



H.O.P.E. LIFELINE



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H.O.P.E. (Help for Oncology Problems & Emotional Support) is an all volunteer cancer support network that provides free assistance to cancer patients and their families facing the challenges of cancer. H.O.P.E. is a 501 (C)(3) non-profit funded through donations. Our office is located at 13275 Blymire Hollow Road, Stewartstown, PA. The official registration and financial information of Help for Oncology Problems and Emotional Support may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1 (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

H.O.P.E. does not receive funding and is not affiliated with the American Cancer Society. Funding comes from donations made by private individuals and the civic/business community. Phone: 717-244-2174 or 717-244-2161.

(E-mail: barb@hopeforcancerfamilies.org www.hopeforcancerfamilies.org)

In this time of social distancing, we at H.O.P.E. have had to cancel yet again our spring fundraising events. However, on Friday, May 7, we have a chance to be part of York County's Day of Giving, an opportunity to unite our community around causes we truly believe in.

So much has been canceled this past year. We have held only two events, and one of those was 'virtual.' Our spring events are being rescheduled for summer and fall, and we're crossing our fingers that they can take place. One thing that has not been canceled this year, however, is people's generosity. We're hoping that generosity continues on May 7 when you can go online to www.givelocalyork.org and make a difference by donating to H.O.P.E. Donations open at midnight and end at 11:59 p.m.

If you are not comfortable donating online, you may mail your donation to H.O.P.E. (P.O. Box 279, Stewartstown, PA 17363) and mark your check for "Give Local York." Please make sure we will receive it before May 7 so we can enter it into our tally. PayPal is also acceptable (from our website under the 'Donations' button), but like the checks please indicate it is for Give Local York fundraiser. There will be matching grants so we need it beforehand to enhance our matching donation.

H.O.P.E.'s Office Hours are Monday through Friday, 9:30—3.

Please call in advance to set up an appointment for:

- Intake
- Wigs/hats/scarves
- Pantry

Please direct all calls to the H.O.P.E. office at 717-244-2174.

Support Group Meeting

You may recall in last month's issue we said there would be a possibility of a meeting in May. That possibility is becoming a reality. On Wednesday, May 12, we look forward to holding our first support group in over a year, adhering to all Covid precautions. So bring your mask and appetite and lots of stories to share.

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Each month it seems as if we're still in limbo and everything is still 'virtual.' Well, this month's Editor's Desk has more good news than bad.

The best news is all the save-the-date calendar events from last month's issue are still on! And we're starting up the monthly support group meetings this month. Barb and Carol are beyond excited about interacting with people once again at actual events. There will be a touch of giddiness when we're together again (carefully, of course). Page 5 of this issue contains these events, with one addition. Speaking of events and fundraisers, do we have a great one for you! Rada Cutlery offers not only high quality knives and other utensils that are made in America and have a lifetime guarantee, but they also feature other types of nifty gadgets as well as food, literally from soups to nuts to dips and desserts. You can find the catalogue on our facebook page at facebook.com/HOPE-Help-for-Oncology-Problems-Emotional-Support-122924154396789/ or on our website hopelifeline.org/rada-cutlery/.

May is also the month we announce our **scholarship winners**. Every year for more than two decades H.O.P.E. has awarded up to four scholarships to outstanding high school seniors who have had cancer in their immediate family. This year in addition to our three winners we are also awarding a scholarship for the local breast cancer non-profit Pink, who recently closed their doors but asked us to carry on their scholarship tradition. The Pink scholarship winner is **Anna Hale**, who is graduating from York Catholic High School. H.O.P.E.'s winners are **Faith Beall**, from Fairfield Area High School, **Vance Hagerman**, from New Oxford High School, and **Lucas Strickland**, from York Suburban High School. You'll learn more about these impressive young men and women in our next issue.

The bad news is we are still not out of this pandemic, and despite the life-altering vaccines this disease is nowhere close to being overcome. All we can do is continue to follow medical professionals' guidelines and act with consideration for others. Of the many adverse effects of the pandemic is cancer screenings. They have fallen in the past year and doctors are worried. See our article on page 4. Another consequence of the shutdown and isolation is the increase in alcohol consumption. Recent studies are being published that reveal how even a drink a day can increase the odds for cancer. See our article on the next page. On a lighter note, spring means baseball, and this year fans are returning to the stadiums after a year away. On page 5 read about two Baltimore Orioles who conquered cancer.

Finally, a request to our families who have recently lost someone to cancer. Every month we are blessed to share joys and triumphs that our cancer patients are experiencing in their journey. Along with these happy times, we also share in the sorrow of losing a patient after a long, hard fight. This month we learned of the passing of seven members of the H.O.P.E. family that happened over the past year. Because of the expense of printing an obituary in the paper, many times a death will occur and we have no knowledge. We want to be able to reach out to our families in whatever is happening in their lives whether joy or sorrow. We are asking if you have had a loved one pass to please notify us so that we can support you in your time of need.

H.O.P.E.'S ANGEL CORNER

BY BARB TITANISH, PRESIDENT & CO-FOUNDER H.O.P.E.



On a cool, sunny morning we had a visit from 5 Exelon employees, Meg Witman, Nick Davis, John Daughen, Krystal Ford, and Devin Flannery. They came to spend the day here at H.O.P.E. Haven and volunteer to do a little gardening!

The day of mulching, planting and trimming bushes was extremely rewarding for everyone. We couldn't be more appreciative for such generous individuals to come and offer of themselves so selflessly.

Sharing lunch, jokes and stories was enjoyable. We introduced them to Smokehouse BBQ sandwiches, which were awesome. We hope to see you all again soon!



“The world’s favorite season is the spring. All things seem possible in May.”

- Edwin Teale

If you would prefer to receive our newsletter by email (and help us save postage), please send a note to our Assistant Director Carol Nelson, at assistant@hopeforcancerfamilies.org, and she'll put you on our list. (And it will have color!) Thanks!

Alcohol and Cancer Are Not A Good Mix

It should come as no surprise to anyone that alcohol consumption increased by 14 percent from 2019 to 2020. For women it was even higher, 41 percent. Although “light to moderate alcohol consumption is considered acceptable for healthy adults,” with CDC guidelines defining excessive alcohol consumption for women as four or more drinks during a single occasion or eight or more drinks a week, and for men five or more drinks during a single occasion or 15 or more drinks per week, experts say that even moderate alcohol consumption increases the odds of getting cancer. Alcohol is the third leading preventable cause of cancer, behind tobacco and obesity.

In the U.S., 41 percent of men and 39 percent of women will develop cancer at some point in their lifetimes, according to the American Cancer Society. The group estimates that around 42 percent of newly diagnosed cancers are potentially preventable, by avoiding such measures as cigarette smoking (accounting for 19 percent of cancer cases), excess weight (7.8 percent of cases), drinking alcohol, (5.6 percent of cases), ultraviolet radiation (2.9 percent of cases), and physical inactivity (2.9 percent of cases). While heavy drinking poses the greatest hazard, moderate drinking – generally defined as two drinks a day for men and one drink a day for women – can also imperil health.

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In October, the American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO), which represents many of the nation’s top cancer doctors, along with the American Institute for Cancer Research, the American Public Health Association and five other groups called on the federal government to add a cancer warning to alcohol labels, saying there was strong scientific consensus that alcohol can cause several types of cancer, including breast and colon cancers. A study published in January in *Cancer Epidemiology* concluded that alcohol accounted for more than one in eight cases of breast cancer in women and one in 10 cases of colorectal and liver cancers nationwide. The link between alcohol and cancer was the focus of a recent large study that found that alcohol causes 75,000 new cases of cancer in America every year, and 19,000 deaths. Medical experts have long recognized alcohol a risk factor for various other cancers including cancers of the mouth, throat, voice box, esophagus, and liver.



Scientists have known for many years that alcohol promotes cancer. Experts say that all types of alcoholic beverages can increase cancer risk because they all contain ethanol, which can cause DNA damage, oxidative stress, and cell proliferation. Ethanol is metabolized by the body into another carcinogen, acetaldehyde, and it can influence breast cancer risk by elevating estrogen levels.

So why isn’t alcohol near the top of risk factors lists? One reason is the popular idea that has been circulating for decades that moderate alcohol intake, especially red

wine, is good for heart health. Recent studies, however, refute those claims. The American Heart Association states that “no research has established a cause-and-effect link between drinking alcohol and better heart health.” People who drink red wine may have lower rates of heart disease for other reasons, such as healthier lifestyles, better diets, or higher socioeconomic status. This and other explanations have led the federal government to no longer promote moderate drinking in its Dietary Guidelines for Americans. A panel of scientists called for the government to lower the recommended daily limit to just one drink a day for both men and women.

But the alcohol industry lobbied fiercely against that change, and the latest guidelines, published in December, did not include the lowered drink recommendation. The American Cancer Society also issued new guidelines last year that for the first time took a tough stance on drinking, warning that for cancer prevention, “there is no safe level of consumption.” Moderate drinking is no longer considered protective and drinking less is always better than drinking more.

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Experts realize that these are hard words to hear, especially during this period of coping with extraordinary stresses. But they’re hoping that people who increased their alcohol intake in the past year will try to avoid making alcohol a daily habit down the road, and that they will take other steps to relieve their stress and lower their risk such as exercising, improving their diets, and reaching out to others for support.

Cancer Screenings Are Down During Covid

Months of lockdowns and waves of surging Covid cases throughout last year shuttered cancer clinics and testing labs, or reduced hours at other places, resulting in steep declines in the number of cancer screenings, especially for breast and colorectal cancers. Numerous studies showed that the number of patients screened or given a diagnosis of cancer fell during the early months of the pandemic and the numbers are still way down. Testing levels in November were about 25 percent lower than in 2019. The number of biopsies, used to diagnose cancer, decreased by about one-third.

One result of this is that doctors are seeing patients with more advanced breast cancer and colorectal cancer. Many cancer specialists are concerned that patients are coming in with more severe disease. Even now that screening centers and clinics are reopening, screenings are still down. Some of this is due to a difficulty to get an appointment due to demand. Some fear going to a hospital where Covid patients might be. Some fear taking time away from work during this uncertain time of employment or can't afford a test's cost. Patients are staying away even if they have insurance because they can't afford the deductibles or copayments.

In the past year telemedicine has bloomed, with some extolling it as the new wave of medicine. Many doctors defend this practice as a critical tool when office visits are too hazardous for most patients and staff. Oncologist Dr. Ravi D. Rao has a caveat, however. A California woman who had stomach pain refused to go to a doctor last March because she didn't want to get Covid. She had a telehealth visit with her primary care physician and tried over-the-counter medications, but nothing helped. As her health deteriorated she finally agreed to go to an emergency room at the end of May where she was given a diagnosis of Stage 4 pancreatic cancer. She died in September. Dr. Rao was the oncologist who ended up treating her, and afterward he said, "In my mind, telemedicine and cancer don't travel together."



*“A hot dog at
the ballgame
beats roast beef
at the Ritz.”*

- Humphrey Bogart

Game-Changing Drug For Esophageal Cancer

Esophageal cancer is rare in the United States, accounting for one percent of all cancers, with about 15,000 deaths per year. We reported on it in last month's newsletter, where we said that it's one of those cancers that isn't easy to spot early and in later stages is difficult to treat much less cure. According to Dr. Ronan Kelly, director of the Charles A. Sammons Cancer Center at Baylor University Medical Center, 75 percent of patients diagnosed with esophageal cancer go through extraordinarily difficult sequences of radiation, chemotherapy, and surgery that disfigures the digestive system only to learn that cancer is still present or has a high likelihood of recurring. In April a study was published in the New England Journal of Medicine announcing a "game changer" in the treatment of this cancer.

Nivolumab is a checkpoint inhibitor that binds to a protein to help immune cells kill cancer cells better. It is already used for some patients with Hodgkins's lymphoma, melanoma, and colorectal cancer. A clinical trial was conducted in 29 countries with almost 800 esophageal cancer patients with a percentage receiving the drug and a percentage receiving a placebo. The patients had all had chemotherapy and radiation followed by surgery to remove their cancers. As usually happens, pathology reports showed that the surgery did not remove all of the cancer cells, which still lurked in lymph nodes and elsewhere. The trial lasted a year, and a follow-up was done two years after that. Among the 532 patients who received nivolumab, the median disease-free survival was 22.4 months as compared to 11.0 months among the 262 patients who received the placebo.

Dr. David Ilson, an esophageal cancer expert at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York, said he didn't expect the treatment to succeed. "This is really a landmark paper. The drug will become a new standard of care."

Baltimore O's and the Big C



Baltimore Orioles' first baseman **Trey Mancini** received a standing ovation in the team's home opener against the Boston White Sox on Thursday, April 8. It was his first time back on the field in almost two years. In March of 2020 when Mancini reported for spring training, just days before training was suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic, a routine physical revealed something shocking: the then 27-year-old had colon cancer. His father, who is a doctor, had suffered from colon cancer years earlier, but Mancini never suspected he had anything to worry about at his young age.

When the rest of MLB returned for a shortened season in the summer, Mancini wasn't among them. Instead, he underwent surgery, followed by six months of chemotherapy. As most other patients experienced during those months, he had to go to these alone. And yet he wasn't alone during his recovery; in addition to family, girlfriend, friends, and teammates, he was supported by Orioles' fans. They showed their support by buying shirts with his No. 16 alongside the word "fight," and they helped raise more than \$80,000 for the Colorectal Cancer Alliance.

A year later Mancini has been declared cancer free, thanks to early detection and rapid treatment, and as if to prove his return to health he hit a home run in his first game back, his first homer since September of 2019 and the 87th of his career, all with the O's.

Another player well known to Baltimore Oriole fans during the 90s is **Eric Davis**. This popular, powerful outfielder learned in June 1997 that the debilitating stomach pain which doubled him over in the dugout in Cleveland a few weeks earlier was caused by a cancerous mass in his colon, which had initially been misdiagnosed as an abscess. Davis also underwent chemotherapy treatments following his surgery. He managed to come back to play in September and the postseason all the while still enduring chemotherapy treatment, which lasted until the following February.

Davis played with the Orioles for only two seasons, and he'll probably be best remembered for the pinch-hit home run in game 5 of the American League Championship against, of all teams, the Cleveland Indians, that won the game for the Os. Davis is still active in baseball and works as a roving instructor in the Cincinnati Reds organization.

Yard Sale Shrewsbury Amish Mrkts	Saturday, May 15
Mason-Dixon Car Show Dallastown Family Restaurant	Saturday, May 29 (4 p.m.—8 p.m.)
H.O.P.E. Multi-Family Yard Sale 16580 Green Valley Court Stewartstown 17373	Fri, July 9 & Sat, July 10 8 a.m.—1 p.m.
Golf Tournament Hickory Heights Golf Course	Saturday, August 21
Twin Rose Lady Riders Ride for H.O.P.E. York Motorcycle Club (Any vehicles are invited to participate.)	Sunday, September 12 Begins 10 a.m.
Voices for Hope Banquet Out Door Country Club	Thursday, September 16 5:30—9 p.m.
Stay Wild - Life in the Outdoors Festival and H.O.P.E.'s Country Fair North Hopewell Fish and Game Association	Saturday, September 25

Dates for events still to be announced include the **Bull Roast**, **Fall Bingo**, the **Road Rally**, and the **Craft and Vendor Show**. More details about every event will be included in future newsletters. You can also find details closer to each event on our Facebook page and website.

**Stewartstown and New Freedom Lions Clubs
Bike, Run or Walk with the Lions 2021
Saturday, June 5th
9 am—11 am**

Register today on Active.com:
<https://www.active.com/new-freedom-pa/cycling/races/bike-run-or-walk-with-the-lions-2021?int=>

Registration includes participation in the event, a goodie/snack bag, finisher medal, entry in a special contest, and more. Food will be available for purchase, as will custom t-shirts the morning of the event. Registration is \$20 before May 15th, \$25 afterwards.

Registration/check-in opens at 8:30 am. You may start anytime between 9 am—11 am. Participants will travel north along the rail trail towards Glen Rock. Go as far as you wish. There will be check points along the trail for completing 5, 10 or 20km.

Get outside and walk, bike or run the NCR Trail while helping your community!

All proceeds benefit:
 H.O.P.E.
 The YMCA
 Stewartstown and New Freedom Lions Clubs

Join us at the Rail Trail at Marge Goodfellow Park
 New Freedom, Pa

H.O.P.E.'S
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"Of all the forces that make for a better world, none is so powerful as hope. With hope, one can think, one can work, one can dream. If you have hope, you have everything."

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