

Center Stage™

A quarterly publication by West Michigan Cancer Center

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WMCC team celebrates 15 years.

15 Years Ago...Looking Back and Running Forward.

1994 was an exceptional year. In the plus column, Nelson Mandela won the first free election in South Africa when blacks participated in voting after the end of apartheid. The "Chunnel" opened, connecting England and France by a 35-minute train ride. The existence of theoretical black holes in space was factually proven. The youngest golfer ever to win the Masters (age 18) started the journey that made Tiger a household name. And finally, in 1994, Bronson and Borgess opened the doors of West Michigan Cancer Center (WMCC) to the residents of Kalamazoo and surrounding counties. The new cancer center immediately made a lasting and positive difference in the health and lives of area residents.

Fifteen years ago, West Michigan Cancer Center fulfilled a joint vision of local hospitals, Borgess and Bronson, to provide a state-of-the-art cancer treatment facility for the community. The collaboration ensured that the best treatment capabilities, which were also the most expensive, could be acquired through cost sharing. The community is the primary beneficiary, with a cancer center that rivals the most advanced academic centers today. Fifteen years ago, and continuing today, cancer treatment here compares to the best anywhere.

Now, WMCC averages nearly 80,000 patient visits annually. Through continuing investments in technology, and clinical excellence, patients are experiencing the benefits of earlier detection and more effective treatment procedures. As a result, we are able to treat and beat more cancers, and ensure a better quality of life for cancer survivors in our community.

Today, WMCC has more than 120 employees who have created a totally unique clinical environment for ensuring the most effective fight against the disease. Our doctors, nurses and staff inspire

hope and confidence through their attitudes and outlooks. Happily, it isn't just wishful thinking. We are winning against more types of cancers today than at any other time in history. And we're not doing it alone. Our community has the most generous and gifted volunteers one could imagine. At WMCC, volunteers assist patients with new, supportive therapies that help cancer survivors cope and re-engage in life. Art therapy, music therapy, reflexology, and even pet therapy remind our patients that their lives belong to them, not their cancers.

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West Michigan Cancer Center  Together, we win.

200 North Park Street Kalamazoo, MI 49007-3731 | Phone 269.382.2500 | www.wmcc.org

Volunteers Make the Difference

Volunteers are considered the heart of West Michigan Cancer Center. They lovingly and generously give of themselves as they serve in a variety of capacities to help patients and their families cope with cancer.

Patient Coaches and Patient to Patient Support

Volunteer Patient Coaches, cancer survivors themselves, come alongside a patient to encourage him or her. Patient Coaches bear testimony to the real hope of beating cancer, moving on, and giving back. A coach is a listener who offers the perspective of personal experience and adds immeasurably to the healing process. Patients may also request peer support from former patients who were treated for a similar cancer. Coaches and Patient to Patient volunteers listen, answer questions, share their stories, and connect patients with educational resources.

WMCC volunteers also share their unique talents and resources.

Pet Therapy

When 85-year-old Pet Therapy volunteer Marjorie Kelly shows up with her golden Retriever, Launi, her dog transforms a waiting room into a smiling room. Launi is a therapy dog. She doesn't know she is a therapy dog; she just knows she loves people and craves their petting and praise.

She flops down at a patient's feet and gives love the way only a dog can: without pretense and without pity. She is a lovable distraction. Launi's owner, a cancer survivor herself, enjoys her weekly trips with her dog and explains why she volunteers at West Michigan Cancer Center: She gets back far more than she gives.

Reflexology

Another volunteer, Karen Merchant, gently massages hands and feet, expertly applying specific pressure to open up circulation, increase energy, and provide deep relaxation and stress reduction. As she quiets a patient's body and soul with her healing touch, cancer patients sometimes want to open their hearts to a listening ear. Patients enjoy the calming, peaceful effects of this therapy, known as reflexology. Sometimes they just close their eyes and drift off, far from the anxiety and insistence of their disease and treatment regimen. As Karen explains, "I don't know who gets the bigger blessing...me or the patient."

Warm Hearts

Volunteer Greeters set the tone for a caring environment with a positive outlook. They make sure every person who enters the door of the Center gets a warm greeting and knows their way to an appointment. *Coffee Cart* volunteers serve up hot coffee and a delicious cookie with a smile and friendly spirit. Skilled pianists volunteer

to play the baby grand in the reception area. Our *clown* therapy volunteers bring good cheer when someone is feeling anxious. Patients have found great comfort in *expressive art* classes, led by volunteer artists. Other volunteers help in the *Fitness Room*, while some with a *green thumb* help keep our grounds beautiful for everyone to enjoy.

If volunteering sounds like a rewarding way for you to spend a few hours each week, contact us and we will help you find a place that fits your lifestyle and schedule. At WMCC, there are many other ways to help, and each one reminds us that we don't fight cancer alone, but together.



Coffee, cookies and smiles are served daily.



15 Years Ago...Looking Back and Running Forward.

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We have great plans for the immediate future. Before another 15 years passes by, we will add several more tumor-specific clinics so patients can experience even more seamless and effective treatment. We will deploy even more sophisticated technologies for detection and treatment of cancer. We will continue to handpick the best and the brightest doctors and staff. We will ensure our community, neighbors, and families have every tool possible to win their personal challenges with cancer. We will fight for our patients when they are weak, and fight with them when they are strong. Because together, we win.

Terry McKay, President and CEO

Gynecologic Oncology Team Grows

On July 6th, Dr. Anna Hoekstra joins Dr. Younes Bakri on the WMCC gynecologic oncology team.

A Kalamazoo native, Dr. Hoekstra graduated from medical school at Rush University, did her residency at Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center and completed her fellowship training at Northwestern University in Chicago. She has published articles on a variety of topics, including endometrial cancer, gestational trophoblastic disease and robotic surgery. She has written chapters in two textbooks on gynecologic oncology. She gives lectures and oral presentations frequently, and enjoys participating in community and medical education.

Dr. Hoekstra performs traditional open surgery for ovarian, endometrial and cervical cancers, as well as vaginal

surgery for vaginal and vulvar cancers. She performed robotic surgery in more than 80 cases during her fellowship using the da Vinci Surgical System. For certain gynecologic cancers, the da Vinci system is the least-invasive option available to women, and has been shown to result in fewer complications than other techniques.



Dr. Anna Hoekstra

The One That Got Away

Kate Shane isn't scared of worms. Kate's father introduced her to fishing as a young girl, but it had been a long time since she spent an entire weekend away to enjoy her childhood hobby. A single mom and busy consultant, Kate learned in 2006 that the family history of breast cancer would be hers to share. A grandmother succumbed to breast cancer, and her mother had fought her own battle with breast cancer over a decade ago.



Kate Shane

Kate met the news without surprise and without a whimper. "I kind of anticipated that someday I would have breast cancer. So, at the time I was diagnosed, I wasn't scared, but just thought 'well, here we go.'" For Kate, a small lump, undetected in a previous mammogram, became a more serious topic at her annual exam. A series of tests that included an ultrasound, then a needle biopsy, finally a lumpectomy and sentinel node biopsy revealed a cancer that had spread into her lymph nodes. Months of treatment later, Kate was cancer-free, and resumed her busy work schedule without looking back.

"I closed the book on the whole cancer thing and charged forward as if nothing had happened. But I didn't deal with the emotional changes, and the life experience of surviving cancer." Kate learned that her cancer treatment, even though it ended well, took an emotional toll she did not anticipate. Nearly two years after her successful treatment, Kate

was having troubles. "I was being affected emotionally by so many things that didn't affect me before...I kind of crashed. I was exhausted. I was depressed. When I was sick with the cancer, I wasn't able to deal with my own needs because I had to make sure there was food on the table, my kid was OK, and that she's going to school and so on." Kate needed to get away.

Kate first learned about fly-fishing for breast cancer survivors from a flyer at West Michigan Cancer Center. The annual event is a weekend retreat for 10 women who have experienced breast cancer at different stages; from total mastectomy to lumpectomy and everything in between. In a beautiful natural setting, experienced fly-fishing guides, mental health counselors, and medical experts create a supportive environment where women find comfort and support by sharing and learning from each other's journeys. Along the way, women enjoy breathtaking scenery, group meals, sharing time, the art of fly-tying, the psychology of fish, casting lessons, and of course, there's time to practice new skills.

"The highlight of the retreat was to be totally focused on me, and to live in the moment, and being in, on or near the water is really healing to me. Another was to spend time listening to other women share their experiences. It confirmed so many things I was dealing with." These days, Kate continues her love of fishing, makes time for herself, appreciates the power of group support, and when she visits West Michigan Cancer

Center, she takes time to "tell one person how much I appreciate what they do."

West Michigan Cancer Center provides support and resources to help women not only win their fight with cancer, but also deny its emotional grip on their lives.



Special Class Series

Food for Life

Wednesdays, July 13, 20, 27 and August 3

Time: 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Location: WMCC 3rd Floor Multi-Purpose Room

This is a four-week class series. Topics include low-fat foods, dairy alternatives, planning healthy meals and immune-boosting foods.

Save the Date:

Summerfest

Saturday, September 12

1:00 pm to 4:30 pm

**Kindelberger Park
in Parchment, MI**

Invitations will be mailed in mid-August. If you don't receive an invitation, and are a past/present patient of WMCC, please call our offices and we'll be happy to send you one.





The Color of Hope

The Color of Hope is a program integrating the visual arts with the healing environment of West Michigan Cancer Center through ongoing exhibitions by local artists.

Throughout 2009, each floor at the Center features works of selected artists including: Kyle Adams, Mike Dzialowski, Doris Miller, Cristina Powell and Samantha Rowland.

Some artwork is for sale. Pricing is available at the Center.

To arrange a tour, contact Lynne Emons: 269-384-8626 or lemons@wmcc.org

< *Poppies*
by Doris Miller



Visit Our New Fitness Room

Our fully equipped Fitness Room, located in the lower level of the Cancer Center, is now open to current and former patients. The room has cardiovascular exercise machines and free weights for training. No matter your ability or fitness level, there's something for everyone in the new Fitness Room. An orientation is required. Call Maureen Brown at 269-373-7476 to schedule an appointment.

Fitness Room Hours:
9:00 am - 7:00 pm

WMCC
Main Number
269-382-2500

Department	Dial	Department	Dial
All Appointments	21	Gynecologic Oncology	
Medical Oncology		Test Results	223
Test Results	221	Prescriptions	233
Prescriptions	231	Nurse	26
Nurse	24	Medical Records & Billing	3
Radiation Oncology			
Test Results	222		
Prescriptions	232		
Nurse	25		

Class Schedule 2009

Classes listed are offered at no charge to current and former WMCC patients and a caregiver.

Blood Cancers Support Group

Date: Last Tuesday of each month
Time: 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm
Location: Lower-Level
Conference Room

This support group is for people diagnosed with any blood cancer, including leukemia or lymphoma.

Cooking Class

Dates: 1st Thursday of each month
Time: 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm
Location: WMCC 3rd Floor
Multi-Purpose Room

Monthly topics selected by WMCC Nutritionist Renee Van Wormer, RD, feature foods with significant health benefits. She also shares recipes and samples with participants. Contact Renee at 269-373-0109 to register.

Conditioning for Life

Tuesdays 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Wednesdays 9:00 am – 10:00 am
Location: WMCC 3rd Floor
Multi-Purpose Room
Fridays 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Location: Lower Level
Conference Room

Strength, balance and cardiovascular conditioning can cause dramatic improvements in quality of life. When done correctly, a person can reduce pain, increase energy and improve overall health. The class is led by an exercise physiologist who will help participants adjust the class to fit their ability levels. It consists of a dynamic warm up, cardiovascular conditioning, strength training, balance and flexibility training using body weight, bands, and stability balls. For more information, contact Jessica Hermann-Wilmarth at 269-373-0129 or email jwilmarth@wmcc.org.

Gentle and Restorative Yoga

Dates/Times: Twice weekly
Mondays 5:30 pm – 6:45 pm
Thursdays 11:30 am – 12:45 pm
Location: WMCC 3rd Floor
Multi-Purpose Room

This ongoing yoga exercise program increases general health and stamina, reducing stress and improving strength and balance of all parts of the body. Call 269-373-7446 for more information.

Look Good, Feel Better

Dates: 4th Monday of each month
Time: 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm
Location: WMCC Lower-Level
Conference Room

The Look Good, Feel Better program provides information and cosmetic advice to women battling cancer. This training includes hands-on instruction on makeup, skin care, wigs, turbans, scarves and nail care. Cosmetics are provided for your personal makeover. Call 269-373-7446 to register. This class is sponsored by the American Cancer Society.

My Time Meditation/ Relaxation

Dates: Thursdays
Time: 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm
Location: WMCC Lower-Level
Conference Room

This class is open to beginners, as well as to those with more experience. Ongoing weekly guidance in meditation and relaxation, with time for meditation practice. Come weekly or just drop in whenever you can.

Patient Support Group

Date: Wednesdays
Time: 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Location: Lower-Level
Conference Room

Individuals who have been diagnosed with any type of cancer are invited to gather weekly and share information, experiences, problems and solutions. Led by Cindy Murray, WMCC social worker, this group can help foster a sense of self-esteem and courage to help survivors face the challenges that may lie ahead.

Pilates Ball Class

Date: Wednesdays
Time: 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm Drop-in
Location: WMCC 3rd Floor
Multi-Purpose Room

Participants will need to bring their own ball. Using a ball as part of a fitness program can accommodate a wide range of difficulty levels, each requiring support from the back and stomach muscles, which help firm up the trunk muscles in the body.

Prostate Cancer Support Group

Date: 3rd Wednesday of each month
Time: 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

This group meets for support and information regarding prostate cancer. Please call Dr. Morry Edwards, Ph.D., at 269-375-2222 or WMCC at 269-382-2500 to register.

Tai Chi

Beginners: Wed. 5:30 pm – 6:45 pm
Advanced: Tues. 5:30 pm – 6:45 pm
Location: WMCC 3rd Floor
Multi-Purpose Room

Tai Chi is an ancient Chinese form of exercise. It is designed to provide relaxation in the process of body conditioning. Call 269-373-7446 for more information.

For more information on any of the classes listed, call 269-373-7446 or send an email to socialwork@wmcc.org. For all classes at West Michigan Cancer Center, please park in the Radisson ramp, and we will validate your ticket.

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Von Willebrand Disease Managed by the Hemophilia Treatment Center

By Glen Heggie, MD, Medical Oncologist



Dr. Glen Heggie

Von Willebrand Disease is one of the more common bleeding disorders managed by the Hemophilia Treatment Center at the West Michigan Cancer Center. It is usually inherited and can be passed on to the next generation by either parent. The Von Willebrand protein is involved in an early step in the clotting process, and loss of its function leads to a characteristic bleeding pattern. Affected individuals usually report a lifelong history of easy bruising coupled with nosebleeds and bleeding gums. Excessive bleeding after surgery or dental extractions is frequently seen. In women, heavy menstrual bleeding is often a major problem.

There are hundreds of different genetic changes that affect the Von Willebrand protein. Von Willebrand Disease is usually divided into three general categories. Type I disease is characterized by a quantitative deficiency of normal Von Willebrand protein. Type II disease is characterized by an abnormally

functioning Von Willebrand protein. Type III disease is characterized by a severe deficiency of Von Willebrand protein caused by inheriting a quantitative deficiency from each parent. Treatment of Von Willebrand Disease usually involves the use of DDAVP (a synthetic antidiuretic hormone) or a plasma concentrate that contains Von Willebrand protein. DDAVP is most useful in Type I disease because it causes a temporary release of Von Willebrand protein from the lining of blood vessels. It can be delivered as a nasal spray (Stimate), which conveniently allows for rapid treatment outside of a medical facility. Because the Von Willebrand protein in Type II disease is abnormal, releasing more of the abnormal protein with DDAVP is usually not helpful, and plasma concentrates are used to increase the Von Willebrand protein level. There is very little Von Willebrand protein available to release in Type III disease, and plasma concentrates are used for treatment.

Patients with Von Willebrand Disease are managed in our comprehensive hemophilia clinics. They are seen by a team of health care professionals that includes physicians, specially trained nurses, social workers, physical therapists, dental hygienists, and others. With proper management, many of the consequences of the disease can be minimized.



Von Willebrand Disease is usually inherited and can be passed on to the next generation by either parent.