



# Care & Share Newsletter

## December 2016

Local Services, Local Support.



Cindy Feist  
Executive Director

*Now that the temperature has dropped, it feels like winter is coming. It is hard to believe that December is upon us and that the holidays won't be far behind. We all need to take a moment and be grateful for what we have. During the rush of December and the holidays, enjoy the little things, the crispness in the air, the smells that fill the house of those baked goods and family recipes being made, and how pretty all the holiday decorations are in your home and within our community. Personally, I am grateful to be the Executive Director for such a wonderful nonprofit on the Eastern Shore. I work with not only the best staff but get to*

*meet those within our community who welcome us with open arms to help any way they can.*

*With no national ties or funding, we rely completely on our community to help us provide services to our neighbors, friends and families right here on Delmarva. Therefore, during this season of giving, we ask that you remember Women Supporting Women. Your donation is tax-deductible, and will be utilized to provide more and better services to all who are affected by breast cancer in 2017.*

*Be it through donations of time, money or goods, we thank all of our supporters for assisting us in providing our community with Local Services and Local Support.*

*From all of us at  
Women Supporting Women*

**A Very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!**

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## SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

SALISBURY	POCOMOKE	OCEAN CITY	CAMBRIDGE
<p><b>December 1st 6:30 pm, Thursday</b></p> <p>1320 Belmont Ave 410-548-7880</p> <p>Topic: Wreath Making Facilitator: Kyle Beebe</p>	<p><b>There will be NO meeting for the month of December.</b></p>	<p><b>December 21st 1 pm, Wednesday</b></p> <p>Atlantic Health Center</p> <p>Robin Rohlfing, Polysomnographer "When snoring isn't the problem"</p> <p>Facilitator: Cindy Elliott, RN, Nurse Nav. Bev Ward, RN Breast Care Nav.</p>	<p><b>There will be NO meeting for the month of December.</b></p>

### FOLLOW US:



# SURVIVOR STORY

## *Advice from a Teenage Cancer Survivor*

by Carly Freels

Nearly 16,000 U.S. children and adolescents under the age of 20 are diagnosed with cancer each year. I am one of them. I was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma when I was 17 years old.

While nothing can fully prepare a person for cancer to enter their life, I want to share a few things that helped my family and me cope with my diagnosis.

### **Friendly Advice for Friends and Family**

If you are a family member or close friend of someone recently diagnosed with cancer, the best advice I can give you is to show them sympathy, but don't treat them differently. Most of the time, you won't have been in a situation that allows you to say, "I know what you're going through." That is more than OK.

While I was going through treatment, I didn't need my friends and family to be able to relate to my experience. What I needed was people who simply were there for me. People who could say, "I know this is hard, and it may seem unfair, but I am here for you no matter what you need."

The fact that my friends and family were still able to joke with me, laugh with me, and participate in everyday events alongside me gave me a sense of normalcy in an unsure situation.

Once I knew who would face this storm with me, I was comfortable in seeking help and encouragement when I needed it. The fact that my friends and family were still able to joke with me, laugh with me, and participate in every-day events alongside me gave me a sense of normalcy in an unsure situation. Despite my diagnosis, I still longed to have that routine high school life I was used to. By not treating me differently just because I had cancer, my friends and family helped me to hang on to a somewhat normal life.

### **On Redefining Beauty**

One of the biggest obstacles I had to mentally overcome was the inevitable fact that I would lose my hair. For anyone undergoing chemotherapy, this is a tough pill to swallow, but it's especially so for a girl in the prime of her high school years.

I started out wearing a wig that almost perfectly matched my once long, flowing brunette hair. However, as time passed, hiding behind a wig just didn't seem right. My cancer was nothing to be ashamed of. To help me keep my hair loss in perspective, I decided to cover my mirror with verses and inspirational quotes about inner beauty and confidence. That's when I began to see my shiny scalp, not as the uncomfortable elephant in the room, but as a sign of my strength and overcoming.

After only a few weeks, I let go of the wig's security and found safety in knowing I was fighting a good fight. That decision is still to this day one of the best I have ever made. Letting go of the world's definition of beauty and redefining it for myself has changed my perspective on so much, even now that I am finished with treatment and my hair has grown back in.

No one ever expects cancer to enter their life. When it does, it becomes a learning process for everyone involved. Have patience with the friends who have trouble relaying their good intentions, treasure the ones who never leave your side, and find the beauty in every victory.



*Carly Freels is the author of When Faith > Fear..., an autobiography that touches on how to keep a positive outlook after a cancer diagnosis. To learn more about Carly or to order a copy of her book, visit [whenfaithfear.com](http://whenfaithfear.com).*

*This article was printed from [copingmag.com](http://copingmag.com) and was originally published in Coping® with Cancer magazine, September/October 2016.*

## *Fighting Fluid*

Lymphedema is a disorder marked by swelling when fluid accumulates underneath the skin. This condition occurs when lymph nodes are damaged or experience trauma, which prevents the lymphatic system from functioning properly. The result is blockages that impair fluid circulation and drainage.<sup>1</sup>

Predicting who will and won't develop the disorder can be tricky. Cancer that affects lymph nodes could cause lymphedema, while side effects from cancer surgery, chemotherapy and radiation—especially procedures involving the removal of lymph nodes—also increase the probability of it occurring.

Lymphedema frequently presents in the arms or legs—and can produce a type of swelling marked by “pitting,” where a fingerprint pressed upon the skin leaves an indentation that doesn't go away. See an infographic on lymphedema.

Because you have lymph all over your body, lymphedema can occur in other areas. “You can get lymphedema in your head and neck after head and neck cancer or surgeries,” says Jessica Jenkins, a physical therapist and certified lymphedema therapist at University Hospitals' Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio. “You can get lymphedema in your genitals—a lot of men come in with scrotal, penile swelling. You can get lymphedema in your abdomen if you had abdominal surgeries.”

In fact, breast cancer survivors are particularly at risk of developing lymphedema because many have had an axillary lymph node dissection (or had lymph nodes removed) in the course of treatment. Jenkins adds that “almost always if breast cancer patients are getting radiation, it's going to affect that armpit area, and that's where we have a lot of lymph nodes. So it's not just the surgery—it's the radiation and sometimes it's the chemo. It's the combination.”

### **Predictability Problems**

While we know a lot about the condition, there's little doctors can do to predict who will develop lymphedema. “There is that innate variability among humans,” says Dr. Fernando U. Garcia, a pathologist at Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. “The exact same operation on one patient may not result in lymphedema, while it may on another patient. It has to do with the amount of lymph nodes that you are born with and those left intact—or removed—after surgery. The more lymph nodes the surgeons are able to leave, the less likely you are of getting lymphedema,” says Dr. Garcia.

Jenkins also points out that “we don't know exactly which lymph nodes are doing most of the work,” meaning there's no formula to determine which node represents the tipping point for developing lymphedema.

Complicating matters further is that there is no precise timetable as to when lymphedema might occur. “It could happen right away because you took out the lymph node that was doing the work,” Jenkins says. “Or it could happen later, because a patient injured or overused an arm. Or, just over time, your lymphatic system has a ceiling effect of how much fluid it can take out, and that ceiling lowers with age.”

### **Stages and Symptoms**

In general, lymphedema progresses in stages and is marked by different (and progressively serious) symptoms. Early warning signs include arm fatigue, a feeling of heaviness, or swelling that comes and goes. In advanced stages, patients may experience permanent swelling, as well as skin changes or hardness; for example, a person's nails may become brittle and thick.

Treating lymphedema is a multifaceted process dependent on the stage and severity. One of the most effective treatments is called complete decongestive therapy, which includes instructing patients on skin care and exercises to help reduce the liquid accumulating in a limb; use of compression bandages (a special kind of wrap); and what Jenkins terms “manual lymphatic drainage: a specific type of very, very gentle massage to help stimulate good, working lymph nodes and help shunt the fluid out of that limb.”

Complete decongestive therapy can be intensive—“The gold standard is for a patient to undergo therapy five days a week for four to eight weeks,” Jenkins says. The goal is to empower patients (if they're able) to work on reducing swelling and stave off lymphedema symptoms on their own. If left untreated, lymphedema can cause serious health problems such as recurring cellulitis infections and susceptibility to wounds. Jenkins cautions that if lymphedema becomes too advanced, skin changes are irreversible.

The goal is to always explore non-surgical options to prevent and treat lymphedema first, but when those efforts do not provide relief, there are surgical options, explains Dr. Daniel Liu, reconstructive surgeon at CTCA® in Zion, Illinois. “Patients who do not realize the benefits of physical therapy after a period of six to 12 months may be candidates for surgery,” Dr. Liu says.

Vascularized lymph node transfer may benefit patients who have advanced lymphedema affecting their skin tissue. The surgical procedure transfers lymph nodes from another part of the body, typically the upper groin or lower abdomen, to the damaged site. Reconstructive surgeons divide the blood vessels that supply the nodes and connect them at the site.

People at risk for developing lymphedema, however, can take preventive measures such as daily limb self-examinations to check for swelling. “Catching lymphedema early is important,” Jenkins says. “Also taking really good care of your skin is important, including using lotion every day and treating any little cuts, even a hangnail.” She also recommends that breast cancer survivors have a compression sleeve they use as a preventive measure if they're going to be using their arm a lot on a given day.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for lymphedema. But by being vigilant about following treatment protocols, the disorder is manageable. Dr. Garcia says that it can improve over time “because you build new connections, new vessels. Think of the lymphatic system like little vessels, or tubes, that help drain the fluid that has accumulated on a regular basis. If you press it or compress it, it helps. With time, the body learns and creates new channels.”

## *Journaling through Cancer in the 21st Century*

by Deborah Ludwig

Marni visited me in the hospital during one of my admissions for chemo in the spring of 2004. I was bemoaning the difficulty of responding to all the emails I'd received from people who'd reached out to inquire about my health. She suggested I start a blog. I could write whenever I felt like it, posting health updates and giving my family and friends one central place to go for information.

"What a great idea!" I thought. I had never blogged before, but I had been journaling since 1992. For me, journal-ing was a way to record my life, work through challenges, set goals, and heal emotionally. Blogging was just a new way to journal.

### **How Writing Can Help**

Did you know that expressive writing has health benefits? Research has shown that expressive writing can strengthen the immune system, increase lung and liver function, improve cognitive function, reduce stress, lower blood pressure, boost your mood, decrease symptoms of arthritis and asthma, and increase well-being in cancer survivors.

It doesn't matter if the topic of your writing is positive or negative; healing benefits are achieved as long as your emotions are involved. Though not a substitute for professional help, journaling can help you work through the difficult emotions that accompany a cancer diagnosis. It is a wonderful therapy tool for cancer survivors.

In our digitally connected world, a blog may be the preferred medium for today's journal writers.

### **Getting Started**

All you need to start writing is a journal, a notebook, or a computer. In our digitally connected world, a blog may be the preferred medium for today's journal writers. A quick Google search for blogging platforms will provide some options – most of them free. There are even healthcare-specific blogging communities, like CaringBridge.org and CarePages.com, where users can create their own personal websites to share health updates.

Most blogging platforms allow you to control the privacy of the posts you publish. For example, you can make your blog viewable only to people who have a password. And if you don't want to share your writing, you can even change the privacy settings so that only you have access to your blog.

### ***Should I Censor What I Write?***

*When it comes to expressive writing, one major point is to be honest. Don't censor yourself. Writing about your deepest fears and the difficult emotions you're experiencing is one of the best ways to work through them. However, if you plan to share your content on a blog or through social media, you may not want to be that open with the public, or even your friends and family. One way to work around this problem is to keep a private journal – in either a notebook or a file on your computer – where you write openly and honestly. Then you can share a censored version online of what you've written privately.*

### **Going Social**

If writing long blog posts isn't really your thing, you can still "journal" your cancer experience using social media. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are a terrific way to provide quick updates to family and friends while simultaneously creating your story through photos and posts about your treatment, your feelings, and the challenges you are facing.

As you post and share content, each social media site provides a record of your journey, dating all the way back to when you first started posting on the site. When you review past posts, you will make discoveries about your values, the patterns in your life, what drives you, where you have grown and healed, and where you remain stuck. What is revealed in those social media posts can be enlightening and, ultimately, healing.

Cancer can make your life feel out of control. But there are at least two things you can control during cancer: *when* you write and *what* you write. Writing can help transform your cancer experience into a journey of healing and self-awareness. And in the digital age we now live in, we have access to entirely new avenues for journaling. So pick up that pen – or log on – and start writing.



*Deborah Ludwig, a leukemia survivor, has completed 31 journals and is the author of Rebirth: A Leukemia Survivor's Journal of Healing during Chemotherapy, Bone Marrow Transplant, and Recovery. To learn more about Deborah and her writing, visit DeborahLudwig.com.*

*This article was printed from copingmag.com and was originally published in Coping® with Cancer magazine, September/October 2015.*

# NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

## 4 Cancer Myths Busted

By Karen Collins, MS, RDN, CDN, FAND

About a third of America's most common cancers can be prevented through healthy eating, regular physical activity, and maintaining a healthy weight, according to the American Institute for Cancer Research. But the wide range of cancer myths can make it hard to figure out what those healthy eating choices involve. EN addresses top cancer questions.

### 1. Does Sugar “Feed” Cancer?

All cells in our body use sugar for fuel, and many (but not all) cancer cells take up blood sugar more rapidly than healthy cells. However, avoiding sugar doesn't necessarily protect against cancer, because blood sugar comes from carbohydrate foods too. When all carbohydrate is limited, the body has mechanisms to keep blood sugar within a relatively narrow range. Chronic high blood sugar, however, may increase cancer risk by prompting higher levels of insulin and certain growth factors. Also, high sugar intake can promote weight gain and perhaps lead to changes in gut bacteria and inflammation.

**Smart Move:** Keep blood sugar and insulin levels controlled with a healthy weight, regular exercise, and a healthful diet that avoids big loads of carbohydrate at once, particularly sugars and refined grains.

### 2. Does Going Gluten-Free Reduce Cancer Risk?

Gluten is a protein in wheat, rye, and barley that poses no risk to most people. For people who have celiac disease, gluten creates damage in the intestines that could increase risk of cancer, which makes following a gluten-free diet essential. Emerging research suggests that some people without celiac disease may experience digestive tract pain, headache or fatigue that improves when gluten is avoided, but this sensitivity has not been linked to cancer risk. For those without gluten-sensitive conditions, research shows no cancer protection from avoiding it. Unnecessarily avoiding gluten can result in reducing consumption of whole grains, and their anti-inflammatory, cancer-protective fiber and phytochemicals.

**Smart Move:** If you are sensitive to gluten, choose gluten-free whole grains and other foods to make sure you get their protective nutrients. Otherwise, choose nutrient-rich whole grains in amounts that fit your calorie needs without regard to gluten.

### 3. Does It Take Massive Amounts of Produce to Reduce Cancer Risk?

Studies show the biggest drop in cancer risk comes from moving from Americans' typical low consumption of fruits and vegetables to at least five servings (about 2 ½ cups) per day. More than this likely helps further reduce cancer risk, and may help some people satisfy hunger while limiting calories for a healthy weight.

**Smart Move:** Aim for at least 2½ cups of vegetables and fruits daily. Include a variety of produce in every meal, since each contributes different cancer-protective nutrients and phytochemicals. Try swapping refined grains, meats or sweets for vegetables in meals and make fruit your first choice for dessert and snacks.

### 4. If Plant-Based Diets are Recommended, Should I Follow A Vegetarian Diet?

Diets heavy on red meat, refined grains, and sweets are linked with greater risk of cancer. However, vegetarian diets are simply one way of creating eating habits that focus on whole plant foods. Plant-rich eating that allows fish, poultry, meat, and dairy foods a smaller portion of the plate—as seen in the Mediterranean and Asian diets—is also linked with lower cancer risk.

**Smart Move:** Experiment with different ways to include a variety of nutrient-rich vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and beans in your eating habits.



Car prop donated by Jason Wharton Art



Jeff and Diana Merritt of Minuteman Plus were presented as this years VIPS (Very Important Proud Supporter).



Beautiful ladies from Life Matters.



Wine lovers at the BBSI Table!



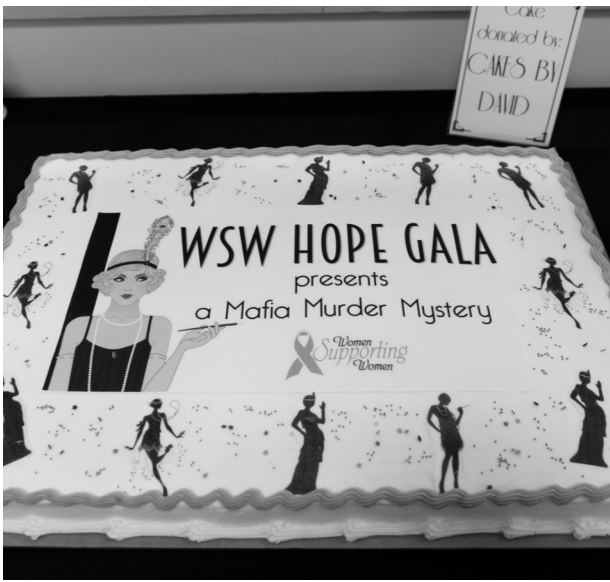
Board Members: Billye Sarbano, Karri Todd, Pam Heying and Jenni Pastusak



Kim Messick and Board Member Melodie Carter



Sarah Southard, Haley Echard, Jocelyn Feist and El Foxx.



John Rittenhouse of New Beginnings Productions.



Jane Roach and Billye Sarbanes, who was presented as the Volunteer of the Year.



Bartenders Pam Heying and Tim Feist



Foxy lady EJ Foxx.

# 2016 HOPE GALA-MAFIA MURDER MYSTERY

Photos courtesy of SMDi Photography and Macey Holyak Photography.



Stephen DiCarlo of SMDi Photography.







*A Special Thank You to*



Midway of Pocomoke City, MD hosted their 7th Annual “Drive Out Breast Cancer Walk” and Trunk or Treat, on October 29th. At the time of this publication their fundraising total was **\$15,535** and counting!! Grateful doesn’t even come close to how we feel towards Josh Nordstrom and Midway. We are SO appreciative of your continuous and unwavering support. Your efforts and this event are an integral factor in WSW providing FREE services to all of those affected by breast cancer on the Eastern Shore.

# WICOMICO COUNTY CHAPTER NEWS

1320 BELMONT AVENUE, SUITE 402  
SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21804  
410-548-7880

WICOMICO@WOMENSUPPORTINGWOMEN.ORG

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY - FRIDAY, 9:00 - 4:00

## Upcoming Events

**Knitting Group**  
Salisbury Office  
Dec 7th, 12 pm

As we welcome the crisp, cold air, scents of warm winter spices, the crunch of leaves and/or snow on the ground and the comfort of a toasty fire we must also prepare our bodies for the illnesses that come with it as well! Build up your immune systems by eating healthy and taking your vitamins; and for those of you who are going through treatment remember to stay as far away from germs and those who are sick.

The Hope Gala-Mafia Murder Mystery was a complete success and so much fun! We were excited to see everyone get into the spirit of things and show up in your sequins, fringe and smart suits. Ovation Dinner Theatre put on a hilarious performance, Milestone Catering pleased our taste buds with their delicious appetizers and meal, and Stephen DiCarlo of SMDi Photography and Macey Holyack of Macey Holyack Photography were kind enough to come out and take some absolutely beautiful pictures (pgs 6-7). A special thanks goes out to New Beginnings Productions for DJing, Minuteman Press who also happened to be our VIPs of the evening, Cakes by David, Jason Wharton Art, and Kitty's Flowers.

We were pleased to be able to honor one of WSW's amazing VIPs (Very Important Proud Sponsors) Minuteman Press and one of our most dedicated volunteers as Volunteer of the Year, Billye Sarbanes, who is also a board member and past President. Without the support and help of businesses, volunteers and friends like you we would be lost. Thank you so much for your dedication and commitment to WSW.

WSW wishes all of you a wonderful holiday season, filled with love, laughter, kindness and the love from all of those closest to you. Happy Holidays!

## FUN FACT:

Santa Claus comes from St. Nicholas, a Christian bishop living in (what is now) Turkey in the fourth century AD. St. Nicholas had inherited a great deal of wealth and was known for giving it away to help the needy. When sainted, he became the protector of children. After his death, the legend of St. Nicholas spread. St. Nick's name became Sint-Nicolaas in Dutch, or Sinter Klaas for short. Which is only a hop, skip, and jump to Santa Claus.

## Wicomico County Chapter Staff Members

**Cindy Feist**  
Executive Director

**Emily Rantz**  
PR & Marketing Director

**Natassia Feather**  
Office Manager

**Sue Revelle**  
Mentoring Coordinator/Co-Founder

## **Mentoring Minute**

*The holidays are here already. The cold weather is setting in and so are those nasty germs. Please remember to wash your hands as often as possible. Use the antiseptic wipes in the grocery stores to clean the grocery cart handles as well as your phones and doorknobs. Try to stay away from lots of crowds, eat healthy, and drastically reduce your processed sugar intake (not so easily done with all of the deserts & goodies for the holidays).*

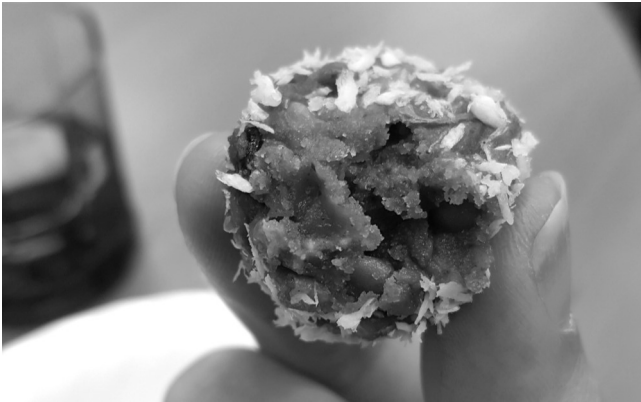
*Along with the physical aspects of remaining healthy, comes the emotional. It is hard to understand what is going on when everyone else seems to be happy and that is just not how you are feeling. People who have chronic depression may find this a more difficult time and may*

*need to engage their therapist more frequently or ask for a temporary increase in their medication.*

*Some may just feel down for a couple of weeks. However, if you find that those feelings remain, please seek counseling. Dealing with breast cancer, surgery, and often chemotherapy changes your internal chemistry, and finding someone to talk to, whether it be a counselor, minister, or even a good friend, may be very helpful. Feel free to come into our office and talk with us, or we can engage our mentoring program to find someone in similar circumstance with whom you can share.*

*Have a wonderful Holiday with your family and friends.*

*Sue*



**Salisbury Nutrition Class**

The fall series has come to an end and we would like to thank those of you who participated and put to use the wonderful knowledge given to you by Chris Himmel and Henriette Den Ouden from Habanera Farm. Chris and Henriette you did an amazing job as always and we are so thankful for your hard work and dedication to WSW. These classes were made possible by a grant from The Women’s Fund and the generosity of Shore Appliance Connection and Worcester Youth and Family Services with the use of their facilities.

*Windy Way Horses Sixth Annual  
Horse Show to benefit WSW*



*Peninsula Dressage  
Annual Horse Show  
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*Peninsula Dressage presents a special Thank-You to their sponsors:*

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*With special thanks to our Judges,*

**Anne Thibo & Marija Trieschman, who donated their time to this important cause!**

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT



Steve Lahey of Naticoke River Swim & Triathlon presents a \$750.00 to Cindy.



Sobo's held it's annual Witch's Ball to benefit WSW, selling out and raising \$440.00.



WSW finished out "Breast Cancer Awareness" month with our first "Light the River" event held at the Salisbury City Park. Four SU students took on most of the logistics for this event and did a fantastic job; Thank you Jeremy Williams, Savannah Hatch, Shannon Loughrige, and Nicole Karlin.



Dr. Alon Davis and staff participated in a casual day for WSW.



While helping Operation We Care assemble care packages, Cindy was pleasantly surprised by Liza Morrison (left) from the Seaford Young Marines with a donation of \$695.00 in honor of Dr. Kerri Kennard (right).

# DONOR THANKS

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Rosetta Dennis  
Manor View Elementary School

Cindy Brasure  
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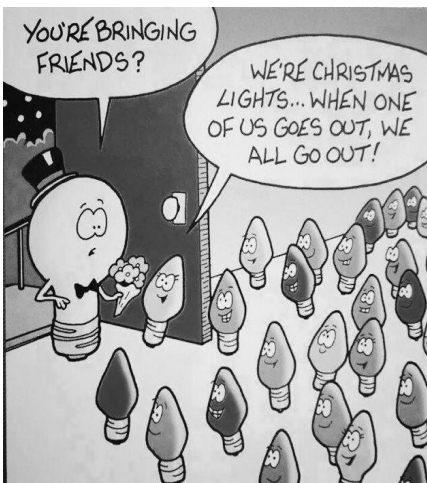
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# Joke of the Month

Two young boys were spending the night at their grandparents. At bedtime, the two boys knelt beside their beds to say their prayers when the youngest one began praying at the top of his lungs.

"I PRAY FOR A NEW BICYCLE..."

I PRAY FOR A NEW BICYCLE..."

I PRAY FOR A NEW BICYCLE..."

His older brother leaned over and nudged the younger brother and said, "Why are you shouting your prayers? God isn't deaf." To which the little brother replied, "No, but Grandma is!"



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newsletter. Thank you.

410-548-7880 or

Tassia@womensupportingwomen.org

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*All donations stay 100% local - WSW is not affiliated with any national organizations.*

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