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H.O.P.E. Lifeline

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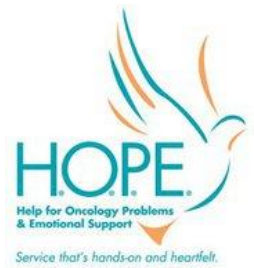
H.O.P.E.'s Office Hours are Monday through Friday, 9:30—3.
Please call in advance to set up an appointment for:

- Intake
- Wigs/hats/scarves
- Pantry

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

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!

H.O.P.E. LIFELINE



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)

Basket Bingo & Non-Perishable Food Drive

 **Sunday, April 16**

Doors Open at 12:30
Bingo Starts at 2:00

New Freedom Community Bldg
New Freedom, PA

Tickets \$20 in advance
\$22 at the door

25 games, 5 secret games,
1 thank-you game

Donate non-perishable food items for chances to win prizes!

**17th Annual
Voices for Hope
Benefit Banquet**

Thursday, May 4, 2023

5:30—9:30 p.m.

Out Door Country Club

**Tickets \$90.00 per person
(Table of 8, \$630 by April 14)**

Features a Reception, Silent Auction, Dinner, and Presentation

 **For tickets, call 717-993-3778**

Support Group Mtg.

Date: Wednesday, April 12
 Time: 7:00 p.m.
 Location: H.O.P.E. Haven
 Speaker: Everyone
 Topic: Everything

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Spring has officially sprung, so let the HOPE events commence! On Saturday, April 1, we will hold our first annual **Easter Egg Hunt** at the Haven, for children ages two to 13. Kids will be divided into age groups to make it more fun for everyone. A week later on Saturday, April 8, get ready to rev your engines for the **American Legion Post 455 Charity Ride** to raise money for HOPE and cancer patient Kathy Beach. Registration for the ride begins at noon and it is followed by a dinner-dance with great music and food, 50/50 raffles, and silent auctions. Keep those dancing shoes handy because a week after that is the annual **Adult Prom**, on Saturday, April 15. Don't stay out all night partying, however, because the very next day it's **Spring Bingo** time. Same place, same time, same great prizes, food and fun.

Peeking down the road a bit, May features the wonderful **Voices for Hope Banquet**. Always held the first Thursday in May (well, with a bit of a hiccup due to Covid), HOPE honors someone who has stood out in their support and service for our organization and the cancer community. This year's recipient is Travis Brown, whose father, Scott Brown, the award is named after. This year's speaker is Stella Ellwood, a very self-possessed young lady who is going places in the fashion design world after conquering an extremely rare form of cancer. You can read more about both of our special guests on page 5 of this newsletter.

The day after the banquet, Friday May 5, is **Give Local York Day**, where you can pledge dollars to help your favorite non-profit organizations (us, we hope). There are so very many worthy groups in need of assistance, and HOPE is one of those. On Sunday, May 7, a **Music Concert Against Cancer** will be held at the St. Paul UCC on Main Street in Shrewsbury. It features Troy Winemiller singing some of the most beloved songs from the Great American Songbook with special guest concert pianist Carol Knisely. Admission is free with a free will offering to benefit HOPE. Just a few days later is one of Barb's favorite events: the **awarding of college scholarships** to outstanding high school seniors. Barb has made sure this has been part of her budget since 1995, and over the years she has given over \$100,000 in scholarship money. (Psst, previous winners—look for our request on page 5.) The awards will take place at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 10, at the Hope Haven, in lieu of the monthly support group, and all are invited to meet these outstanding young people. Finally, our last event in May is the **Mason Dixon Car Show** on Saturday, May 27, at the Dallastown Family Restaurant. Is your head spinning yet?

April is designated **National Cancer Control Month** and more recently **National Minority Cancer Awareness Month**. Both of these stress the importance of awareness and education and screening. We have more details about this on the next page. Also on this page is some information about **PFAS**, also known as 'forever chemicals,' that are found just about everywhere and have been shown to be hazardous to our health. (I'm going to try to persuade my husband to switch his nightly popcorn brand.) On page four are a couple updates in the cancer world of breast and prostate cancer, as well as interesting thoughts about medical progress in our century.

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

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



As the end of February comes upon us, we get excited for our annual Pasta Dinner at the New Freedom Family Restaurant, where we see old friends and make new ones! The food is delicious and everyone wants to arrive early to get the lasagna before it sells out.

This year's event was a huge success. The food was wonderful and the customers enjoyed everything. The staff, Dimos, Vickie, and Georgie created several baskets of goodies to raffle, along with the baskets

H.O.P.E. brought. The staff gets just as excited as the rest of us!

The grand total for the evening was \$4761! Despite the threat of sleet and freezing rain, the evening was a GREAT SUCCESS!



"Judge each day not by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant."

- William Arthur Ward

In April, the Focus is on Awareness

April is **National Cancer Control Month**, approved through a joint resolution by congress in 1938. Among other things, it stresses the importance of cancer screenings and prevention. It also reminds us of the importance of the following: living a healthy lifestyle, realizing how to prevent certain types of cancer, recognizing the signs and symptoms of cancer, and knowing how to seek proper treatment.

April is also **National Minority Cancer Awareness Month**, an offshoot of National Minority Health Month, which began in 1915 with the establishment of National Negro Health Week by Booker T. Washington and was made official in 2002 by the U.S. Congress. Cancer outcomes are worse in populations who experience health disparities because diseases from their socio-economic condition affects the treatment and outcomes negatively. Black, American Indian, and Alaskan Native communities experience the worst cancer health disparities among racial/ethnic groups in the U.S. They share the most significant cancer rates and the most inferior outcomes for each of the most common types of cancer. Here are just a few of these disparities:

- Black men are more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer and more than twice as likely as other men to die from prostate cancer.
- Black and white women have similar breast cancer incidence rates, but Black women are 40 percent more likely to die of the disease.
- Hispanic men and women are twice as likely as their white counterparts to be diagnosed with and die from liver cancer.
- Rates of new cases of lung, colorectal, and cervical cancers – which are highly preventable – are higher in rural than urban areas of the U.S.

Too Smart For Our Own Good

You probably recall being warned against using nonstick pans and other cookware. That warning is still very much in place if the items contain **PFAS**. These are a class of more than 12,000 human-made compounds that accumulate in the environment and human bodies over time and do not easily degrade, which is why some people call them ‘forever chemicals.’ Technically called per- and polyfluorinated substances, these chemicals are added to a variety of products – from hand lotion to dental floss to nonstick pans, outdoor gear, and industrial fabric – because of their ability to repel water, oil, and grease. Increased testing is revealing PFAS in public drinking systems, groundwater, and surface waters nationwide. Use of PFAS is so widespread that nearly every American has detectable levels of these human-made chemicals in their blood. According to the CDC, high levels of PFAS may increase the risk of testicular and kidney cancers. They may lead to high cholesterol and lower birth weights. They may also decrease how effective vaccines are in children.

Household products that have the most PFAS include some grease-resistant paper, fast food containers/wrappers, microwave popcorn bags, pizza boxes, and candy wrappers. They are also used in stain resistant coatings found on carpets, upholstery, and other fabrics, and water-resistant clothing. You are encountering them as well in dental floss, shampoo, nail polish, and eye.

What’s a person to do? Experts say try to avoid contact with them when possible. For example, food that comes in one of the above wrappers or containers can be transferred to something else for storage. When heating up food, use something glass or ceramic. Instead of nonstick cookware (Teflon, for example) try cast iron, stainless steel, glass, or enamel items. Here’s a website that provides information to help you select products with fewer harmful chemicals. <https://pfascentral.org/pfas-free-products/>

Worried about your water? The good news is Pennsylvania is one of the states with enforceable drinking water standards, and importantly, has just signed into law regulations monitoring PFAS in drinking water. For a detailed explanation, go to <https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pabull?file=/secure/pabulletin/data/vol53/53-2/46.html>.

If you’re going to check labels for the presence of these chemicals, here are the recommendations of the experts. First, read the letters carefully. It’s best to go with PFAS-free, not PFOA-free or PFOS-free. The latter are two types of PFAS. In the United States, manufacturers stopped producing them after they were linked to health concerns, but there are still thousands of other PFAS chemicals that may be in the product, so it’s helpful to check product labels for ingredients that include the words ‘fluoro’ or ‘perfluoro.’ Be aware of packaging for foods that contain grease-repellent coatings. When testing nonstick pans, Consumer Reports found that even some pans labeled PFOA-free were full of PFAS.

We've Come a Long Way, Baby. And Are Still Making Progress!

I listened to an interview recently with Steven Johnson, who has written 13 books on science and technology. The topic of the interview was a TED Talk he gave about human life expectancy, based on his book *Extra Life: A Short History of Living Longer*. He began the talk by saying this:

"Here's a classic thought experiment that's designed to trick your brain into thinking long-term and getting out of the daily news cycle. And it goes like this: if a newspaper came out once a century, what would the front page banner headline be? "We defeated the Nazis," or "landed on the moon," or "built the internet"? I would argue that it would be the story of a single number, maybe the most elemental measure of progress that we have: life expectancy at birth. The length of time that the average person can expect to live in a given place at a given time.

"One hundred years ago, as best as we can measure, the average global life expectancy stood somewhere in the mid 30s. Today, it's just over 70. So in one century, we doubled global life expectancy. One hundred years ago there were less than two billion people on earth. Today there are almost eight billion and counting. And we have that runaway population growth not because people started having more babies, but rather, because people stopped dying and the generations stacked up."

Johnson goes on to explain the different reasons for this doubling of life expectancy. (If you're interested in hearing the entire TED Talk, go to <https://www.npr.org/2023/03/09/1162156179/weve-doubled-life-expectancy-in-100-years-how-did-we-do-it> or just Google Steven Johnson Ted Talk life expectancy doubled. It's extremely interesting.)

Development in Breast Cancer Screening

All this is to talk a little about several recent developments in cancer detection and treatment. You may have heard a recent FDA requirement that mammography facilities must notify patients about the density of their breasts. This is because women with dense breasts are at higher risk for breast cancer, and dense tissue can make cancer harder to detect in mammograms because it shows up as white on a mammogram, making the cancer – which also appears white – more difficult to detect. This is common in about half of women undergoing mammograms. Additionally, the FDA is requiring that facilities recommend that patients with dense breasts talk to their health care provider about breast density, risks for breast cancer, and their individual situation.

Prostate Cancer Patients

Most men who are diagnosed with prostate cancer can delay or avoid harsh treatments without harming their chances of survival, according to new results from a long-running study in the United Kingdom.

Men in the study who partnered with their doctors to keep a close eye on their low-to-intermediate-risk prostate tumors – a strategy called surveillance or active monitoring – slashed their risk of the life-altering complications such as incontinence and erectile dysfunction that can follow aggressive treatment for the disease. But they were no more likely to die of their cancers than men who had surgery to remove their prostate or who were treated with hormone blockers and radiation.



*"Those who
can, do. Those
who can do
more, volun-
teer."*

- Unknown

Her Name Means Star

When Stella Ellwood was four years old, her parents received almost unfathomable news from doctors: their daughter had an extremely uncommon form of cancer called acute megakaryoblastic leukemia, or AMKL. The cancer was so rare that the oncologist giving them the news had never treated any children with it.

Within 24 hours Stella and her parents were on their way to St. Jude's Children Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, where researchers had been working to find the origins of Stella's rare form of acute myeloid leukemia. St. Jude's researchers had recently led the world's largest study of the genetic changes that cause this subtype and had been experimenting with different methods of treatment.

It was determined that Stella's type of cancer would be best treated with a bone marrow transplant, and a match for her was found in Germany on the international bone marrow registry. The donor, who the family learned two years later was a teacher named Benjamin, donated marrow a second time for follow-up infusions. During her seven months at St. Jude's, the four-year-old kept busy making jewelry, painting pictures, reading books, swinging on the playground, and playing dress-up. Immediately after her transplant she did yoga on her bed and drove a remote-control car around the transplant unit.

At the end of July, Stella was sent home cancer free. Her White Hall, Maryland, community held a surprise parade for her, with family, friends, and neighbors lining York Road as the Hereford Volunteer Fire Department escorted her and her family home. Home-made signs and balloons were held by cheering well-wishers as Stella, wearing a gold tiara, waved happily from the back seat of her family's car, with her younger sister strapped in beside her.

Fast-forward five years. Stella returned to school, her family returned to their normal life (sort of), and in July of 2022 they returned to St. Jude's for Stella's five-year checkup. Because the no-longer little girl had stayed in remission for five years she was technically labeled 'cured.' That same day, on July 16, Stella celebrated her new status with her first sewing lesson.

Stella sews now on a machine set up in her bedroom, where she watches tutorials online and makes throw pillows and dresses for her dolls. Down the road she has plans to be a "fashionista in Paris," and no one has any doubts about her starring in that role.

A Remarkable Family

When he was just 17 years old, Travis Brown lost his father Scott to cancer. The Brown family owned an orchard and had been wonderful supporters of HOPE. Scott made a comment one day that when he was in the orchard planting he felt as if he was planting seeds of hope for future generations, because he knew he wasn't going to be around to witness the fruition of his efforts. His statement became the theme of the Voices for Hope Banquet and its Seeds of Hope Award, given to someone who had also given that gift to the cancer community.

Travis has continued his family's history of giving to HOPE. Most recently it was through his work as an electrician. In addition to owning his own business and teaching at York Vo-Tech, Travis also teaches journeyman electricians for the IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers). When Travis learned of the work going on at the Haven three years ago, he brought a team of 35 journeymen to help gut and rewire the office. They came twice a week for nine weeks and saved HOPE thousands (and thousands) of dollars. Their only 'payment' was dinner (cooked by Barb or Phil), since they were coming after their regular workday had ended.

Married for 14 years, Travis and his wife Kayla have two daughters, Hailey and Gracie. This makes him ideal to be a softball coach. His team, the Panthers Select, raised over a thousand dollars for Hope through a variety of fundraisers. Travis and his family have also regularly provided Christmas for a HOPE family.

Travis is a perfect recipient of this year's Scott Brown Seeds of Hope Award, an award that was begun 17 years ago, in honor of his father, Scott. Travis lost his Dad at the age of 17.

Attention HOPE Scholarship Recipients:

We would love to hear from you! All of you, from our first recipients 28 years ago, in 1995, to last year's who are beginning your sophomore year of college.

For our 'senior' scholarship winners, where are you? What are you doing? How has life treated you? For the more recent winners, how is college? What are you studying? For all those in between, where are you in your journey?

Every one of you wowed the scholarship selection committee members, and we would be thrilled if we could share with our readers an update of your life.

(See the front page for our email address and phone number.



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<http://www.hopelifeline.org>
"Like" Us on Facebook:



On Friday, May 7, go online to givelocalyork.org and donate to HOPE. Thank you!

"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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16580 Green Valley Court
Stewartstown, PA 17363
(717) 244-2174
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