunion. “I began to get responses back from survivors in my class who thought it was a good idea,” said Sue. “Out of 119 kids in my graduating class, we had 45 come back.”

To spark student involvement, Marty came up with the idea of Relay letter jackets. Each student had to raise \$500 to earn a Relay For Life foot emblem. Next year’s letter will be a Relay For Life ribbon and the third letter will be a round ACS logo patch. The jackets were a success, with a dozen students from the three high schools in the county earning a foot.

“If it wasn’t for the students participating, I don’t think our Relay would be nearly as productive,” said Sue, who is in charge of the nearly 30 student teams at Lakeland High School.

The county’s award-winning mission delivery committee is dedicated to educating the community about the programs and services offered by the American Cancer Society. A rally was



held to increase awareness about Road to Recovery, which provides transportation for cancer patients to their treatments. Onsite hair donations were made possible and the Look Good...Feel Better program, which teaches female cancer patients beauty techniques to help restore their appearance and self-image during treatment, was highlighted during the event.

“It’s really important to me to know that we are making a difference in our area so people know exactly what the ACS has to offer, not only for the patient, but for their family,” said Suzanne.

Relay For Life brings together people from all walks of life with the common goal of eliminating cancer. No matter who you are, there’s a place for you at Relay. Call us toll-free at 1-800-ACS-2345 to find a Relay For Life near you.

Pictured: Auctioning items during the Prelay (bottom left); Counting donations (above right).

• local area spotlight

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West Michigan Area Service Center reaches out to Latino community

As part of our 2015 goals, the American Cancer Society is working towards the goal of eliminating disparities in cancer morbidity and mortality through advocacy, research, education, and service.

The Great Lakes Division is taking up this initiative to address disparate communities and fill the need for cancer information for all populations. In the West Michigan Area Service Center, Mike Lindhout, area executive director, and Maria Mora, community program coordinator, are addressing the needs of the Latino community in the Grand Rapids area.

“I knew from discussions I have had with friends who are part of the community and with other organizations that people were having difficulty reaching out because of the language barrier,” said Mike. As fluent Spanish speakers, Mike and Maria are able to communicate more effectively with the Latino community.

They have partnered with existing health organizations in the community to reach more people about the free services and programs the Society offers. Mike was invited to speak on a local Spanish language radio station, and this led to an invitation to display information and speak at the Grand Rapids’ Children’s Day festival.

“People were really honestly surprised that we weren’t there about getting money, we weren’t there to fundraise, we weren’t there with our hands out – we were there to let them know what we could offer them,” recalled Mike.

Mike and Maria were also invited to *Viviendo con cáncer*, a monthly Spanish language support group facilitated by a cancer resource specialist from Lacks Cancer Center. There they had the opportunity to present a culturally appropriate message about the Society. The visit was also memorable because it was the first for a newly diagnosed patient who Maria invited.

“She had very limited resources as far as support or people she could talk to so she was feeling very alone,” said Maria, who also introduced the patient to the Road to Recovery program, which provides

rides to cancer patients to and from treatment. The connections made through the outreach partnerships allowed Maria to help in more ways than one.

“I think given more time and a concerted effort at outreach in our communities, we will build trust in ACS and will be even more successful in raising cancer awareness,” said Mike. “It’s important for people to know we are here to serve them no matter who they are, no matter what language they speak, and regardless of their immigration or financial status. By reaching out in a culturally appropriate way, we let the Latino community know that we understand the obstacles they face, and we are ready and willing to help.”

The Society’s toll-free number, 1-800-ACS-2345, has Spanish-speaking staff available. Spanish language materials are available at www.cancer.org/espanol, and Mike and Maria are gathering more print materials for translation. These materials are shared with the partnering organizations, increasing the number of people reached.

Bilingual volunteers are needed to reach more people through ACS services. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Maria Mora at (616) 364-6121.



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International young cancer survivors attend fifth ever World Oncology Camp

Hollie Moffat, Clodagh Cooke, and Molly Swan couldn't wait to experience two things when they came from Northern Ireland to America: Lucky Charms cereal and the Big Boy statue. These were just a few of the many American icons the young international cancer survivors anticipated before their trip to the United States to attend the American Cancer Society and YMCA's World Oncology Camp (WOC) this year.

After spending a week at WOC in Jackson, Michigan playing games, boating, "blobbing", and conquering the high ropes course, the 47 international campers departed for a one-week home stay to experience life with an American family.

Joanie Mack, who was a host parent for WOC this year, had the opportunity to host the three young cancer survivors from Northern Ireland. As a first time host, Joanie compiled a list of every "American" activity she

could think of before the arrival of her young guests, hoping to share with them every typical American tradition and experience.

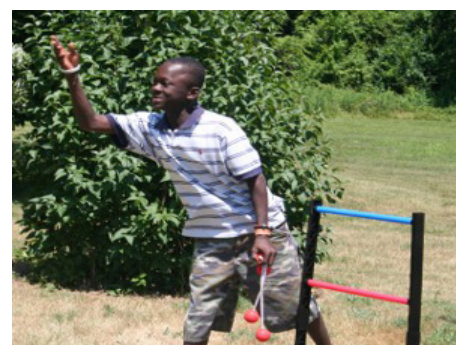
Visiting the Detroit Zoo, getting manicures, and attending the River Day Festival in Downtown Detroit were just a few of the countless activities that kept them busy during their stay. In addition to Joanie's planned activities, the young guests also treated their host family to a unique Irish talent show complete with an emcee, tin whistle, and Irish dancing.

"Being able to share our everyday lives with these girls was such a wonderful experience," said Joanie. "These beautiful young ladies really opened up and by the end of the trip we felt like family." The American swimming pools and shopping malls were a whole new experience to the girls, who had never seen a shopping mall with so many stores and often giggled at the cultural differences in vocabulary.

Tracie Stewart, who works for the American Cancer Society, hosted a young boy named Prince from Ghana. During his stay, they went bowling and out to pizza, played yard games, experienced a traditional American cookout, and visited a local amusement park. Prince shared with the Stewart family that coming to America is only a dream for most people in his country, and he really wished he could stay. He also said the

people were his favorite part about being in America, and that WOC gave him memories to last a lifetime.

For many of the host families, the experience of hosting a child offered even more than they had anticipated and it was difficult to say goodbye. Over 21 years ago, a relative of Joanie



Mack passed away from Wilms' tumor at the age of six. Today, the overall 5-year survival rate for children with this disease is more than 90 percent. Molly Swan, who is 12 years old and a survivor of this disease, is living proof that progress is being made and that the programs, research, education, and advocacy efforts of the American Cancer Society are making a difference. For more information on any of the American Cancer Society's Summer Camping programs, contact your local American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.

Pictured: Molly, Joanie, Joanie's niece Kaitlyn, Clodagh, and Hollie pose with the Big Boy statue (bottom left); Prince plays a game of ladder ball (above right).



• survivorship and patient services

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Summer camping programs offer normalcy

The journey to cancer survivorship can be hard, especially when you may not be old enough to cross the street alone, drive a car, or attend your first prom. More than 100 young cancer survivors from Indiana and Michigan were able to take their minds off of their treatments, hospital visits, and the other issues of cancer and simply enjoy being a child while they attended the American Cancer Society's Camp Catch-A-Rainbow and Young Adult Retreat this summer.

Going to the doctor for check ups or facing another round of chemotherapy to many of these young children is just part of the daily routine, so the opportunity to take a break, run down the slip 'n slide, or simply hang out with other kids just like them may be just what the doctor ordered.

Many of these children rarely have the opportunity to feel normal or participate in activities with other kids their age, but at camp they are the "norm". Spending an afternoon at the water park or taking the day to shop in downtown Chicago with other children who have been



through similar experiences often creates natural support.

Allyce Williams began attending the summer camping programs when she was first diagnosed with Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia. As a Camp Catch-A-Rainbow graduate and Young Adult Retreat attendee, she is now reaching the end of her almost 10 year summer camp journey and has created bonds with other young survivors along the way. The survivors at Young Adult Retreat tenderly call each other the "cancer kids", displaying the bonds that have been made each year.

"Camp is an experience that you share with people that have been going through the same thing you have," said Allyce. "I continue going each year because I have met great friends and it has always been a lot of fun."

During the summer camping programs, campers are able to participate in activities they normally may never have the opportunity to do, especially considering the financial burden that rests with many families facing cancer.

The restrictions of cancer can be simple things such as not being able to swim in the lake because of the risk of an infection in an IV port or not having the energy to walk across the campgrounds and opting to take a ride



on a golf cart instead. But here, for once, these children do not stand out. They, like all the others at the summer camping programs, have faced cancer. Their spirits are refreshing, and you are reminded that they are just normal kids, battling the disease we are all fighting to cure.

"Next year is my last year to attend Young Adult Retreat, but I don't think I'm going to miss it because I am going to be a counselor at Camp Catch-A-Rainbow," said Allyce. "It is so easy to be involved with the summer camping programs for a very long time, regardless of your age."

For more information on the Society's summer camping programs, contact your local American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.

Pictured: Young survivors enjoy Chicago during the Young Adult Retreat (bottom left); Campers take on the climbing wall during Camp Catch-A-Rainbow (above right).

ACS research program funds ovarian cancer researcher in Indiana

The American Cancer Society is the nation's largest private, not-for-profit source of funds for scientists studying cancer. By funding groundbreaking research, the American Cancer Society has contributed to many important discoveries that have led to a better understanding of cancer and cancer treatment. In the past 60 years, the Society has invested nearly \$3 billion in cancer research and helped save millions of lives.

The Society funds researchers in every area of cancer medicine, including ovarian cancer, which is the eighth most common cancer in women (not counting skin cancer). Ovarian cancer ranks fifth as the cause of cancer death in women and is the leading cause of death among gynecologic cancers.

Ovarian cancer research has already led to better ways to detect high-risk genes and assess a woman's ovarian cancer risk. A better understanding of how genetic and hormonal factors interact may also lead to better ways to prevent and treat ovarian cancer. The Society is currently funding 56 grants dealing with ovarian cancer research. These grants total more than \$27 million and four are going to researchers in Indiana and Michigan.

Dr. Daniela E. Matei is one of the researchers in the Great Lakes Division whose work is being funded. Dr. Matei

began studying gene expressions in ovarian cancer during her fellowship at UCLA, and has continued her work in that area as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine at Indiana University.

"It is well known among cancer researchers that the American Cancer Society has a wide platform of research funding," said Dr. Matei, whose preliminary work has shown that Gleevec, an anti-cancer agent, can stop the growth of ovarian cancer cells.

Dr. Matei used her preliminary data to develop a grant, which was highly rated but did not receive funding. This did not deter her and she sought guidance and advice from an additional expert in the field to make her grant stronger. Her dedication paid off and she received a five-year grant after a second submission.

Her team uses the funding to study the biology and treatment of ovarian cancer to determine if there is a more specific anti-cancer therapy for women with ovarian cancer. Dr. Matei hopes to find out how to block a growth receptor found in ovarian cancer cells so tumors will stop growing, and then apply this idea to a clinical trial in the future.

"My research in the lab is very much complemented by my interest in



clinical trials for ovarian cancer patients," said Dr. Matei, who is a practicing oncologist as well as a researcher. She runs the clinical trial program for ovarian cancer patients at Indiana University, and often gets samples from patients that are then analyzed in the lab.

"It gives me balance and meaning to what I do, because I can see my laboratory findings translating into actual clinical questions and hopefully clinical applications."

For more information on the Society's research program and funding, visit www.cancer.org/research.

Pictured: Dr. Daniela E. Matei.

First nationwide consensus statement on ovarian cancer symptoms released

Ovarian cancer, historically referred to as the “silent killer”, accounts for about 3% of all cancers among women and ranks second among gynecologic cancers. According to Cancer Facts & Figures 2007, ovarian cancer causes more deaths than any other cancer of the female reproductive system. Without an effective screening test, ovarian cancer is usually not diagnosed at an early stage due to the lack of definitive symptoms.

The American Cancer Society recently joined the Gynecologic Cancer Foundation and the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists to issue the first nationwide consensus statement on ovarian cancer symptoms. This statement was created to raise awareness about symptoms most commonly associated with ovarian cancer, which include:

- bloating
- pelvic or abdominal pain
- difficulty eating or feeling full quickly
- urinary symptoms (urgency or frequency)

Because these symptoms can be vague and common, they need to be persistent and represent a change from normal to be suggestive of ovarian cancer. Women who have these symptoms daily for more than a few weeks should consult their

doctor, preferably a gynecologist, for a thorough examination.

Other symptoms that have been reported by women with ovarian cancer include fatigue, indigestion, back pain, pain with intercourse, constipation, and menstrual irregularities. However, these symptoms are found in equal frequency in women in the general population and are usually associated with other causes.

“The number and frequency of symptoms also are often key factors in the diagnosis of ovarian cancer,” said Dr. Debbie L. Saslow, American Cancer Society director of breast and gynecologic cancer. “When a woman visits a doctor complaining of these symptoms, and they cannot be explained by other causes, ovarian cancer should be considered.”

There is no current follow-up guideline for women with these symptoms. Women who are considered high risk or who have unexplained symptoms as described above may have a bimanual pelvic examination, a trans-vaginal ultrasound, and/or a blood test for the tumor marker CA-125. However, studies have shown that these tests are too inaccurate to be used for routine screening of women at average risk of ovarian cancer. In addition, these tests have not been shown to reduce deaths caused by ovarian cancer. Exploratory surgery may be an



option to determine if ovarian cancer is present, but there is a significant risk of serious adverse effects, including death. If a pelvic examination or other tests suggest ovarian cancer, it is necessary to consult a doctor or surgeon who specializes in treating women with this type of cancer, such as a gynecologic oncologist.

Dr. Len Lichtenfeld, American Cancer Society deputy chief medical officer, acknowledged that “we are left with a less than perfect way of trying to find ovarian cancer early by relying on symptoms that can point in many different diagnostic directions.”

But as researchers continue to search for an effective screening test for ovarian cancer, it is hoped that the consensus statement will increase awareness, and prompt attention to symptoms can improve the odds of early diagnosis and successful treatment.

For more information about ovarian cancer, visit www.cancer.org/ovariancancer or call 1-800-ACS-2345.

New advocacy structure gives volunteers more leadership opportunities

The American Cancer Society's grassroots volunteer structure has been revised to allow for more effective recruitment, training, engagement, and mobilization of volunteers. Founded on the belief that grassroots volunteers play a critical role in legislative efforts at all levels of government, the ACS Legislative Ambassador Program will strengthen our message in the fight against cancer.

The new structure utilizes teams and leadership roles to allow for quick reconfiguration to mobilize volunteers to speak out on cancer issues.

Ambassadors will be constituents of a single Member of Congress. Each congressional district team will be called an ACT! (Ambassador Constituent Team!). Volunteers within each ACT! will have the opportunity to specialize in media, ACS CAN, Relay, and advocacy and volunteer mobilization.

Each state has a lead ambassador who will manage the ACT! leads. Patty Avery is the Indiana Lead Ambassador and Linda Burkett is the Michigan Lead Ambassador. Both of

these volunteers have been involved in advocacy for several years and now take on exciting leadership roles that will allow them to share their expertise.

Patty Avery, Evansville, IN

Patty Avery recalled how amazing it was for her when she experienced her first Relay For Life. "The fact that regular people were empowered to fight back against cancer absolutely captivated me and won me over forever."

Through Celebration on the Hill and Indiana's Lobby Day, Patty has seen how the ACS empowers people to make a measurable impact on cancer. As the lead ambassador for Indiana, Patty wants others to know how necessary it is to make your voice heard in the fight against cancer.

"National decisions have tangible impact on real lives and that to me is what I want to keep in mind and help people understand that it's doable," Patty said. "I think the structure is going to help us move quickly when there's an issue and activate the grassroots to reach out to their elected officials on these issues."

Linda Burkett, Three Rivers, MI

Linda Burkett first heard of advocacy during a Relay For Life recognition event on the senate floor in Lansing. "It was right after Mother's Day and I had promised my mom that she would not die in vain," recalled Linda, who first joined Relay in mem-



ory of her mother. "I heard of advocacy and joined that day."

For the past two years, Linda has celebrated her father's birthday and memory at Michigan's Lobby Day. This year, the event was even more memorable for Linda when she was named Michigan's lead ambassador.

"I'm highly honored and I'm looking forward to how many more ambassadors we can encourage to join us," said Linda. "There's power in numbers and I think the ambassadorship will grow more with this structure because more awareness can be brought to it. If you speak up and just one life is saved, it's worth it."

To learn more about the new structure and get involved in advocacy efforts, contact Jennifer Hunt, Grassroots Manager, at (517) 664-1342, or visit online at www.acscan.org/indiana and www.acscan.org/michigan.

Pictured: Legislative ambassador Shawna Farina and Patty Avery (bottom left); Linda Burkett and Rep. Fred Upton (above right).



• resource highlight

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The Great American Eat Right Challenge: nourish yourself and reduce cancer risk

Did you know that making even the smallest, most simple changes in diet and lifestyle can help protect you and your family from cancer?

The American Cancer Society can help you reach your healthy living goals with the Great American Eat Right Challenge, which takes place this year on August 16. The Society offers interactive online tools to help you learn ways to reduce your cancer risk by adopting healthy eating habits and maintaining a healthy weight.

Poor nutrition is a risk factor for cancer. Approximately one-third of cancer deaths in the United States each year are caused by nutrition and physical activity factors, including being overweight or obese. Making savvy food choices and staying physically active are some of the most

important things you can do to reduce your risk of developing cancer, as well as other diseases.

The American Cancer Society recommends the following to reduce risk of some cancers, heart disease, and diabetes:

- Choose food and beverages in amounts that help achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat five or more servings of a variety of vegetables and fruits each day.
- Choose whole grains, rather than processed (refined) grains.
- Limit how much processed and red meats you eat.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, limit how much you drink (no more than one drink per day for women and two per day for men).

If you are overweight or obese, you could be at a higher risk of developing many cancers, including cancers of the breast, colon, esophagus, and kidney. But you can reduce your cancer risk drastically by limiting how much unhealthy food you eat. For example, cutting back on the amount of processed and red meats you eat can reduce your risk of colon and prostate cancer.



To help you reduce your risk of cancer, take advantage of the Great American Eat Right Challenge web site at www.cancer.org/greatamericans. The site has tips and tools that can help you take steps toward a healthier lifestyle, including a healthy eating quiz, calorie calculator, and healthy recipes.

In mid-August, the Society will be releasing *The Great American Eat-Right Cookbook*. This great resource is co-authored by Jeanne Besser, food columnist and stylist for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and Colleen Doyle, MS, RD, the Society's nutrition and physical activity director. Inside, you will find healthy, delicious recipes and inspiration for making healthy choices. The recipes are simple to follow, easy to make, and many can be made in 30 minutes or less.

To order *The Great American Eat-Right Cookbook*, visit www.cancer.org/bookstore, or call us toll-free at 1-800-ACS-2345.

