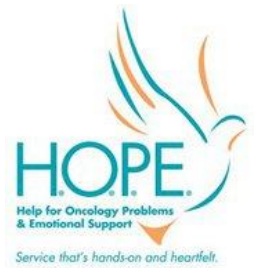


February 2022

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)

H.O.P.E. Lifeline

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Roxanne McKinney

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 Mtg.

Date: Wed., February 9
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: H.O.P.E. Haven
Speaker: Everyone

It's Pasta Time!



What better way to fight the cold than dinner with friends in a cozy restaurant?

Join us at the New Freedom Restaurant and Coffee Shop and support H.O.P.E.



Monday, February 28, 2022
3 to 9 p.m.

Enjoy lasagna, your favorite pasta, sauce, garlic bread, salad, and soda, or BYOB.

H.O.P.E.'S **NEW ADDRESS**

Physical Address:
13275 Blymire Hollow Rd.,
Stewartstown, PA 17363
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 279,
Stewartstown, PA 17363
Phone: 717-244-2174

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*“Tension is
who you think
you should be.
Relaxation is
who you are.*

- Chinese Proverb

*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!*

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Nearly two years into a coronavirus pandemic, most of us are exhausted by the stress of pandemic life. It is overwhelming that almost 900,000 people have died in the U.S. and that a staggering five and a half million have died worldwide. Just when we thought we were seeing a little light at the end of the tunnel a new variant emerged, refilling the hospitals and endangering children.

However we have persevered, and as ever, look to the future with hope. Pause and take a moment to remind yourself of the challenges you've overcome these past couple of years and the comebacks you've made. As we ring in 2022, try looking back with gratitude at the strength and resilience that you may not have realized you possessed.

Speaking of strength and resilience, nowhere is it more evident than in the people who have kept H.O.P.E. not only afloat but thriving. Barb, Carol, members of the board of directors and all of the wonderful volunteers have been working nonstop to provide all the services to their patients that they've come to count on. The pantry is visited regularly and kept stocked by donations. Our **Christmas Head Elf Marty** had her hands full overseeing gifts for 31 families with their 67 children. Most of the recipients were local, but one little boy lives in Maine, and a couple other boxes of gifts had to be mailed. One of Marty's helper elves went above and beyond: a family who provided Christmas to a little girl and her family in Georgia drove all the way down and delivered the gifts in person. Our **January raffle** brought in over \$11,000 and we thank all who participated in that. Our friends at **Penn Waste** decorated a Christmas tree to benefit H.O.P.E. at the Spruce-up event at Rev Stadium and came in second place. **Grant money** came from Sertoma International and the George and Josephine Schmidt Memorial Fund. And two board members procured a \$10,000 grant for chair lifts or elevators to be installed in the Haven.

As they say in the infomercials, wait, there's more. On the last Monday of this month, the 28th, you're invited to enjoy lasagna, pasta, garlic bread, and a soda at the **New Freedom Family Restaurant and Coffee Shop**. Come anytime between 3 and 9 for an evening of delicious food to benefit H.O.P.E. Owners Demos and Vicki have been feeding our friends for over a decade; even the waitstaff donates their tips to H.O.P.E. that evening. A little over a month later get your daubers ready for our spring bingo. The date will be announced in a couple weeks.

Remember last September when there seemed to be something occurring every other day? May will be such a month this year. Mark your calendar now for the **Voices for Hope** event on Thursday May 5, unable to attend Voices for Hope, you can support H.O.P.E. by contributions to "Give Local York", a dance two nights later on Saturday, May 7, the super-popular **Adult Prom** on Saturday, May 14 (tickets are already selling!), and a scenic ride through York County sponsored by the **Twin Rose Lady Riders** on Sunday, May 22.

The U.S. hit a milestone this past year—the 50th anniversary of the **War on Cancer**. We have an overview of that on pages 3 and 4. Meet an inspirational marathoner on page 4, and if

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

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

Caroline Kennedy once said, "Sharing the holiday with other people and feeling that you're giving of yourself, gets you past all the commercialism." This can certainly be said for the many people who stepped up to make Christmas 2021 special for our H.O.P.E. families. Carloads of clothing, toys and other gifts were delivered to our doorsteps. Head Elf, Marty, and her team of happy elves wrapped and some delivered these items to those in need. For those that donated or took a mitten off of one of the Christmas Trees, please know that you helped put smiles on the faces of many children while helping families struggling with cancer. Many of you donated anonymously, but rest assured your compassion and generosity didn't go unrewarded. For each of you have earned your Angel Wings.



Happy 50th Anniversary, War on Cancer

Fifty years ago, in December 1971, President Richard Nixon launched the ‘war on cancer.’ For people diagnosed with cancer in the early 1970s there was just a fifty-fifty chance they would survive the next five years. Treatments could be brutal and much was misunderstood. Even the word cancer was taboo – instead, it was referred to as ‘the Big C.’

A lot has changed over those five decades. Since 1971, the cancer death rate is down more than 25 percent. Between 1975 and 2016 the five-year survival rate increased 36 percent. The arsenal of anticancer therapies has expanded more than tenfold. Mammograms, colonoscopies, and other screenings are finding common cancers in early stages more often, when survival odds are as high as 99 percent.

Yet cancer remains the number 1 killer of Hispanic and Asian Americans, of women in their 50s, and of everyone ages 60 to 80. A person’s lifetime risk for invasive cancer is 1 in 2 for men, and 1 in 3 for women. Cancer is now understood to be primarily a disease of the aging because the root cause is cells that mutate and grow uncontrollably, and the longer people live the more opportunity there is for this to occur.

Fortunately, people also have a much better prognosis after being given a diagnosis of cancer. Thanks to billions of dollars spent on research and the development of multitudes of treatments, people are living longer and living better. Ten years ago chemotherapy was the only treatment for most patients with advanced cancer; now there are immunotherapies that harness the immune system to fight cancer and targeted therapies that zero in on molecules in a cancer, often stalling growth. These breakthroughs extend life and can turn cancers into chronic diseases managed with a pill. In some cases chemotherapy still remains the best option, but improvements have been made with that form of treatment. Today’s chemotherapy can better target the tumor, leaving healthy cells alone; and complementary medications are available that prevent or mitigate side effects such as fatigue and nausea.

So, to tweak the famous line in the Virginia Slims cigarette advertisement (and date myself and anyone who remembers it): “We’ve come a long way, baby.” But we still have farther to go. As oncologist Azra Raza, professor of medicine and director of the MDS Center of Columbia University, said, “Understanding cancer will take 1,000 years. It is too evolved. Instead, we have to find the first cell and eliminate it.”

Dr. Raza has been working toward that very goal for the past 35 years, having collected 60,000 cancer specimens from her patients and planning to collect 50,000 tissue samples from people who do not have cancer (yet), and analyzing these cells to understand how genetic changes and everyday exposures lead to cancer. Dr. Raza envisions developing an early-alert system by placing a microchip under the skin that will make avoiding cancer as commonplace as avoiding heart disease.

In the meantime, we have learned enough about prevention that we can continue to monitor our own lifestyle to stay as healthy as possible. (See specifics on next page.) One type of cancer that has been slowed down by lifestyle changes is lung cancer. According to a recent report by the American Cancer Society, lung cancer deaths are declining faster than overall trends. Mortality rates for lung cancer dropped about 5% each year between 2015 and 2019, while overall cancer mortality dropped about 2% in that time. Screening has been a factor, although a small one; doctors attribute the improvement largely to a decline in smoking rates in the past 30 years.

And yet...

In 2020, for the first time in two decades, cigarette sales increased. A major explanation for this is the pandemic and its accompanying stresses and even sense of fatalism. Social isolation leads to self-medication. Ironically, the relaxation of restrictions has also led to celebration and indulging.

And then there’s also vaping and the tug between its ‘positive’ effect, that is, a tool to help smokers quit cigarettes, and the cynical response that it’s the tobacco industry’s evolution in getting new generations addicted to nicotine. Or probably more likely, a combination of both.

Who seems to be doing the puffing these days? The younger generations. It’s now the cool thing to do, part of their online images. A 25-year-old woman who lives in Brooklyn and works as a copywriter began smoking last year. She explained one reason for her new habit: “People are posting outside of a cool place, smoking with their friends, outside of cool dive bars. Smoking is part of being seen, and I think people want to be seen right now.” Looks as if we still have to come a bit further, baby.

An Inspirational Athlete

Tommy Rivers Puzey placed 16th in the Boston Marathon in 2017 with a time of two hours 18 minutes. He has won a handful of other marathons and was selected to be a member of the U.S. team for a 50-kilometer road race in a global ultrarunning competition. In July 2020 Puzey was admitted to a hospital near his home in Flagstaff, Arizona, with what was initially assumed to be Covid-19. Instead, he was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of lymphoma. He began chemotherapy and remained in intensive care for two and a half months.

Doctors and others acknowledged that his fitness kept him alive, even as he lost 75 pounds during aggressive treatments. He underwent multiple surgeries, ventilator intubation, an open-lung biopsy, collapsed lungs, internal bleeding, acute liver failure, ulcers, and septic blood infections. After six rounds of chemotherapy, he was told by doctors that his cancer was in remission. He was then transferred to a rehabilitation facility where he had to relearn how to chew and swallow, how to use his hands, how to shift his weight from one side of his body to the other. He did not go home until November 2020.

Initially doctors told his wife that if he survived, he would probably be on a ventilator for the rest of his life. Then they said if he survived he'd be on oxygen. But by last April he was able to walk two miles with a walker, stopping every five minutes to rest. Eventually he progressed to walking six or seven hours in the high altitudes of Flagstaff. His brain works more slowly, but his mantra is "If you are moving, you are still alive."

Fast forward to November 2021 and the New York City Marathon, which Tommy entered. He said he entered the race "as a beacon, something he had looked at on the horizon for a while." He described the event as "magic," something "beaming with solidarity and cohesion and cooperation and strength and love and inspiration." On Sunday, November 7, he said he was pulled along by that magic, by spectators who drew signs for him and by people who jumped in the race to walk with him throughout the day. Ruzey said he measured his progress not by mile markers but by what he said was moving "dot to dot between these expressions of love and inspiration."

Ruzey finished the marathon with his wife by his side. The sun had gone down and most other spectators had gone home when he crossed the finish line after 9 hours and 19 minutes.

Unfortunately his fight isn't over yet. Doctors have given him a 90 percent chance that his cancer will return without a bone marrow transplant, so he is now working on building his strength so his body will be able to handle another four to six rounds of chemotherapy, followed by a bone marrow transplant. His wife, three young daughters, and countless friends and supporters are confident he can win this marathon.

How We Can Wage Our Personal "War on Cancer"

According to a study done in 2016, an estimated 20 to 40 percent of cancer cases and half of all cancer deaths could be eliminated with familiar steps like not smoking, exercising, avoiding too much alcohol, and maintaining a healthy body weight.

What else should we do? Here are some suggestions and statistics from the November 2021 AARP Bulletin.

- **Quit smoking.** Doing so reduces your risk of 12 different cancers, including pancreatic, colorectal, bladder, and lung. Even if you've been diagnosed with cancer, quitting smoking can significantly improve your chances of survival.
- **Drink less alcohol.** Roughly one in 25 cancer deaths are connected to alcohol. Moderate drinkers (considered to be women who have one drink a night and men who have two) have nearly double the risk of oral and throat cancers; heavy drinkers have a twofold risk of liver cancer.
- **Exercise more.** Women who were the most active had up to a 21 percent lower risk of breast cancer, and both men and women had a 19 percent lower risk of colon cancer.
- **Drink your milk.** High intakes of calcium and vitamin D – found primarily in dairy foods and fortified drinks and cereals – resulted in significantly lower risk of breast cancer, according to one study.
- **Drink coffee.** A cup a day resulted in an eight percent reduction in endometrial cancer risk, researchers found. (Three to four cups a day may also be linked to a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.)

How to Have a Happy Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day in the midst of a pandemic challenges even the most romantic of us. Add to that Valentine's Day during cancer treatment, and you've got a double whammy. Here are some suggestions from Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center on how to make this day special and unique.

- ◆ Plan a movie or Netflix marathon, complete with takeout from the patient's favorite restaurant.
- ◆ Go electronic free. Turn off your phones, laptops, and TV. Create an 'atmosphere.' Vow to spend an evening living in the present.
- ◆ Find a new board game or games to play.
- ◆ Choose cozy gifts like a warm, soft blanket and slippers. Add in a bouquet of favorite flowers.
- ◆ Paint a masterpiece together with a canvas and small set of paints.
- ◆ Play charades. Fill a bowl with pieces of paper containing different people, places, or things that are meaningful to the players. Act them out or provide clues.
- ◆ Become a two-person book club. Purchase or borrow a feel-good book you've both always wanted to read (or re-read). Spend the evening reading aloud and discussing. Or try a poetry collection or anthology.
- ◆ Make a list of all the things you want to do in the future.
- ◆ Decorate your loved one's hospital room with pink hearts, streamers, and balloons (if allowed).
- ◆ Do you have kids? Create your own 'restaurant' where they can act as wait staff. Give them construction paper to make menus and see what they come up with. Take this to the next level if they're old enough to know their way around the kitchen and you trust them.



High School Seniors with a Cancer Connection:
Now Is the Time to Apply for the H.O.P.E. Scholarship.

Any high school senior who has been affected by cancer, either personally or with someone in the **immediate** family, is eligible to apply for a H.O.P.E. scholarship.

To apply, visit the H.O.P.E. website at <http://www.hopelifeline.org/academic-scholarship/> and download an application. If you have trouble downloading the application please call the office at 717-244-2174 or 717-244-2161 and we can email it to you.

All completed applications must be delivered or mailed to H.O.P.E. at P.O. Box 279, Stewartstown, PA 17363 **no later than March 15**. No application will be considered after that date.

Buy A Brick

Brick Sizes
4 x 8 \$100 8 x 8 \$250
12 x 12 \$1000 24 x 24 \$2500

PLEASE VISIT
WWW.HOPELIFELINE.ORG/BUYABRICK

TO DOWNLOAD YOUR APPLICATION
OR ORDER ONLINE VIA PAYPAL

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For more information
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assistant@hopeforcancerfamilies.org

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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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(717) 244-2174

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