Cancer—Is It Another Chronic Disease?
New thinking about cancer, in the era of new targeted cancer therapies

by Sree Chandana, MD, Medical Oncologist

What is the cause of my cancer? This is a common question posed by many of my patients. There is no good answer. I say “a little bit of everything: your genes, lifestyle, environment, stress, etc”. As technology continues to make leaps and bounds, our understanding of cancer is also increasing. I often tell my patients “if we know what we are dealing with, there is a better solution”. The same is true in cancer. These days, with the help of “omics” (the study of genes, proteins and metabolism in the context of the entire human body), we are able to figure out what is the driver or cause—such as a genetic change—for a particular cancer or blood disease. With this knowledge, we are now able to develop new therapies, targeting only those drivers which control cancer. Even though scientists had been searching for these genetic changes in cancer and blood disorders for a long time, major breakthroughs happened when researchers discovered a genetic abnormality in one particular cancer called chronic myeloid leukemia (CML). Subsequently, a targeted therapy, which blocks the activity of this abnormal protein led to a miracle treatment for CML patients. CML is now being treated as a chronic disease with several new oral drugs, eliminating the need for transplant and greatly extending the lives of our patients. Similar to the success story involving CML, we now have new targeted therapies for several other cancers. Kidney cancer is a prime example for these therapies. Scientists found two key drivers for kidney cancer. There are at least six new oral therapies, targeting these driver proteins in kidney cancer. This gives us the opportunity to treat kidney cancer as a chronic disease, with manageable side effects, rather than as a terminal disease. In lung cancer, two targeted therapies are approved for patients with the EGFR mutation (a driver for some lung cancer). The therapies are called Erlotinib and Afatinib. Another drug, Crizotinib, targets a protein product resulting from fusion of two genes EML4 and ALK, approved for treating lung cancer. Some patients may benefit from these drugs. Based on several research studies, breast cancer patients benefit from several therapies, which target estrogen receptor and HER 2 receptors (again drivers for some breast cancers). These are only a few examples in current cancer care. We have a long way to go in research and development to be able to understand the proteins that lead to cancer and to develop targeted therapies for every cancer. But at least we now have a basic understanding of how to treat cancer as a
For Your HEALTH
By Rachel Noman, RD, WMCC Dietician

With fall in full swing, it’s the perfect time to warm up with a bowl of soup. Soup can be a delicious and nutritious meal on a cool fall evening. It can also be a calorie and fat trap. Follow these tips for making sure you are reaping the benefits from soup.

1. Choose broth-based soups. Creamy soups are high in fat and calories. If you do choose a creamy soup, try making your own and using low fat alternatives.

2. Load up on the veggies. Soups are a great way to sneak extra vegetables into your diet. Add leftover veggies or frozen vegetables to any soup for an extra boost of nutrition. Blend your soup with an immersion blender to disguise the veggies. Don’t forget the protein. Protein will help keep you satisfied longer. Add a lean protein like beans, quinoa, or chicken to your soup.

My Cancer Story
Submitted by Al Steffens

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in February of 2010 at the age of 77. I underwent 24 weeks of chemotherapy, surgery and 43 radiation treatments. I was declared cancer free in January of 2011. I still see an oncologist every six months.

I am not a cancer victim.

I am a cancer survivor.

I have mentored three men who are breast cancer survivors like me. I speak to groups. I learned a great lesson from my experience. Patience. The most effective treatment for me was the attitude that I was going to win.

Al Steffens is retired and lives in Portage.

WMCC Welcomes New Providers

MICHAEL FRANCISCO, PA-C
Medical Oncology Clinic

Michael Francisco is a Physician Assistant in our medical oncology clinic who also sees patients at both Borgess Medical Center and Bronson Methodist Hospital.

Francisco received his Bachelor of Science degree, Master of Science in medicine degree and Certificate in Physician Assistant Studies from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. His responsibilities include seeing and evaluating hematology, medical and radiation oncology patients and conducting consultations.

BENJAMIN SCHAEFER, M.Div.
Chaplain,
Quality of Life Program

Ben Schaefer is Chaplain of our new Quality of Life Program. Schaefer received his Bachelor of Science degree in Recreation/Youth Development from Calvin College and a Master of Divinity from Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids. He completed his residency at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Cancer-Chronic Disease? Continued from page 1

chronic disease. I have seen many patients with advanced-stage cancer, who have been living with their disease for several years and maintaining a good quality of life. While we are refining our chemotherapies to alleviate side effects and improve quality of life, new targeted therapies are being developed. These therapies, combined with conventional chemotherapy, boost the ability to treat cancer as a chronic disease both for patients and physicians. That is why we always say to our patients, “please hang in there, and tomorrow will be a better day with new treatments”.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in February of 2010 at the age of 77. I underwent 24 weeks of chemotherapy, surgery and 43 radiation treatments. I was declared cancer free in January of 2011. I still see an oncologist every six months.

I am not a cancer victim.

I am a cancer survivor.

I have mentored three men who are breast cancer survivors like me. I speak to groups. I learned a great lesson from my experience. Patience. The most effective treatment for me was the attitude that I was going to win.

Al Steffens is retired and lives in Portage.
A Gift that Keeps on Giving
By Carol A. Christianson, MS, CGC
WMCC Genetic Counselor

While you gather with your family this holiday season, make it a point to talk about your personal and family health history. Family history is one of the best gifts you can give your siblings and children. It can be used to figure out their risk for common diseases like cancer. Their doctors can use this information to figure out if they might benefit from earlier or more frequent screening.

In most cases, cancer occurs sporadically, or by chance. People with sporadic cancer are the only one in their family with cancer. They are often diagnosed between the ages of 60 and 80. In most cases, the risk to other family members is not increased. However, if you have sporadic colon cancer, the chance that your siblings or children will develop colon cancer goes from 4% to 9%. If you were diagnosed in your 40s or 50s, your siblings and children should begin screening 10 years earlier than you were diagnosed. They should also have screening colonoscopies every five years.

In some families, breast cancer occurs in two or more women. In other families, people seem to be prone to colon cancer, or prostate cancer. In these families, the siblings and children of people with cancer, are 2 to 3 times more likely to develop cancer than people in the general population. These individuals may benefit from earlier or more frequent screening.

About 5% to 10% of women with breast cancer have a hereditary breast cancer syndrome. A hereditary cancer syndrome is caused by a change, or mutation, in a single gene that is passed on from parent to child at conception. These gene mutations increase a person’s risk for a number of different cancers.

The most common hereditary breast cancer syndrome is Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer syndrome (HBOC). This syndrome is caused by mutations in one of two genes; the BRCA1 gene and the BRCA2 gene.

Women who inherit a mutation in either of these genes are more likely to develop early-onset breast cancer, ovarian cancer, pancreatic cancer and melanoma. Men who inherit a mutation in a BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene are more likely to develop male breast cancer, prostate cancer, pancreatic cancer and melanoma.

About 1 in 300 people in the United States have a BRCA1 gene mutation. Mutations in the BRCA2 gene are seen in 1 in 500 people.

About 5% to 6% of people with colon cancer have a hereditary colon cancer syndrome. The most common hereditary colon cancer syndrome is Lynch syndrome. Men with Lynch syndrome have an 80% chance of getting colon cancer in their lifetime. Women have a 50% chance of developing colon cancer. Their risk for uterine cancer is 40% to 60% and the chance they will get ovarian cancer is 9% to 12%. Other cancers associated with Lynch syndrome include cancer of the stomach, small bowel, urinary tract, liver, pancreas, and central nervous system.

People who have a number of family members with different kinds of cancer should talk to their doctor about their risk for a hereditary cancer syndrome. People who find out they have a gene for a hereditary cancer syndrome are followed closely so that if cancer does develop it can be treated early.

What can I do if I have a family history of cancer?

If you, or someone in your family has cancer, you should try to collect information on all of your relatives; including the people in your family without cancer.

Here is a checklist to help you remember what information to write down and share with your doctor:

• **Current Ages** – Of all family members including your children/brothers and sisters/parents/nieces and nephews/aunts and uncles/grandparents/cousins.

• **Age at Death** – If no longer living

• **Cause of Death** – If no longer living

• **Health Status** – List their health problems

• **Type of Disease** – List any known diseases

• **Age when Disease was Diagnosed**

• **Ethnic Background** – Countries your family came from/ancestry

• **Health Habits & Environmental Exposures** – Health habits and things a family member may have been exposed to can include:
  - Diet, exercise, and weight control
  - Living or working near a chemical or other type of plant
  - Smoking, drinking alcohol, or drug use
  - For women, age at the time of her first period, age when she had her first child, and age at menopause.

You should try to get this information from all of your family members. You may also want to collect the medical records or death certificates of family members who have passed away.

Sharing this information with your doctor can help him/her look for patterns in your family that may suggest you or your relatives have a higher chance of getting cancer.

For more information about genetic counseling, contact Carol Christianson at (269) 373-0120.
Growing up, most of us consider our parents to be invincible or untouchable. I know that I did. I assumed that my mom and dad would be at every sporting and school event throughout my childhood...that they would be around to witness my high school graduation, my college graduation, and walk me down the aisle on my wedding day. Sadly, my life took a dramatic turn at the age of 19. That’s when my dear mom, Maureen Klage—the one who was always there for me, my rock in life's stormy seas as well as my friend to share in the good times—passed away from ovarian cancer. She was just 48 years old.

At the time, I didn’t know much about ovarian cancer. I had learned only a little bit of information from my mom while she was battling the disease. But, realizing that I, too, might be at risk for this cancer, I decided to find out more. In the course of my research, I discovered that ovarian cancer is one of the hardest cancers to catch in women. When it is finally detected, it is often in an advanced stage. Once I learned this information, I knew I wanted to do something to get the word out about ovarian cancer and help women of all ages.

As a student in the Lee Honors College at Western Michigan University, I am required to write an honors thesis to fulfill my graduation requirement. I consulted my mentor, Dr. James Lewis, and expressed to him my desire to do something involving ovarian cancer awareness. Dr. Lewis, Associate Professor of Human Performance and Health Education at WMU, suggested linking my thesis project to an event that was already well established: the Annual Kalamazoo River Valley Trail (KRVT) Fall Color Bike Cruise.

With the help of Dr. Lewis and the students in his class—HPHE 3710: Practical Recreation Programming & Leadership—we piggybacked our ovarian cancer awareness event to the Fall Color Cruise. We also decided that it would be a good idea to solicit a healthcare partner, and since my Mom had been treated at West Michigan Cancer Center, it was the obvious choice. WMCC embraced the project and supported the event with volunteers and giveaway items. The bike cruise was held on October 13th and the theme was ‘Ovar-come the Silence’. It exceeded every expectation I had! Planning an event to raise awareness for ovarian cancer was a dream of mine for quite some time. With hard work and dedication, my dream became a reality that day. The event was a lot of work, including planning for the event more than a year in advance, but it was well worth it!

The 2013 KRVT Fall Color Cruise had 480 registered participants, from young children, to grandparents. With the help of my fellow honors college students, we spread the word about ovarian cancer with handouts including bracelets, car magnets, water bottles stuffed with informational flyers, and bike flags for the children!

More about Ovarian Cancer—Signs and Symptoms to Watch For

Ovarian cancer is difficult to detect, especially, in the early stages. This is partly due to the fact that these two small, almond shaped organs are deep within the abdominal cavity, one on each side of the uterus. These are some of the potential signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer:

- Bloating
- Pelvic or abdominal pain
- Trouble eating or feeling full quickly
- Feeling the need to urinate urgently or often
- Fatigue
- Upset stomach or heartburn
- Back pain
- Pain during sex
- Constipation or menstrual changes

If symptoms persist for more than two weeks, see your physician.

More images...
Gorgeous, colorful artwork is once again gracing the halls of our main center at 200 North Park Street in Kalamazoo as we resume our popular Art as Healing exhibit. Eight artists are participating in the exhibit—which will remain in our center through July of 2014. The artists are: Gloria Garner, Lori Gavan, Jan Gwinnell, Linda Herzog, Conrad Kaufman (whose beautiful, scenic murals also decorate our infusion room), Doris Miller, Nancy Stroupe and Jan Weren.

Sara Strong, a local artist and Western Michigan University grad, curated the exhibit and many pieces are for sale. If you’d like to make an inquiry, contact Lynne Emons, WMCC Marketing Manager, at 269-384-8624 or email lemons@wmcc.org

Healthy Holidays by Samantha A. Carlson, LMSW, OSW-C

Preparing for the holidays can be a challenge, especially for cancer survivors and caregivers. Prioritizing emotional health and wellness to ensure a safe and healthy holiday season is often a challenge. Holiday parties and gatherings can be overwhelming. Trying to juggle social events can be stressful. However, you may find these strategies helpful.

Prioritize your positive social events: Positive social relationships have been proven to improve our health. Conversely, negative relationships can hinder health. When scheduling your holiday gatherings, weigh your options and decide if you are attending out of obligation or enjoyment. Know your limits to ensure you are able to enjoy your events, rather than worrying about your schedule.

Prioritize traditions: Holiday celebrations and our culture thrive on tradition, sometimes causing more harm than good. Weigh the sentimental investment against the effort and resources, and prioritize the traditions that are most important to you.

Self Care - Respect your routine: 30 minutes of walking or brisk exercise can be an amazing investment in your health, especially through stressful holidays. Exercise improves mood by releasing chemicals called endorphins, as well as neurotransmitters such as serotonin, and other chemicals to improve mood (also known as the body’s natural antidepressant). These deplete stress causing chemicals and make us feel happier.

Exercise boosts and combats fatigue by elevating energy (by delivering oxygen and nutrients to your body more effectively, resulting in better quality of sleep). Exercise improves the immune system (flushing bacteria out of the body, and increasing antibodies and white blood cell counts).

Healthy Nutrition: Healthy choices with holiday food and spirits is an important part of self care. Some indulgence is celebratory, however it can be detrimental to not only your waist line, but your mental health. Meals lacking the recommended fiber, vitamins, and nutrients make us feel sluggish and depleted. Remember to balance your diet for optimal health.

Alone time: Take time for yourself out of the hectic schedule of the holidays. Scheduling time to read a book, taking a bath, relaxing to enjoy a hobby, playing with a pet, or meditating is extremely important. The holiday season is full of stimulation and activity, and can be taxing on our brains and therefore our emotions. Take the time to invest in your health, and have downtime to rejuvenate.
**Art as Healing**

**When**
Every other Monday
January 6 to March 17

**Time**
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

**Place**
Reverence Home Health & Hospice
East Board Room
348 N. Burdick Street
Kalamazoo

**Register**
Kathleen Buday, M.Ed., ART-BC
at 269-552-0712 or email kathleen.buday@reverencehomehealth.org

Research shows that art therapy has the potential to reduce anxiety and stress as a way to promote healing. Participants will learn ways to use the creative process as a tool for expression, exploration and discovery. No previous art experience is necessary. Pre-registration required.

---

**Cooking Class**

**When**
Thursday, February 13

**Heart Healthy Cooking**
Thursday, May 8

**Healthy Summer Dishes**

**Time**
4:30 pm – 6:00 pm

**Place**
WMCC 3rd Floor
Multi-Purpose Room
200 North Park Street
Kalamazoo

**Register**
WMCC at 269-373-0109 or email nutrition@wmcc.org

**COOKING CLASS**
Led by WMCC Registered Dietitians

---

**Healing Yoga**

**When**
January 2014

**Time**
TBA

**Place**
WMCC 3rd Floor
Multi Purpose Room
200 North Park Street
Kalamazoo

**Register**
WMCC at 269-373-0109 or email nutrition@wmcc.org

This introductory yoga class is open to cancer patients who are currently in treatment or up to three years’ post treatment. Yoga can help promote balance, strength, flexibility and stress management. It can also help decrease symptoms of fatigue and help raise energy levels, especially during treatment and in the months that follow. Bring a yoga mat, large firm pillow, and blanket.

---

**Look Good... Feel Better**

**LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA**

**When**
January 2014

**Time**
TBA

**Place**
YMCA
2900 W. Centre Ave.
Portage, MI

**Register**
Trish Harrison
taharr@kzooymca.org
or 269-324-9622 x 435

LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA is a FREE 12-week fitness program designed for adult cancer survivors who have recently become deconditioned, or chronically fatigued from their treatment and/or the disease itself.

The goal of the small group series is to help participants build muscle mass and strength, increase flexibility and endurance, and improve functional ability. The program is designed to strengthen and support survivors on the road to recovery after their treatment regimens. Registration and medical release is required.

---

**Look Good Feel Better**

**When**
4th Monday of every month
December (no class)
January 27
February 24

**Time**
5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

**Place**
WMCC Lower Level
Conference Room
200 North Park Street
Kalamazoo

**Register**
American Cancer Society
at 1-800-227-2345

The Look Good Feel Better Program provides free information and cosmetic advice to women battling cancer. This training includes hands-on instruction on makeup and skin care. Cosmetics are provided for your personal makeover. Caregivers are welcome to attend, but only patients will receive a kit.
Follow the West Michigan Cancer Center on social media sites.

**Massage**
- **When:** Monday – Friday
- **Time:** 10:00 am – 3:00 pm
- **Place:** WMCC 2nd Floor Infusion Room
- **Register:** No registration required. Preference to patients in treatment.

**Quit Smoking**
- **End Tobacco Use**
- **Free Help**
  - WMCC is proud to partner with local and statewide community healthcare advocates to educate patients and loved ones about the health risks of tobacco use. Free quit smoking self-help tools and classes are available for WMCC patients and their loved ones.

**Survivorship Clinic**
- **Place:** WMCC Lower Level Conference Room
- **For questions call:** WMCC at 269-384-8677 or email survivors@wmcc.org
  - The WMCC Survivorship Clinic is a team-based approach to help cancer survivors improve their quality of life. Through the clinic, patients have access to social workers, registered dietitians, a nurse practitioner and genetic counselor to discuss and address issues following treatment.

**Tai Chi**
- **When:** Every Tuesday
- **Time:** 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm
- **Place:** WMCC 3rd Floor Multi Purpose Room
- **Register:** WMCC at 269-373-0109 or email nutrition@wmcc.org
  - Tai chi can be extremely beneficial to cancer patients during treatment. This introductory class can help you to safely improve balance as well as provide strength and flexibility, reduce stress, lower blood pressure and increase energy. No previous experience is necessary. If Kalamazoo Public Schools close, tai chi will be cancelled.

**WMCC Online**
- Follow the West Michigan Cancer Center on social media sites.
  - WestMiCancerCtr
  - wmc.org

**WMCC Wellness Activities**
- Available at no charge to patients newly-diagnosed, in treatment and up to three years’ post-treatment.
- Check wmcc.org for specific dates and times.
Corporate and Foundation Supporters
Pfizer Foundation
AT&T
Schrämm’s Greenhouse
Trust
Bowers Manufacturing Company
Old Mill Brewpub
United Way of Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region
Michigan Cancer Consortium
Ford, Kriekard, Soltis & Wise, P.C.
SK Fire Protection, Inc.
Walmart Corporate Giving

Visionary Circle $1,000+
Hawks for a Cause
The Wendy Holton Memorial Golf Outing
Ms. Michaelene Glowacz
Mr. Fred E. Hagen
Gary and Dolle Hubbard
Mr. Carl E. Lee
Drs. Joseph and Betty Jane Miro
Ms. Mary Little Tyler

Trustee Circle $500-$999
Ms. Alissa Bahr
Ms. Eleanor Bannigan
K. Norman and Rosemary Copeland
Mr. Michael Walkington

Patrons $100-$499
Anonymous
Mr. William K. Anderson
Harlow C. Bailey
Mark and Jane Bainbridge
Ms. Diane E. Barron
Mr. Robert L. Barry
Mr. Kurt Bartsch
Ms. Carol A. Bertrand
Ms. Karen A. Braash
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas J. Brown
Mr. and Mrs. John R. Burgess
Richard and Vicki Campbell
Mr. Edward R. Carter
Ms. Linda Huggett Carter
Mr. James Cavender
Jack and Carol Collins
Ms. Marilyn M. Currier
Mr. Richard A. Davidson
Dr. and Mrs. Glen Douglass
Mr. and Mrs. Louis E. Farraye
Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Georgeau
Ms. Anna J. Gibbons
Mr. and Mrs. Gay W. Hart
Mr. and Mrs. Carroll & Judith Hughes
Janet Kline-Hunt
Mr. Alan D. Kushner
Ms. Fay Leutzinger
Mr. Robert C. Lewis
Mr. O.I. Linet
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas M. Mansager
Leonie A. McLaughlin
Mr. Basil Morris
Ms. Ruth Moser
Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. Moses
Ms. Cynthia Nelson
Bradley and Joyce Olson
William and Sally Paletti
Leah and Robert Peters
Ms. Julia Phillips
Mr. Lewis Pitts
Mr. and Mrs. David Bruce Redman
Mrs. Alice M. Salisbury
Janet and Doris Schuring

Robert Severson
Kelly and Dave Smith
Mr. David Sturgis
Ms. Lillian Talanda
Ms. Pamela J. Tibbitts
Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Vlek
Mr. Michael G. Walters
Ms. Florence West
Pat Westrick
Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Whaley
Ms. Linda L. Wilson
Mr. Ethan G. Woods
Mr. Robert J. Worline
Mr. Matthew M. Zarantonello

Friends $1-$999
Ms. Diane J. Adams
Ms. Dawn R. Affhalter
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Atkin
John and Barb Allen
Imtrada B. Alspaugh
Mr. and Mrs. Jack E. Anderson
Mr. and Mrs. Russell L. Anderson
Mr. Bob Arvidson
Ms. Geneva Bailey
Arreil Z. Baker
Ms. Gretchen Baker
George W. Czirr & Lois J. Baker-Czirr
Ms. Ida M. Bellantine
Ms. Leona Barnes
Mr. and Mrs. Larry D. Barndhart
Mrs. Shirley Barrick
Ms. Rita Bean
Mr. and Mrs. Clair Belland
Constance L. Benson
John and Patricia Berninger
Kay J. Bevan
Mr. Lewis A. Bigler
Mr. Michael L. Bignell
Mr. and Mrs. Royce Bland
Larry and Lisa Bontrager
Ms. Deloris J. Boothe
Mr. and Mrs. John Bosma
Ms. Sheryl Bowman
Ms. Janet L. Brinkert
Ms. Martha Anne Brouwer
Mr. Walter R. Brown
Mr. and Mrs. Bob & Kristi Bruce
Ms. Karen Bruner
Mr. and Mrs. David Buchanan
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Buck
Mr. and Mrs. Edmond L. Buczkowski
Donnie M. Burch
Ms. Patricia L. Burchett
Mr. and Mrs. William C. Burk
Ms. Nancy L. Bushouse
Mr. and Mrs. Carl J. Bussema
Ms. Anne L. Cahow
Ms. Karen E. Callens
Ms. Julia Campbell
Mr. Richard Centala
Mr. and Mrs. Edwin P. Charles
Ms. Linda L. Clearwaters
Mr. George L. Cole
Mr. Ralph Cole
Mrs. Annie P. Coleman
Mr. Carlo D. Combs
Ms. Melva P. Cook
Mr. Gerald Cramer
Ms. Sherry L. Crouch
Ms. Jeanette Cutter
Mr. Richard H. Deter

Mark and Tammi Dibble
Kay Dickinson
James and Marlene Dines
Mrs. Glenda Drubin
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth H. Duemler
Ms. Bonnie Dumiao
Mr. and Mrs. Herman Ebbes
Bruce and Shirley Erlendson
Mrs. Cynthia Eustice
Mrs. Betty C. Evans
Terri Feron
Ms. Beverly Finntty
Mr. David W. Fischer
Donald and Jonalee Fisher
Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Fiesler
Ms. Shirley Flick
Mr. Richard J. Forbes
Mrs. Pauline Foss
Mr. and Mrs. David R. Frederick
Mrs. Martha E. Fuller
Mr. Richard Gailbreath
Dr. Michele Garcia
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Garrod
Mr. Ralph Gates
Mrs. Betty A. Geib
Mr. David George
Ramon and Roxanna Girder
Mary Giela
Ms. Antoinette M. Gironda
Mr. and Mrs. David & Janice Girton
Mr. Charles W. Glasser
Jeff and Bette Glindmeyer
Dr. Bert D. Gools
Mrs. Leontine Green
Jack-Lynn D. Greenhalgh
Mr. David C. Greenhoe
Richard and Rosemarie Griffith
Mr. and Mrs. N. Richard Haas
Mr. Charles Hagan
Mr. and Mrs. Richard D. Hake
William and Sandra Hambright
Mr. Gary Hamlin
Mrs. Gracie A. Harber
Donald and Marjorie Heath
Mrs. Ruth M. Hedlund
Mr. William J. Heldak
Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Heller
Mary and Gary Herder
Mr. Lillian L. Hershay
Everett and Margie Hiestand
Ms. Sondra R. Hillsburg
Ms. Kathleen J. Hobbs
Mr. and Mrs. Allen C. Holstrom
Mrs. Phil Holub
Mr. Duane Hostetler
Ms. Ann E. House
Mr. and Mrs. Wayne D. Housew
Mrs. Sharon D. Hunter
Mrs. Dorothy Hunt
Marlene Jabara
Ms. Rochelle K. Johnson
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Jurczak
Mrs. Ruth Kacienda
Joan E. Kelley
William and Emily Kelvington
Ms. Grace A. Kerwin
Ms. Ila Kinder
Ms. Jeanne-Marie King
Mr. and Mrs. William R. Kinney
Mr. and Mrs. Gearald Kinsey
Ms. Elizabeth M. Kipper

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dean Klisinger
Mr. and Mrs. Louis M. Klein
Ms. Rita Kling
Mrs. Linda Klok
Mr. and Mrs. Vahakn Knarian
Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Kooy
Ms. Elaine Kovach
Mrs. Marlene Krajewski
Mr. Bill Krasean
Mrs. Liesia Krautmanis
Ms. Carolyn Kuehn
Tina and Rob Land
Mr. and Mrs. Victor & Loretta Laughlin
Mr. Warren Lawrence
Mr. and Mrs. Phillip M. Lazarus
Ms. Barbara E. Le Mense
Gunars Liepins
Mrs. Sally A. Lindsay
Mrs. Janet Liuers
Ms. Christine Locke
Mr. Kenneth E. Long
Mr. Lloyd Ludwig
Ms. Dorothy Lyles
Mr. Tom Lynch
Martin and Sandra Mann
Ms. Linda K. Marklin
Mrs. Annette Markovich
Ms. Betty Markward
Ms. Janet K. Martin
Ms. June Mattingly
Ms. Elaine G. Maxa
Mr. and Mrs. Kay & Marilyn Maxson
Mr. and Mrs. Carl McEwen
Mr. and Mrs. Melvin J. McDadden
Mr. and Mrs. Philip L. Mendham
Mr. and Mrs. Norman L. Mihills
Mrs. Barbara Milbocker
David and Yvonne Miles
Mr. John Millar
Sammie M. Miller-Paul
Julius and Judith Millers
Mr. Alfred Minke
Mrs. Margaret S. Money
Gayl Morse
John and Suzanne Moyer
Mr. Johnny L. Mulay
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Mullin
Dr. Dale R. Mulch
Mr. and Mrs. Chet M. Neal
Mr. Ron Nemedi
Ms. Stella Niedzielski
Ms. Mary Nigg
Ms. Patzy J. Noe
Mrs. Helen L. Norris
Donald and Elayne Nottingham
Frank and Judy Nowak
Mrs. Florine O’Donnell
Bob and Penny Ogrin
Mrs. Judith Oliver
Ms. Amy M. Onderlinde
Wolfgang and Dana Paap
Elia and Allen Palmer
Mrs. Bernice Parker
Mr. and Mrs. James W. Peck
Ms. Sherry L. Peto
John and Joyce Petro
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Phelps
Ms. Marilyn K. Pierce
Mrs. Georgia Pinto
Mr. and Mrs. Tobin Ploehn
Ms. Dawn L. Potter Williams

continued on next page
WMCC Donors - continued

Ms. Kathleen L. Praedel
Elle R. Quinones
Mr. August Radtke
Mr. Jay Rantz
Ms. Phyllis Rappeport
Mrs. Joyce A. Rapson
Mr. and Mrs. Roger & Sally Rathburn
Ms. Nancy C. Ray
Ms. Margaret V. Reid
Ms. Julie Reinholt
Mrs. Theresa Rerucha
Tommy and Cedreia Ricks
Ms. Sue A. Riely
Mr. Arthur E. Roberts & Mrs. Betty Lujan-Roberts
Don and Fran Rodnammer
Liberta G. Rogers
Mr. and Mrs. William Roseboom, Sr.
Mrs. Margaret Rowe
Andrei Rozentals
Mr. Joseph L. Rzanca
Lawrence and Betty Jane Sarhatt
Donald and Jacqueline Schaefer

Mr. Andre G. Schirk
Mrs. Kate Schlabach
Mr. and Mrs. John R. Schmidt
Mrs. Evelyn M. Schut
Gordon and Yvonne Selkirk
Mr. and Mrs. Karle Sherman
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry & Marlene Simkins
Mr. Steven F. Simon
Mr. Thomas J. Simon
Belden and Barbara Smith
Mr. Harold L. Smith
Mrs. Louise A. Smith
Mrs. Reta M. Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Stewart R. Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur E. Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Sojies
Fred and Marcela Soukup
Ms. Bonnie M. Sparacino
Joyce E. Spencer
Ms. Louise Sportel
Mr. Robert K. Springer
Ms. Ruth E. Starrfield
Ms. Hillary Stanislavski

Marian H. Starbuck
Ms. Margaret Stickle
Mrs. Lillian Jane Stiefel
Eugene Stiteleer
Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas L. Sunlin
Mr. Edward W. Talbot
Ms. Mary Tankr
Mr. William L. Taylor
Mr. Richard J. Theakston
Ms. Susan M. Theisen
Ms. Donna F. Thomas
Ms. Louise E. Thomas
Duane and Joyce Triemstra
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph O. Trudeau
Mr. and Mrs. Bernie J. Vallier
John and Jean Vanburen
Mr. and Mrs. James R. VanderMolen
Mrs. Betty L. VanderSlik
Mr. Paul VandeWouwer
Mr. and Mrs. Frank VanOosten
Ms. Flora VanWeelder
Mr. Thomas Vargo
Mr. Edward C. Verity

Mr. and Mrs. Arie D. Visser
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Visser
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph A. Vogel
Ms. Lucy Wadney
Mrs. Frieda Walter
Mr. and Mrs. Martin L. Walters
Ms. Phyllis C. Walters
Mr. Tom Walton
Mrs. Darlene C. Ward
Jody R. Watts
Mr. Arthur S. Wehlig
Ms. Margaret A. Weiss
James and Cheryl Werner
Mr. and Mrs. James A. Westcott
Mr. and Mrs. Steven D. Wheat
Mr. Richard E. Willard, Jr.
Mrs. Patricia M. Williams
Ms. Sally J. Woford
Ms. Sheryl K. Woodstock
Mr. Gregory Youdell
Don and Carol Zoner
Jake and Marlan Zuidema
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard J. Zwart

WMCC Tribute Donors

In Memory of Gale Arkwright
Anonymous
Jan Birkhold
Randy J. Crandall
Cliff Jepson
Bill Kannegieter
Karl J. Nock
Patricia M. Tompkins

In Memory of Bruce Barker
Margaret A. Olds-Muse
In Memory of Eleanor Brown
Henry Richard A. Funeral Home
In Memory of Mary Bullock
Deanna Garhart
Nancy Weston
In Memory of Gladys Casey
Edward Casey
In Memory of Florence P. Cook
Florence G. Kaylor
In Memory of Lee Coville Jr.
Karol Baughman
Harold Coville
Merle L. Coville
Wendell C. Coville
Willbur H. Coville
Richard J. Craig
Steve Dentier
Gail Dellow
Margaret G. Elwell
Lori Hart
Cliff Miller
Bob Myrold
Marvin Piper
Matt Preston
Alfred A. Schiebner
Willard Mohney
In Memory of Robert Davidson
Eileen Kristner
In Memory of Barbara DeBoer
Eugene Berg
Edward Lean
In Memory of Steven DeKubber
Debbie Geringer
In Memory of Nancy DeVries
Jacquelyn B. Donovan

Timothy J. Klein
Mary E. Vandenberg
In Memory of Barbara Dolph
Willard Mohney
In Memory of Lori Everseld
Robert M. Ogrin
Phyllis N. VanVugt-Bratt tte
In Memory of Diane Evans
Gale L. Arent
James R. Bingham
David A. Blythe
Robert E. Butler
Tiffanie L. Carnago
C. Robert Cowell
DeeAnn Dopp
Elizabeth French
James Goecker
Russell Hoyt
Jerre G. Ihrcke
Kathy A. Johnston
Barbara E. Le Mense
Terrance Moyer
William J. Reedy
Leo A. Thielenman
PEO, Chapter DW
In Memory of Norma Fleming
Abby Lilly
In Memory of Robin Griffith
Ardis L. Griffith
Bowers Manufacturing Company
In Memory of Janet Harding
R. L. Goodrich
Donald A. Heath
Kathleen L. Jordan
Dean Pennala
Peter Wilkins
In Memory of Eleanor Woodlan Heikes
Arleen Lapekas
Huston C. Rinehart
John F. Scheel
Richard Simmons
Donald P. Stormer
In Memory of Wendy Hotrum
Susan E. Wagner

In Memory of William Hughes
Mary R. Snow
In Memory of Joanne Hutchins
Jack Roombus
Gary E. Ruoff
Norman L. Terry
In Memory of Roy Johnson
Barb Miller
In Memory of Lawrence Jones
Leatrice Jones
In Memory of Phil Koss
J. David Kosacek
In Memory of Judith Lattes
Eileen Krimer
In Memory of Jennifer Lambert
Kenneth H. Duemler
In Memory of MaryAnn LeDoux
Edwin J. Willie
In Memory of Terry Lentz
Patricia A. Kubiszna
William B. Ross
In Memory of Mark A. Lyster
Robin K. Airhart
Daniel P. Ryan
Success Mortgage Partners, Inc.
In Memory of Lowell Maxam
John B. Burhans
Jack Goodrich
Harry Moyle
John Thingstad
In Memory of Art Munford
Clyde C. Mumford
Doris Mumford
Kyle Mumford
Peggy Mumford
Chris Oliver
In Memory of Jacklyn Nemedi
Kay Dunfield
In Memory of Ken Nielsen
Donald A. Marvins
In Memory of Betty Nutt
Gordy Krum
Sally J. Gildea
In Memory of James Nutt
Sally J. Gildea

In Memory of Frank Papierz
Leon Puzevic
In Memory of Elia Phelps
Robert Dekker
Nancy M. Fish Stone
Phillip M. Lazarus
Brenda Phelps
In Memory of Dr. Leroy R. Ray, Jr.
Phyllis Wall
In Memory of Roberta Ritsaem
Anonymous
Kathleen A. Zeeb
In Memory of Chris Rowe
Mary Lynn Rowe
In Memory of Sandra Rowland
Samantha Rowland
In Memory of Lynn Marie Ruse
Arnold Johnston
In Memory of Linda Salisbury
AON
In Memory of Marilyn Schwabauer
Mary D. DeYoung
John T. Schouwburg
In Memory of Bette Serbantez
Linda H. Carter
In Memory of Helen Simon
Theodore Simon
In Memory of Russell W. Smith
Donald J. Mason
Ann Milbeck
Robert E. Robbins
In Memory of Martha Spearman
Mary Ann Carey
Susan L. Lamer
In Memory of Marleah Thompson
Joan M. Beattie
Ewald F. Bierlein
Jean F. Bischoff
Edwin K. Bosworth
Byrl J. Bowman
Betty S. Bridges
Karlo A. Dill
Frederick L. Frey
James Goecker
Darrel D. Graffis

continued on next page
It is WMCC’s tradition to spend the holiday season honoring and celebrating cancer patients and their families, as well as renewing our commitment to the fight against cancer through our Season of Hope campaign.

A Season of Hope is about taking action in honor of all those who have been touched by cancer. WMCC pledges to continue to be the epicenter of cancer care and community cancer education for Southwest Michigan. WMCC pledges to continue to be the place you turn to when a family member is diagnosed with cancer because you know you will receive top-notch cancer care. But, we can’t do this alone.

Please join us in a Season of Hope by making a donation to WMCC. Your financial contribution will provide direct support to our patients for all the services provided at our center that are not covered by insurance, for charity care for those who do not have insurance, and to our community education and prevention campaigns. Your gift will be a tangible reminder that, in the face of cancer, our community unites in support, in hope.

Donations to WMCC support a wide variety of cancer support and prevention activities right here in Southwest Michigan. Each year, thanks to the generosity of our community, WMCC is able to provide:

- Social work services for our patients and their families
- Nutrition counseling services for patients
- A daily coffee cart, massage services, exercise classes, and transportation for patients receiving treatment
- Cancer screenings for low-income, uninsured individuals
- Community education classes, including an annual seminar for primary care physicians so they are better able to detect cancer
- And more...

Please consider making as generous a gift as you can.

Season of Hope gifts can be made in memory or honor of someone. Your honoree, or their family, will be notified of your special gift and their name will be listed among our Season of Hope honorees in the WMCC newsletter.

For more information about making a donation to WMCC, please contact Jessica Hermann-Wilmarth, Director of Development, at 269-373-0129 or by email at jwilmarth@wmcc.org.

WMCC Board of Directors

Chairperson
William Mayer MD, MPH
Vice President, Chief Medical Informatics Officer & Community Health Bronson Healthcare Group

Vice Chairperson
Laura Lentenbrink
Vice President, Human Resources Borgess Medical Center

Treasurer/Secretary
Rebecca Eklund, CPA, CHFP
Assistant Vice President/Controller Bronson Healthcare Group

Director
Joseph Mirro MD
President and CEO/CMO West Michigan Cancer Center

Director
Patrick Dyson
Executive Vice President Strategy & Corporate Services Borgson Health

Director
Katie Harrelson
Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer Bronson Methodist Hospital

Director
Scott Oliver
Controller Borgess Medical Center

Director
Joseph Gesmundo
American Village Builders Borgess Community Representative

Director
Floyd (Bud) Parks
Harold and Grace Upjohn Foundation Bronson Community Representative

WMCC Tribute Donors - continued

Aileen Greanya
Bob Green
Phyllis E. Hall
Leon Hayward
Sue E. Kovach
Peter Marsiglia
Kevin S. Nelmes
James S. Platt
Bernard Potts
Ronny J. Redman
Kurt L. Remmert
Robyn D. Roberts
Mark A. Root
Marshall Rutz
Mike and Sharon Soelye
Gregory R. Stone
Frederick L. Stull
Janice VanDerKley
Donna M. Waits
Marcia L. Waits
Johnnie L. White
Robert G. White
Mary Lou Wright
Piante Moran
In Memory of Frances Verity
Karina Carr
George G. Bruzza
Patricia C. Crane
Martin R. Debel
Gary R. Drouin
Deronda Dunbar
Menno Haan
Wallace O. Haight
John Haskins
Nancy A. Ray
Robert D. Sharp
Henry Tyson
Cornelia W. VanBruggen

In Memory of Jeanne Weaver
Robert F. Bishop
Fred Bowman
Linda K. Burke
James E. DeHaan
Robert Hardy
Sue Hardy
Steven L. Laws
Joyce I. Neubauer
Julius Remur
David J. Stafford

In Memory of Richard Werner
Carol J. Corbett
In Memory of Betty Yeske
Bob Burg

In Honor of Laura Brunke
Kim Thayer
In Honor of Nancy Centers
Paul W. Stuart
In Honor of Don and Carole Hodgman
Harold H. Kraus
In Honor of Barbara LeMense
PEO, Chapter DW
In Honor of Fred Miller
Walt Goodrich
In Honor of Dr. Kirk Payne
Edward Casey
In Honor of Jennifer Rowe
Mary Lynn Rowe
In Honor of Christine Lyster Ryan
Robin K. Airhart
Daniel P. Ryan
Success Mortgage Partners, Inc.
In Honor of Emmy Steves
Amy Steward

A Season of Hope
Changing to Serve You Better

We want to let you know about some recent changes in our Radiation Therapy Department. These changes are aimed at improving our service to you. You’ll notice improvements in two key areas: 1) Staff reassignments; 2) Nurses’ station renovations. The goal is to help you interact with us more easily and thus receive better overall care.

First, we have paired each doctor with a specific nurse to take care of you in a team-style approach. In addition, we have two physician assistants, a support nurse and medical assistant who are also available to serve you:

**Linda Grossheim, MD**  
Radiation Oncologist –  
Division Chief - Radiation Department  
Deb Haseman, RN  
Primary Nurse for Dr. Grossheim

**Vera Nigrin, MD**  
Radiation Oncologist  
Nancy Weber, RN  
Primary Nurse for Dr. Nigrin

**Jeff Radawski, MD**  
Radiation Oncologist  
Nick Mills, RN  
Primary Nurse for Dr. Radawski

**Additional Radiation Oncology Staff Members:**

- **John Green, PA-C** - Radiation Oncology Physician Assistant  
- **Tricia Miedema, PA-C** - Radiation Oncology Physician Assistant  
- **Heather McEwen, RN** - Support Nurse / Radiation Oncology  
- **Hayley Harris, MA** - Mid-level & Dept. Medical Assistant

Second, we will soon begin renovations:

**RENOVATION OF THE NURSES’ STATION—RELOCATION OF STAFF**

- The nurses’ station within the Radiation Therapy Department is now enclosed and is no longer available as a walk-up station.

- The nurses have been moved closer to the physicians and into private offices. This allows them to interact more efficiently, and thus provide you with better care.

**WHAT IF I HAVE A QUESTION & NEED TO ASK A STAFF MEMBER?**

If you are currently being treated with radiation therapy and have a side effect management issue requiring a doctor or nurse’s attention, please mention this to the radiation therapist. He or she will use the current pager system to notify the appropriate staff member and you will be seen in an exam room.

If you have a general question or concern that does not require an immediate visit with a nurse or physician, you will be asked to do one of the following:

- Stop at the Front Registration Desk (outside of the Radiation Therapy Dept.) and fill out a **Walk-Up Screening Form**. The appropriate staff member will then be notified.

- Call the **Phone Triage Line**: 269-384-8664. Your call will be addressed that same day, if possible, or no later than the following business day. This method works well for prescription refill requests, recent test results, follow up and general scheduling questions, etc.

**PLEASE NOTE:** All prescription refill requests must be made 24-48 hours in advance. Please call right away when you see that you are getting low on any particular medication. Last minute or same day requests may not be processed that same day. Thank you for your patience as we make these improvements.

Volunteer Spotlight: Bob Elwell

*By Deb Chesney  
WMCC Volunteer Coordinator*

He’s a devoted husband, father of three, grandfather of six, World War II enthusiast, joker, blood donor and elementary school reading buddy. If that weren’t enough, he’s also one of WMCC’s most committed volunteers, faithfully dedicating one afternoon every week for the past ten years to bring a little bit of cheer (and caffeine) to patients and their loved ones.

His name is Bob Elwell and you could say he is just crazy about the coffee cart.

Bob’s journey with the cart began in September of 2003. He’d just retired after more than 35 years working in banking and retirement planning. Bob and his wife, Jan, loved spending time with their three daughters and six grandchildren.

Yet, Bob yearned to add other meaningful commitments to his life. His dad had passed away many years before from cancer and Bob decided that donating time at West Michigan Cancer Center would be a way to honor his memory and give back.

So, he began to push the cart every Wednesday afternoon, pouring endless cups of coffee and doling out snacks, all while serving up jokes and little packages of batteries (with a note attached, ‘gift not included’). Why batteries? They’re for chemo patients, he says, who utilize battery-operated pumps.

Bob also donates blood eight times a year to the Red Cross and volunteers at Richland Elementary School where he serves as a reading buddy.

We’re glad he’s our buddy, too, and we want to thank him for giving his heart and his time for the past decade to our patients and caregivers.
Regular Business Hours
The Cancer Center is open Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm.

After Hours
Our answering service takes calls after hours and on weekends and holidays. Call and tell the service your doctor’s name. The on-call doctor will then return your call as soon as possible.

In Case of Emergency
In a life-threatening emergency, please call 911 or report to the nearest hospital emergency room.

Call Your Doctor
Please call us if you experience any of the following:
- Temperature of 100.5° F or higher
- Chills (with or without a temperature)
- Nausea and/or vomiting that cannot be controlled in 24 hours
- Diarrhea that cannot be controlled in 24 hours using Imodium AD®, Kapectate or other over-the-counter product
- Unusual cough, shortness of breath or lung congestion
- Any bleeding or excessive bruising
- Pain or burning with urination
- Mouth sores or sore throat
- Sinus pressure, pain or congestion
- You develop a rash, or a current rash worsens
- Pain not controlled by current medications

When in Doubt, Please Call Us
Call as early in the day as possible. That way, we’ll have more resources available to assist you.

In Case of Inclement Weather
In case of inclement weather (snow, a tornado, etc.), you should listen to local news on your television or radio stations for information about closings. We will also post information on our website at www.wmcc.org, on our Facebook page and on Twitter. If it is at all possible, we will attempt to contact scheduled patients. You may also call 269-382-2500; there will be a recording if the Cancer Center is delayed in opening or closed because of weather.

Prescription Refills
At each visit, please bring a complete, updated list of all medications you are taking, including prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines and vitamins. This information is vital in creating your unique care plan. Please note, however, that when it is time for a refill, our doctors can write orders only for medications they have originally prescribed. Refills for prescriptions written by another doctor will need to be filled by that doctor and may require a recent visit to him or her. When it’s time to refill a prescription written by one of our doctors, it is most convenient to do so when you’re here for a visit. Prescription refills by phone will take 24 – 48 hours.

You may pay your bill online at MyWMCC, our secure, patient portal on our website. Visit www.wmcc.org, click on the MyWMCC link and follow the instructions.

Phone lines are answered by WMCC staff members during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 p.m. After regular business hours and on weekends, our answering service handles all calls.