



Care & Share Newsletter

December 2017

Local Services, Local Support.



Cindy Feist
Executive Director

What is the true meaning of Christmas? Everyone has an answer to this in some way, shape or form. Is it the card you get in the mail with the lovely quote or the perfectly wrapped gift placed just right under the Christmas tree? For many religions, it is the birth of Jesus. We celebrate during the holiday with images of him lying in a manger in a stable, a symbol of hope for all mankind. I see this sign of hope every day at Women Supporting Women.

The hope I see comes from an individual who stops in at the WSW office and hands us a five dollar bill to help women in need or the businesses in our community that we reach out to during our events asking for donations. Then, there are the many sponsors, board members, and volunteers who have given their time and talents over the past years to help Women Supporting Women continue our mission.

Without all of you, Women Supporting Women wouldn't be where we are today. In this month of hope, celebrating and counting our blessings, I am honored and truly blessed to be a part of this organization providing the much needed services and support to our local women who are on their breast cancer journey.

During this holiday season, may all of you find the hope you need, celebrate with the ones you love and as the New Year rings in, look forward to a bright 2018.

From All of Us at Women Supporting Women
Happy Holidays and a very Merry Christmas!

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SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

Salisbury (Wicomico)	Pocomoke (Worcester)	Ocean City (Worcester)	Cambridge (Dorchester)
<p>Dec. 7 - 6:30 PM Thursday</p> <p>1320 Belmont Ave. 410.548.7880</p> <p>Speaker/Topic: Facilitator: Kyle Beebe</p>	<p>The December meeting has been cancelled. Enjoy your holiday.</p> <p>Pocomoke Comm. Center 1410 Market St. 410.548.7880</p> <p>Facilitator: Virginia Schneider</p>	<p>Dec. 20- 1:00 PM Wednesday</p> <p>Atlantic Health Center 9714 Healthway Dr. Berlin 410.548.7880</p> <p>Speaker/Topic: Patrice Reese, ARRT (R) (MR) Information on Breast MRI</p> <p>Facilitators: Cindy Elliott, RN and Bev Ward, RN</p>	<p>The December meeting has been cancelled. Enjoy your holiday.</p> <p>Christ Episcopal Church 601 Church St. 410.463.0946</p> <p>Facilitator: Sue Todd</p>

SURVIVOR STORY



While he was battling breast cancer, Steve Del Gardo discovered something almost as shocking as his Stage II diagnosis. The world of breast cancer was focused almost entirely on women. Now he's cancer-free and doing his part to raise awareness for male breast cancer survivors by leading Protect the Pecs, an organization where men can receive support and know they are not alone in their fight.

I was 44 when I first felt a lump in my left pectoral area. My primary care doctor referred me to a well-known breast care institute nearby. At my first appointment, the receptionist gave me several forms to fill out. I couldn't believe that all of the questions were geared toward women, asking about menstrual cycles, gynecologists and most recent mammograms. Even the sign outside read "Wellness Center for Women." All I could do was sign and date the forms.

I had a mammogram and ultrasound and, after reading my test results, my doctor recommended a biopsy. A week later, the results came back benign. He told me to come back in six months if the lump hadn't disappeared. Instead of disappearing, it got bigger and painful but I trusted him, so I waited. I went back after six months, and he recommended a lumpectomy immediately.

When the biopsy results came back as Stage II breast cancer, I was shocked because I thought it was a fatty deposit. I did not expect a cancer diagnosis. My doctor recommended a mastectomy. I asked him about taking both breasts, but he said typically 90 percent of men don't get it in the other breast. I told him I'm not a typical guy. I had a double mastectomy later that month.

After those two surgeries in November, I thought I was done with treatment. My doctor said there was a 30 percent chance of recurrence within five years, and I thought those were pretty good odds. He disagreed and recommended chemotherapy. Even though I really didn't want chemotherapy because of everything I'd read, I took four rounds of paclitaxel (Taxol) once every three weeks. I lost the hair on my head and my goatee. Some side effects were bad, especially the nausea and bone pain, but I got through it with great support from my family and friends. My hair grew back a little darker and a little wavier, and I lost 55 pounds, so those are two pluses.

During treatment, I got frustrated with the lack of resources out there for guys with breast cancer. I didn't know anything about breast cancer, and when I did find something online, it was just a footnote. There were no support groups, and there was no one for me to talk to. That's when I decided to start Protect the Pecs. I'd been through the pain and suffering, and I knew I could do a lot for male breast cancer survivors and their families.

Through Protect the Pecs, I am raising awareness about male breast cancer by telling my story at corporations, colleges and conferences. Not surprisingly, my audiences are usually made up of women because men are embarrassed about having breast cancer. I tell them not to worry about the word "breast"—just call it chest cancer or pec cancer. Women usually make doctor's appointments for their husbands and sons so, by educating them, I'm also educating the men in their lives.

When I speak, I stay away from the doom and gloom. I was never that sort of person before, and I'm still not. Instead, I'm open and honest, and I use humor because laughter is one of the keys to recovery. Hearing about the first time I had a mammogram and how I ate hot wings before chemotherapy puts people at ease. I also mention things I've done that I never could've done before I had cancer, like speaking in front of big audiences and throwing out the first pitch at a Cincinnati Reds game without being terrified.

A lot of people are so very angry about having cancer. When I talk to them one on one, I tell them cancer is just a hiccup in their lives. Blaming and being negative doesn't help. If you're negative, I believe your body will get sick. When I was diagnosed, my dad told me to be positive and keep moving forward, that I'd get through it. Instead of lying face down in the fight against cancer, I came out swinging, using all my strength, positivity, faith and humor to beat it down.

MEDICAL UPDATE

How Practicing Yoga Helped Me Recover from Cancer ... and how it can help you too

by Claire Petretti Marti

When I was diagnosed with stage II breast cancer on January 12, 2010, my life changed forever. At the time, I'd been practicing yoga for fifteen years and teaching for four. As a yoga instructor, I already understood the incredible benefits of yoga for the body, mind, and spirit. But navigating through cancer treatment showed me just how much yoga could help me stay resilient.



Cancer attacks your body, sure, but it also attacks your mental well-being. Conventional medicine is aimed at destroying the physical aspects of cancer, but it can fail to address the significant effects cancer has on your thoughts and emotions. Yoga, on the other hand, focuses on the entire person. It can make you feel empowered because you are actively doing something for your own health and well-being. Yoga can help you feel more self-confident and allow you to trust your body's ability to heal and recover from trauma. It can help you find a sense of resilience and inner strength.

Over the course of the year in which I was diagnosed, I endured three surgeries, six rounds of aggressive chemotherapy, and almost two months of daily radiation. I balanced out this assault on my body by eating an antioxidant rich, primarily plant based diet; exercising daily; receiving acupuncture; and most importantly, practicing yoga. I continued to teach most of my yoga classes, and I even got certified to teach yoga for cancer therapy while undergoing chemotherapy myself. Yoga can help you feel more self-confident and allow you to trust your body's ability to heal and recover from trauma.

As a cancer survivor, I experienced firsthand the many benefits of yoga. A yoga practice can

- ◆ Minimize physical and emotional side effects.
- ◆ Boost energy and improve mood.
- ◆ Combat fatigue and stress with relaxation and breathing techniques.
- ◆ Restore flexibility, strength, and range of motion.
- ◆ Enhance lymphatic flow, digestion, and circulation.

How exactly does it work? Gentle range of motion exercises can restore mobility at surgery sites and help with scar tissue buildup. Yoga also helps support bone health. Everyone who undergoes chemotherapy for cancer is at risk for bone loss. Bone loss occurs when your body breaks down more bone than it can build up. Cancer treatments can spur on this process. Weight-bearing exercise like walking and practicing standing yoga poses can help strengthen bones and counteract the effects of cancer treatment on bone health. Some people develop neuropathy after surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation. Neuropathy is damage to the nervous system, which in turn affects nerve function. This nervous system damage changes the way the body sends signals to muscles, joints, skin, and internal organs. Yoga, self-massage, and mindfulness walking can help mitigate the effects of nerve damage.

The lymphatic and circulatory systems also suffer damage during cancer treatment. If the lymph nodes have been removed or compromised, lymphedema can result. Exercise can stimulate the lymphatic system by stretching the lymphatic smooth muscles. Learning yogic breathing techniques can aid in counteracting nausea, weakness, and insomnia. Yoga has also been shown to help with combating fatigue and depression.

Practicing yoga can go a long way in keeping your attitude positive through challenging cancer treatments and beyond. Go ahead; try it! You may find that yoga helps you tap into the power within. Powerful!

Claire Petretti Marti is an E-RYT 500 yoga teacher who has been practicing, studying, and teaching yoga since 1999. You can learn more about Claire and her yoga practice at OceanSoulYoga.com. This article was published in *Coping*® with Cancer magazine, July/August 2017.

COMPLEMENTARY CARE

Surviving the Holidays while Surviving Cancer
by Melissa Minkley, MSW



Decide ahead of time which family traditions you want to participate in, like decorating cookies with your grandchildren, and which ones you might consider putting on hold this year. It was a week before Christmas and I was visiting with my sister who had completed her last radiation treatment for breast cancer earlier that day. As she pointed to a stack of plastic bins filled with Christmas decorations, she sighed and said, "I feel so bad, I'm not up to putting them out this year." I reflected on similar boxes in my living room that needed my attention. I quickly realized that I didn't have an excuse for not having my decorations up, but she did. With all that she had been through with surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation treatment in the last six months, no one would challenge her lack of Christmas spirit. But this was hard for my sister to accept. She repeatedly apologized for not sharing the joy of the season with the rest of the family. Yes, the holidays are a time for celebration, rejoicing, and family togetherness. However, the season can be a stressful time for those who are coping with cancer. The additional holiday demands can create feelings of being overwhelmed, mixed with feelings of joy. The season can be a stressful time for those who are coping with cancer.

If your family is coping with cancer this holiday season, here are some key points to consider as you plan for this joyful and busy time of year.

Make a Plan

Decide ahead of time which family traditions you want to participate in and which ones you might consider putting on hold this year. Feel free to adjust those plans as the holidays approach and your energy levels and mood change.

Create New Traditions

Make the most of your energy by creating new holiday traditions that will limit the amount of stress for yourself. Some traditions are comforting and have special meaning, but if not, consider letting the old, cumbersome traditions go and creating new ones.

Perform at Your Ability

Accept your limitations and don't beat yourself up for not doing the things you think you should be doing. Be gentle with yourself. Respect what your body and your mind are telling you.

Ask for Help

Let others know how they can help you with shopping, baking, preparing meals, and wrapping presents. It's OK to be specific about your requests for help. Those who care about you also have a desire to be helpful, and you can help meet their needs by allowing them to assist.

Simplify

Try to keep the holiday planning and traditions simple. Shop online, use mail-order catalogues, or just give gift cards. Eat out at a restaurant for a holiday meal or host a potluck supper.

Communicate Your Feelings

Talking with your family and friends about your wishes for the holidays will help you clarify your needs. Share your needs and concerns with your loved ones and encourage them to do the same. Be respectful of one another's desires for the holiday season and be willing to compromise when needed.

It's difficult to avoid the holidays. But it is possible to make them easier to manage with some thoughtful planning, and by communicating your needs with family and friends. Most importantly, be kind to yourself. There is no need to apologize for your limitations or for those moments when you lack the holiday spirit.

This article was published in *Coping*[®] with Cancer magazine, November/December 2011.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

During the winter season it can be hard to continue eating healthy and even more difficult to shop for local organic and nutritious foods. Below are some local places you can visit to source items like fresh and dried herbs, local honey, fresh milk and seasonal fruit. Use the ingredients to make soups, smoothies, salsa and more!

CAMDEN FARMERS MARKET

Over the seasons and years Camden Avenue Farmers Market has grown to become a successful market, featuring not only organic produce, but a wide variety of locally grown products from local farms and homemade craft and food products as well. Fresh flowers, fresh free-range duck and chicken eggs, organic and pasture-raised meats, fresh milk and yogurt, seasonal orchard fruit, seafood, baked goods, local honey, jams and jellies, artisan breads, nut butters, hummus, fresh and dried herbs, transplants for your own gardening, and other products take their place in the tent city that forms every Tuesday, year round, from 2:30 PM - 6:00 PM at 1401 Camden Ave. Salisbury, MD. Follow them on Facebook at @CamdenAvenueFarmersMarket.



BERLIN FARMERS MARKET

Local farmers' fresh produce, seafood, meats, bedding plants, herbs, homemade goods and flowers. Located on Harrison Ave. behind the Berlin Fire Company. Open Friday's from 10:00 AM—3:00 PM, April to December.

THE RABBIT HOLE

Salisbury's first local store! Offering all local and regional products. In season produce, organic meats, packaged goods & baked goods and so much more! The store is located at 229 E. Main Street, Salisbury, MD and open Tuesday—Saturday from 11:00 AM—7:00 PM. Follow them on Facebook at @Followtherabbit.sby.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT



Midway of Pocomoke raised over \$19,000 at their Annual Walk on October 28. This is their largest contribution to date and is extremely appreciated.

Organizer and Marketing Manager at Midway, Josh Nordstrom works very hard each year to put on a great event for the community. This year's theme was "Knock Out Breast Cancer." All who attended had a great time and many went home with awesome auction items donated by local businesses.

Tall Pines Harbor Campground hosted their Whinnies for Ninnies Annual Breast Cancer Ride and "Think Pink" Weekend to raise money for Women Supporting Women. The total donation amounted to \$6,900! Some of the fun activities included a bra decorating contest, strawberry milkshakes, horse trail ride, pink YETI cooler raffle, bra pong and silent auction.

Right: Exec. Director, Cindy Feist and Marketing and PR, Amanda Smith visited Tall Pines Harbor Campground for a day of "horsing around."

Below: Owner of Tall Pines Campground, Sherri Baker and Ride Organizer, Billye Jean Maddox present the check to Amanda Smith with WSW.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT



Above: WSW finished out “Breast Cancer Awareness” month with our “Light the River” event held at the Salisbury City Park. This spiritual and solemn ceremony brought comfort to all who attended. Thank you to our speaker, Pam Wulff, violinist Leyna Paul and singer, Mary Brumbley. Photo Credit: Ray Sanders



Kerrie Bunting of WSW accepts a check for \$750 from Steve Lahey of the Nanticoke River Swim & Triathlon.



Thank You to Peninsula Imaging for raising \$250 through their pink casual Friday's in the month of October.



USSSA East presents a check for \$2,500 to WSW Exec. Director, Cindy Feist. Funds were raised through their ‘Saving Second Base’ Softball Tournament.



Board Member, Karri Todd accepts a \$500 check from Delmar Middle and High School Cheerleaders. Funds were raised during their Breast Cancer Awareness Night at Delmar Pizza.



Snow Hill Middle School's SADD Team donated \$200 to benefit Women Supporting Women. Great job, students!



Peninsula Dressage 9th Annual Horse Show



The 9th Annual Peninsula Dressage Horse Show at WinAway Farms in Willards, MD raised over \$5,000 to benefit Women Supporting Women. Riders and horses alike were decked out in pink.



Peninsula Dressage Presents a Special Thank You to Their Sponsors:

GRAND PRIX SPONSORS

- Aqua Pro Environmental Solutions (APES)
- Atlantic Hotel Inc., Ocean City
- Auto Gallery, Inc.
- Autumn Grove Stables
- Aviva Nebesky
- Christina Dayton –Wall DVM, All Creatures Veterinary Services
- County Saddlery
- David Horne
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- Kelly McGinn Dressage
- Laura’s Blanket Repair
- M.L. Selzer
- Pat Chandler
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- Peninsula Dressage
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- Two Old Mares Blanket Service

INTERMEDIARE SPONSORS

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WSW NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

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410-548-7880

WICOMICO@WOMENSUPPORTINGWOMEN.ORG

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

FUN FACTS:

"Jingle bells" was composed in 1857, and not for Christmas – it was meant to be a Thanksgiving song!

The name December comes from the Latin *decem* for "ten", as it was the 10th month in the Roman Calendar.



100+ Women Who Care on the Shore is a local organization who meet three times a year. Women nominate their favorite local charity, three nominations are chosen randomly out of a hat, those three women talk about their nomination and then all the members vote. The charity with the most votes is where

each woman writes their \$100 check to. Local charities must be a 501c3 that benefit residents of Worcester, Wicomico and Somerset counties. 100% of funds must stay on the shore. This year, WSW is the proud recipient of a \$5,000 donation from 100 + Women Who Care.

Wine Down Hour

Join us for an evening of wine tasting, learn the art of wine-making and bottle your own to take home! Cost is \$40/person and includes all of the above and two bottles to take home.

Friday, December 8 from 5:30 PM—7:30 PM

Brews Up at Urban Nectar-10019 Old Ocean City Blvd. Berlin, MD 21811

Office Closures

The Women Supporting Women Office will be closed on:

- ⌘ Monday, December 25
- ⌘ Tuesday, December 26
- ⌘ Monday, January 1

WSW Turns 25!

Women Supporting Women is coming up on its 25th Anniversary. Be on the look-out for updates, fun activities and new programs in 2018. This is a big milestone for our non-profit and we want to celebrate!!

Office Staff Members

Cindy Feist

Executive Director

Kerrie Bunting

Event Coordinator

Amanda Smith

PR & Marketing

Sue Reville & Kathy Pisani

Mentoring Coordinators

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 pair you with one of our survivor mentors with whom you can share.

The Travelling Piggy Pillows In September 2013, I was given a pair of comfort pillows to use after my mastectomy. The pillows earned their name of “comfort pillows.” They helped me sit and sleep comfortably immediately following my surgery. I relayed how much the pillows helped me to my sister during this period. Not long after my recovery, my sister had a friend who was going to need the “comfort pillows” after her mastectomy. As expected, she found them to be very useful after her surgery. However, the story does not end here – the pillows have helped two more women and are now resting comfortably waiting for the next time when they can be pulled out to offer “comfort” to the next friend. ~ from a local survivor

JOKE OF THE MONTH

There is a senior citizen driving on the highway. His wife calls him on his cell phone and in a worried voice says, "Herman, be careful! I just heard on the radio that there is a madman driving the wrong way on Route 280!" Herman says, "I know, but there isn't just one, there are hundreds!"



“One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas day...
Don't clean it up too quickly.”

~ Andy Rooney

DONOR THANKS

Individual

Sherry Fisher
Dr. Sechler
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Cancer Institute

Peninsula Regional Medical Center

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\$1,500 +

Airport Self Storage

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HOW CAN YOU DONATE?

MONETARY

- ⌘ Our website
- ⌘ Over the phone
- ⌘ Mail-In (Donation slip on back)
- ⌘ In Honor or In Memory Of
- ⌘ Third Party Fundraiser

IN-KIND (NON-MONETARY)

- ⌘ Wigs
- ⌘ Bras
- ⌘ All types of head coverings
- ⌘ Prostheses
- ⌘ Paper, cardstock, etc...



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Please contact the office if you are not reading
or if you no longer wish to receive our
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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