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2023

2024

# 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.

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### H.O.P.E. Lifeline

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## January 2024 Calendar Raffle



Donation \$20 per ticket

Over \$3800 in Prizes!

*Great Christmas Presents!*

Omaha Steak Gift Card for \$500

Ocean City Two-Night Getaway \$400

Coach Bag \$300

Vera Bradley Purse and Wallet \$160

17 Other \$100 Gift Cards



And Lots More!

Visit link to see prizes and order online.

<https://hopelifeline.org/calendarraffle/>

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**.

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

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No Support Group this month. Have a safe, warm Christmas.

### FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Happy holidays! We hope your Thanksgiving was an opportunity to give thanks for the blessings you have and a time of celebration with your loved ones. Christmas is a little more than a month away, a countdown that was probably begun by excited children and overwhelmed parents. In the midst of all the anticipation and expectation, try to take some moments to look for examples of wonder and awe, for, as Socrates said, "Wonder is the beginning of wisdom."

This issue is Barb's gift to her editor (me). She has written lovely and loving tributes in the Angel Corner to two of her most valuable volunteers, **Kay Joy** and **Bobbie Seidel**. If you're a visitor to our office you've probably crossed Kay's path as she has dropped off a batch of her home-cooked meals for our patients and their families; and if you grocery shop you've no doubt seen Bobbie, especially Saubel's in Stewartstown, where she can probably tell you the location of every item in the store. The other part of Barb's gift is that this is the **December/January issue** combined, so I get a month off.

You may recall in last month's Angel Corner Barb thanked her dear **Twin Rose Lady Rider** friends for enduring five hours of cold, wet weather to collect donations for the annual bike ride. Although nobody toured the scenic countryside, people nevertheless came and dropped off donations to the final tune of \$7,479.53. That amazing amount should warm everyone's hearts. **The Kennard-Dale girls' volleyball players** hosted a HOPE night with special tee-shirts. All proceeds from tee-shirt and concession sales were donated to HOPE, over \$560 by the end of a great evening. The event included kids of all ages, with a group from an elementary school who performed a song between the jv and varsity games. Last month's **Bingo** was equally successful. The more than 200 players in attendance enjoyed the plentiful supply of baked goods as they concentrated on their bingo cards. Caller **Ira Walker** kept the games moving efficiently with his expert skills and personable delivery. Players remarked on the beautiful prizes of baskets and raffle items that were assembled by **Chris Waltemeyer** and **Tanya Markel** (Sis). People are already inquiring about the spring bingo date!

The holiday season is fueled by food. On the next page is a reminder of which tempting foods you need to try to avoid. You can enjoy holiday festivities and still eat the right foods, or at least minimize your consumption of the not-so-right foods. Obviously this doesn't just apply to the holiday season; these are guidelines for life.

For some the holidays are their favorite time of the year because of get-togethers with family and friends. Yet these are the toughest time of the year for others who have no family and few or no friends. In May of this year the U.S. Surgeon General released a report titled "Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation." It found that even before the Covid-19 pandemic, about half of U.S. adults reported experiencing measurable levels of loneliness. This holiday season think about which family members and friends you haven't heard from in a while and maybe reach out to make sure they're ok.



*"When we recall Christmas past, we usually find that the simplest things—not the great occasions—give off the greatest glow."*

~ Bob Hope

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

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

When going through chemo, most patients do not feel up to cooking or even smelling the foods when they are preparing them. This is where **Kay Joy** comes into play. Kay has been preparing home-cooked meals for our families for over 15 years. When Carol is helping the patients in the pantry one of the first things they ask is if there is any of Kay's Saturday night special, bean soup, or whatever their favorite meal is. Everyone has that one special item they love and that brings them comfort. I remember one of our dear patients named John who always wanted Kay's Saturday Night Special or Scott who wanted Kay's Bows and Beans.

There is something magical about having a home-cooked meal made just for you when you are feeling down or sick. With every bite, you feel the love Kay puts into the dish. It amazes me that at 82 she still cooks every day for others. Cooking is Kay's way of giving back and spreading **JOY**. (Read about Bobbie on page 5.)



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](mailto:assistant@hopeforcancerfamilies.org), and she'll put you on our list. (And it will have color!) Thanks!

## Tis the Season to Overeat

One of our key missions in these newsletters is to keep you aware of proper diet and good lifestyle choices. And you've probably tried to pay attention to the foods you put in your body. But then come the holidays! If we could restrict ourselves to extra helpings of only foods that are good for us, then the indulgence might add a few pounds but it might not jeopardize our health otherwise. Not that that second portion of broccoli is going to have the same appeal as the second slice of pumpkin pie, but awareness of harmful foods might help you plan your menus and select your servings, especially when you realize how some foods increase your risk for cancer.



**Let's start with sugar!** Sugar consumption is not harmful if consumed within recommended limits. Cancer cells do use sugar for energy, just like every other cell in your body, but eating a normal amount has no direct effect on the growth of tumors. What's normal? The dietary guidelines published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommend limiting added sugar to less than 10 percent of your daily calories, which is less than 200 calories (12) teaspoons on a 2,000-calorie daily target. Animal studies have shown that sugar can cause hyperglycemia (high blood sugar) and insulin resistance and promotes more tumor growth in the liver, and a high-fat diet with sugar supplements in the form of high fructose corn syrup can lead to cell damage, inflammation, and tumor development. Not to mention possible weight gain, which also increases cancer risk.

**About that excess weight...** Some studies show that being overweight increases the risk of several types of cancer, particularly in the breast, endometrium, colon, esophagus, kidney, pancreas, and gallbladder. Although the connection is not well understood, it may be that excess fat in the body causes increased hormone production, chronic inflammation, or poor regulation of tumor cell growth which, in turn, promotes the development of different types of cancer.

**What about meat?** While it's a good idea to focus primarily on a plant-based diet – one that is rich in vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and legumes (beans and lentils) – it's true that high-quality lean meats and poultry in reasonably sized portions can also contribute valuable nutrients to your diet. But red meat and processed meats are another story. Many studies have consistently linked red meat and processed meats (cold cuts, sausages, and hot dogs, as well as processed poultry products) with colorectal cancer. The more meat consumed, the higher the risk. A review of studies specifically looking at meat consumption and colorectal cancer found that the risk increased by 36 percent for every 3.5 ounces of red meat and 28 percent for every 1.5 to 2 ounces of processed meat consumed each day.

**And cooking any meat products at high temperatures** (above 300 degrees F) and **exposing them to smoke** – by grilling, frying, or broiling, for instance – produces chemicals known as heterocyclic amines (HCAs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) that are known to increase tumor development throughout the bodies of laboratory rodents. No direct link has been found between the formation of these chemicals on meat products and cancer in humans, but researchers around the world continue to investigate possible links between meat consumption, cooking methods, and cancer.

Well, at least I can enjoy a few glasses of wine with my holiday meals... **Alcohol** can increase the risk of some types of cancer, especially when combined with other risk factors, such as smoking. Even light alcohol consumption is associated with an increased risk of oral cancer, cancer of the pharynx, and breast cancer in women when compared with nondrinkers and those who drink only on occasion. Moderate to heavy drinking is associated with colorectal cancer and cancer of the larynx, while studies show that heavy drinking increases the risk of liver, stomach, lung, pancreas, and gallbladder cancers. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans define moderate drinking as up to one drink a day for women and two for men.

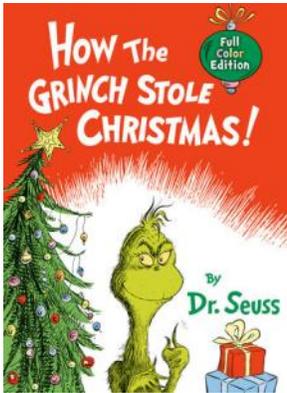
**Are there any foods that are good for me?** Fad diets come and go. Remember the keto diet, the paleo diet, the South Beach diet, the raw food diet, the macrobiotic diet, the carnivore diet, even the Atkins diet and Weight Watchers? But the one that has stuck around is the **Mediterranean diet**. Each has its benefits and drawbacks. When researchers reviewed more than 50 observational studies looking for links between diet and cancer, they found significant differences in cancer occurrence, recurrence, and death rates among people who did and did not follow a traditional Mediterranean-style diet. When they analyzed specific results, these people had lower rates of colorectal, breast, gastric, prostate, liver, and head and neck cancer. The ingredients of this diet are fresh fruits and vegetables, fish, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and olive oil, which form the basis of a plant-based dietary pattern. Other aspects of the diet include eating less meat and fewer high-fat dairy products and using flavorful seasonings other than salt. The diet is best known for its benefit to heart health, and it even helps ward off depression with the emphasis on fruits like berries and vegetables such as spinach and broccoli.

## I (Don't) Want to Be Alone

While for many it can't be avoided, living alone can be detrimental to one's health. A new study published in the journal *Cancer* suggests that adults who live by themselves have a 32 percent higher risk of death from cancer than adults living with others. That risk is particularly high for adults between the ages of 45 and 64 who live alone. Their likelihood of cancer death is 43 percent greater than that of their counterparts who live with others.

The increased cancer risk is greater among men than women, because more men live alone (56 percent vs. 44 percent). Moreover it was stronger among white adults living alone. Adults with higher education levels living on their own faced greater risk as well. Individuals with less than a high school education living alone were 1.26 times more likely to die of cancer, while those with a college degree living alone had a 1.41 times greater risk. One of the researchers who analyzed data collected from nearly 475,000 adults between 1998 and 2019 by the National Health Interview Survey and the National Death Index suggested that stronger social support from the community among racial and ethnic minorities, as well as among low-income people, might play a role in alleviating the association between living alone and cancer mortality in these groups.

U.S. Census figures reveal that the proportion of one-person households has more than doubled, from 7 million households (13 percent) in 1960 to 38 million households (29 percent) in 2020. In May of this year, the U.S. Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy, MD, issued a surgeon general advisory calling attention to the public health crisis of loneliness, isolation, and lack of connection in our country. He highlighted how the lack of connection can increase the risk of premature death to levels comparable to smoking daily. Those who are isolated tend to have more unhealthy habits. People who live alone are less likely to follow healthy diets and more likely to be severely obese, currently smoke or drink heavily, and have severe psychological stress. (See the website Mental Health America <https://mhanational.org> for more information on this topic.)



*"Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas means a little bit more."*

~ Dr. Seuss

### Bobbie Siedel: Super Shopper

[Angel Corner continued from page 2]

Sometimes we may feel alone in the midst of our cancer journey, as life brings new challenges and hardships to bear. Then comes HOPE in the way of a wonderful volunteer. It might be a homecooked meal, a kind word, a card in the mail, or a trip to the food pantry. HOPE would not exist without all our wonderful volunteers, and I want to recognize two of those wonderful volunteers during this season of giving thanks.

I first met Bobbie Seidel 14 years ago at a HOPE yard sale and I tell everyone she is my "best yard sale fine"! My daughter invited Bobbie to stop by my house to check out our yard sale. We had just set down to have a bite to eat on the porch and someone needed mustard on their sandwich and I was all out; Bobbie jumped up and ran to her car and hollered "What kind do you want?" I walked out and saw her car was like a grocery store! She had everything in it from nuts to bolts. Then she explained that when she retired from Social Security, she started coupon shopping and tried to help people out. Before she left that day, she was our newly elected coupon shopper for the HOPE food pantry.

Bobbie has the greatest personality, and she is always smiling and humming. It isn't any wonder that everyone knows her in the stores; after all, Bobbie has made such wonderful connections that she is always getting great sales to stock the pantry. Carol gives Bobbie our shopping list and Bobbie looks for all the sales. If items are donated to HOPE and we can't use them Bobbie finds a home for them. Bobbie does not believe in wasting anything. Not only does every person know Bobbie, but so do the animals. Bobbie is a big animal lover and she is always looking out for them. If we have something that is out of date, she finds a farm where she can take the food for the animals. So, when you see Bobbie in the store thank her for all the hours she puts in for HOPE!

# Good Grief

By Jeff Hoffman

Whenever I hear the term, "Good grief," I think of Charlie Brown. It brings to mind the classic Christmas cartoon "A Charlie Brown Christmas" in which Charlie Brown purchases a Christmas tree that doesn't quite meet the standards set forth by his friend, Lucy Van Pelt. I can just hear Charlie Brown lament, "Good grief" as he wonders why others can't see the true beauty of the tree. It isn't until Linus finally explains the real meaning of Christmas that everyone else finally sees what Charlie Brown has seen all along.



Grief, good or bad, is part of life.

Perhaps you have lost a loved one or maybe you're battling a terrible disease. Either way, you are likely experiencing the anger, denial, depression, and pain associated with grief; so you might ask, how in the world can grief be good?

While our grief is as individual and unique as our own fingerprints and DNA, there are some common traits that we all share as we make the journey through our grief. At some point we emerge with a sense of acceptance that our world has changed forever. Our tears abate, our anger subsides, and we are able to make it through the day without falling apart.

In a word, we begin to heal.

It is that healing that shows us who we really are. We begin to live in the "new normal." A world where we wake up knowing we'll no longer hear the laughter of a loved one or knowing our health has forever changed. At some point we are able to reflect back upon the journey, recalling those early days where the darkness of grief swallowed us up even as we followed the path toward the brighter road that gets us past the numbing pain. We discover we can once again laugh, enjoy time with our family, smile at a fond memory, and look forward to the next day of our life.

Once we arrive at that place, we're able to recognize that the journey we just completed was necessary for us to survive. That is also when we discover the true beauty of our experience with grief and where we are able to see how much we have grown. It is at that moment that we are able to recognize there is such a thing as Good Grief.

## Holiday Grief Survival Guide

- 1) **Let Yourself Say No.** Above all else you need to take care of yourself. If you're feeling sad and not up to going to that holiday party—give yourself permission to say no! Stay home, watch a movie, and take care of yourself.
- 2) **It's Okay to Leave Early.** You might feel like you're up for a social gathering until you get there and realize "I am not okay being here." Give yourself permission to go home early—your friends will understand.
- 3) **Always Have an Exit Strategy.** Drive to holiday parties yourself so you have the option to leave as soon as things get too difficult to handle. Avoid hosting.
- 4) **Surround Yourself With Supportive People.** Only surround yourself with people who make you feel supported and who understand that you're grieving and might not be up for celebrating this year.
- 5) **Know It's Okay to Be Sad and It's Okay to Be Happy Too!** You don't have to love this holiday season. A lot of it is hard. Give yourself permission to be sad but also to be happy; that doesn't mean you're 'over' the loss.

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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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