



AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RELAY FOR LIFE

Celebrate.

Remember.

Fight Back.

Issue 3

[www.RelayForLife.org/WarrenCountyNY](http://www.RelayForLife.org/WarrenCountyNY)

December 2014

# Relay For Life of Warren County Newsletter

2014 Queensbury Relay came and went as fast as Elvis' hips swing! I want to begin this issue of our newsletter with a big **THANK YOU** to everyone who participated in Queensbury Relay for Life 2014! From committee members, to Relayers, to sponsors and donors! It takes all of us together to make our event successful. Queensbury Relay for Life was #1 in the capital district!! I am beyond proud to walk with you all for this awesome cause!

We truly **Rocked Around the Clock on May 30th!** The event set-up started out a very wet and windy one, but low and behold, just as the committee formed up for the opening ceremony, the clouds parted, the rain stopped, and above us loomed a glorious rainbow.

Can you say **WOW?!** It was a glorious moment, felt by so many in attendance that day.



*Thank you, Scott Seeley, for capturing this awesome shot!*

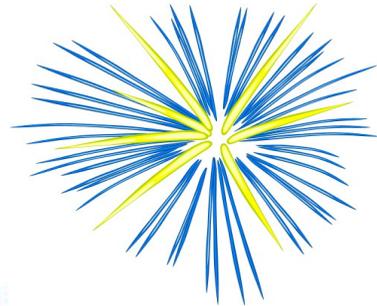


# TOP NOTCH!



Special thanks to our top performing Relayers and Teams! We had SIX national all-stars!

Congratulations Rebecca M. Turner Cullen, Kelly Seeley, Kathy Baker, Jodie Fisher, Jeff Jarett and Lyndsey Brown!



## Day of Relay

### TOP PARTICIPANTS:

	Rebecca Cullen	\$8,017
	Kelly Seeley	\$3,421
	Kathleen Baker	\$3,408

### TOP TEAMS:

	Cooper's Crew	\$9,816.01
	Ryan's Road to Recovery	\$9,284.70
	Hair Creations	\$6,565.60

## End of Fiscal Year

### TOP PARTICIPANTS:

Rebecca Cullen: \$9,057

Jodie Fisher: \$5,000

Kelly Seeley: \$3,671

### TOP TEAMS:

Cooper's Crew: \$10,831

AngioDynamics: \$10,761

Ryan's Road to Recovery: \$9,380

# EVENT AWARDS



**Best Team Spirit: Hair Creations**

**Best Dressed Relayers: Phil & Michele Normandin**

**Best Dressed Tent Site: Encompass**

**Team Captain Award: Lisa Sessleman**

**Largest Team: Glens Falls National Bank**

**Most Dashboard Emails: Anne Powers with 286 emails!**



# Thank You

FOR YOUR HELP  
COMMITTEE MEMBERS!

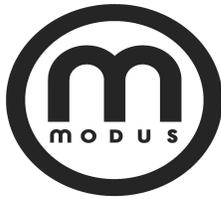


<b>Event Chair:</b>	Rebecca Cullen
<b>Team Recruitment:</b>	Lyndsey Brown & April Way
<b>Luminaria:</b>	Pam Smith
<b>Survivors/Caregivers:</b>	Rebecca Cullen, Kelly Stevens, Kim Gonyea, Jackie Fosco
<b>Online:</b>	Kelly Seeley
<b>Publicity:</b>	Chris O'Neill of Froggy 100.3
<b>Ceremonies:</b>	Rebecca Cullen
<b>Logistics:</b>	Tom Cullen & Rebecca Cullen
<b>Entertainment:</b>	Ginny Regner, Melissa Cheeney, Jane Griffiths & Alexis Wielt,
<b>Concessions:</b>	Kathy Baker
<b>Traffic:</b>	Kevin Ramsey & Boyscout Troop 16
<b>Camping/RV's:</b>	Rebecca Cullen & Reeney Umpstead
<b>DJ Extraordinaire:</b>	Richard Tollner
<b>ACS Staff Partner:</b>	Jillian Kamp



# Our Sponsors!

A huge part of our success is due to the support of our generous sponsors! Their sponsorship not only helps create more birthdays but also goes a long way in showing how much they care about our community and its members. Please be sure to thank them the next time you visit!



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# Thank you, Guests!

First and foremost – to our **Survivors** and their **Caregivers**. We are at the track in May, and Relay all year through, for YOU. Thank you so much for joining us – your attendance means so very much to us: Proof positive that all of our efforts are fruitful!

**YOU are our Heroes.**



**Ryan Seeley, Nola Byrne, Charlie Brown and JoEllen Deluca –**

YOU are all so amazingly beautiful. Remarkable strength, determination and poise describe each of you. Thank you so much for your joining us in May, for sharing your incredible stories, and lighting the way for all of our Survivors, Caregivers, Relayers and guests. You are our HEROES. Event day has come and gone, but know that you are in our hearts and thoughts all year through!



**Mayor Jack Diamond** – thank you so much for setting aside your evening every year to help us honor our Survivors and Caregivers. More so, thank you for your behind-the-scenes work, including this year's Proclamations for our Relay and Paint the Town Purple. Your time and efforts are very much appreciated!



A couple of letters say it all when it comes to Relay's National Anthem over the past couple of years... P J! Thank you, **PJ Ferguson** for volunteering your time and incredible voice during our Relay for Life ceremonies. Your rendition of the National Anthem is a favorite for sure. *(PJ showed up at Relay with walking pneumonia... a Relayer in every essence of the word).*



**Cookie Agard**'s melodious voice also treated us as we walked the track in search of our loved ones' luminaria. Thank you for joining us, Cookie!

Thank you, **SunDancers**, for joining us once again to entertain us and warm us up for the many laps that we will take throughout the night as we remember and honor our loved ones affected by cancer! The amount of time you put into practicing for this event every year is not forsaken. Thank you for loving us the way you do!!



**Lisa Camp** – we are tired just watching your energetic self!! Thank you and **Ray of Light Fitness** for all the time you put into the choreography for your flash dance at this year's event. Motivating, fun, rejuvenating are only a few adjectives that describe you and your dance.





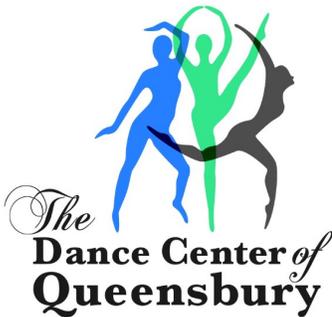
Ya haven't had fun till you've danced with the **Spa City Swingers**!! Not only did they entertain us, they stayed on well after their promised skit, and we entertained each other! What a GREAT group of energetic, smiling, fun, enthusiastic, awesome people!! Love, Love, Love! Thank you so much for joining us – we are already looking forward to seeing you again – in May 2015!!

**Tom Harrington** and his bagpipe crew. Wow. Somber, sobering, beautiful bagpipes. Thank you so much for the years that you have given Relay for Life, Tom. Looking forward to seeing you again in 2015!



A big thank you to another repeat performance by the **Queensbury Central Fire Department**, and **EMS**. Year after year, they are there, quietly, among us.

And then there's that Spartan Pride! The **Queensbury Schools** have always been so generous and helpful in allowing Relay for Life to utilize their facilities and equipment. There is a lot of behind-the-scenes logistics that Eric Wright and others at the school take care of that make us look so good. Thank you for another great year, guys!



Thank you, **Vicki Harris**, who danced the most beautiful routine to entertain our Relayers and guests during this year's Relay event. The choreography was smooth and absolutely moving. The time Vicki and Diane LaBruzzo spent is so very much appreciated. The **Dance Center of Queensbury** has become increasingly involved with Relay for Life of Warren County, for which we are increasingly thankful. See you in 2015!

# The Karate Center

324 Quaker Rd, Queensbury, NY

It is typical for us to have a Fight Back Ceremony during our event, which has occurred in past years at midnight. We find Midnight to be an opportune time to re-awaken our spirit and rejuvenate ourselves in

our future work in fighting the fight against cancer. For the past couple of years, we have been joined by **The Karate Center** who has provided us with a jaw-dropping exhibition of their talent. Kudos to you, Karate Center, and thank you **Sensei Derek** and your fellow artists for being a part of Relay for Life!



THANK YOU TO **EVERY SINGLE RELAYER** who took part in 2014 Queensbury Relay for Life! You all seriously rock!!!! Thank you to everyone (Relayer or not) who took part in making our Relay one of the top Relays in the country. From our awesome **DJ Richard Tollner** to... **Chris O'Neil** (assisting DJ)... to the behind the scenes logistical work by **Tom Cullen**... to the gal who captured many of the photos in this newsletter, Danielle Rushkoski of **From the Heart Photography**... all of the students and adults who played a hand in stuffing luminaria bags and getting them out onto the track... Team **Allen's Army** for lighting HOPE in the stands... **Troop 16 Boy Scouts**... the **Glens Falls Builder Club**... **Mirror's Image Salon**... all of the donors who made the Survivor's Cafe a reality and provided breakfast to some tired Relayers (**Sweet Basil's, Uno Chicago Grill, Ginny Rae's Diner, Price Rite, Ninety Nine, Outback, Panera's, Domino's, Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Massie's, Dango's, Subway Glen Street, Golden Corral, Hannaford, Angelina's, The Silo, Gambles and Noon Whistle Deli**)... Team **Reality Check** in celebrating No Tobacco Day... Bob Beyerbach at **Glens Falls Printing** (you rock!)... the many unnamed or unseen faces who donate their time, talents and energies for the cause! **All of us, together, will win the fight against cancer!!**  
**Thank you!!**



# Mark Your Calendar

Don't sit on the sidelines...Get involved!

Support your fellow Relayers by sharing these events with everyone you know! Further information for each event can be found on the ACS and Facebook pages.



February 14, 2015

*Valentine's Day Dinner & Dance!*

Join Team Hair Creations for the third annual Cupid for a Cure dinner and dance! Be sure to get your tickets early as this event is sold out quickly!

Don't miss out on 2015 Paint the Town Purple! Mayor Diamond has proclaimed the week leading up to our annual Relay for Life event as Paint the Town Purple! 2014 was a big hit, a lot of fun, and the winners got rewarded for their exceptional creativity! Congratulations to The Dance Center of Queensbury for taking first place, and winning a full 2015 sponsorship! Who will win a 2016 sponsorship or primo parking spot at Relay?! Start thinking purple!!



**Stay Tuned for 2015 Relay for Life Details... We'll Be GLOWING!!**



## *Old Fashioned Jack Wax Party*



### **Thurman Maple Sugar Party** *Thurman Town Hall, 311 Athol Rd., Athol* *Saturday, March 14th only, 4 p.m. until all are served* *Fighting cancer for over 50 years...*

This all-you-can eat sumptuous buffet is crowned with a dessert of genuine jackwax. Serving begins at 4 p.m. and lasts until all are served. \$10 adults, \$5 for kids 6-11. Free for those 5 and under. Info. 518-623-2967. During the day of the event, call town hall kitchen, 518-623-4050. Join the fun as area musicians perform some great toe-tapping music. New in 2014, purchase Jack Wax desert alone for \$4.50!



Jackwax parties have been held by North Country folks forever, and this confection, it has been said, probably originated with the Native Americans.

A Thurman diary written in the 1930s tells of the jackwax party held at Athol Methodist Church, which once stood between town hall and the Harris House. It raised funds for the church back then, but one year the call went out to raise money with a Jack Wax party to help the family of a young local boy stricken by leukemia. The next year, the church had closed and the young boy's life had been lost. Organizers decided to carry on the tradition of hosting the meal as a fundraiser to help those with this disease, and that year - and every year since, the dinner has raised money for the American Cancer Society. 2015 marks the 56th year that the dinner has been held for this purpose.

Kathy Templeton has organized the event for the past couple of years, taking over Becky Hitchcock's work when she died unexpectedly in 2012. Becky's predecessor was Jean Reynolds, a life-long Thurman resident who organized the event for decades before passing away from cancer.



**A proud sponsor of Warren County  
Relay for Life for the American Cancer Society!**



## Don't Wait For It To Happen To You

Has there ever been a time where your path has crossed with someone that would soon have a major impact in your life? As I stood there speaking with Paul Rossi, who works at Roma Imports, I could sense the strength he has. I was visiting Roma Imports seeking a donation for our Relay for Life St. Patrick's Day fundraiser event. I had spoken with Paul on the phone and when he told me he was a ten-year survivor, I immediately asked if I could interview him so that I could tell his story through our newsletter. From the onset of our conversation, I could tell that Paul was a survivor in every sense of the word. His words held many important messages, but one of his messages truly stuck with me: *"Don't wait for it to happen to you."*

Paul has always donated to St. Jude's Children Hospital. It is something he did well before he was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia at the age of 39. His beliefs always held strongly that one must take action while you are able to, before your something happens to you or someone close to you that inhibits your ability to take such action. Since Paul's diagnosis, and like so many others with Leukemia, he learned first-hand the great importance of donating blood and platelets.

Leading up to Paul's diagnosis, he had an infection in one of his teeth that would not go away. For several weeks, he visited his dentist for antibiotics to try to get rid of the infection. For some reason, unknown to him at the time, the infection just would not go away. Paul became fatigued. In that he was working three jobs to take care of his family, and not unlike myself, he passed off being tired all the time to his busy lifestyle. It was not until he experienced a bloody nose and a trip to the emergency room that he received his diagnosis of Leukemia.

Imagine. In your mind's eye, wear Paul's shoes for a moment. Imagine walking into the ER and you don't leave until six weeks later. Six weeks of the start of the fight for your life. Just hours before getting to the ER, everything in Paul's life was great. He had just purchased a new home and was an active participant in life. He loves passing time

outdoors. He was active and in “good health.” Then, out of nowhere, his white blood count dropped to 900, with shadows forming around his eyes. He later learned why the tooth infection would not clear up. He had no immunity. The shadowed eyes was a result of bleeding behind his eyes – he needed platelets to stop the hemorrhaging. During Paul's six weeks in Albany Medical Center, he received **platelets that saved his life**.

Paul received many kindnesses throughout his sickness. From random monetary donations from individuals, to his workplace holding a bake sale – all so very much needed, so very humbling and very much appreciated. But his most treasured act of kindness for Paul was that **someone donated platelets**.

There are so many people that give life-saving blood each year. Many, however, do not realize the importance of blood, platelet and bone marrow donations. Many patients, like Paul, need platelet transfusions just as often as blood transfusions during chemotherapy treatments. Giving platelets may take a couple hours out of your day, but it gives someone life.

Paul's driving force was and is his family. With them, he found his way through his fight with humor – his IV pole decked out with medical gloves made quite a unique Christmas tree! Paul shared with me how he believes humor has a “rippling effect” - I could not agree more. “There is always someone worse off,” Paul says. Humor and it's ripple effect, and surrounding himself with positive people, helped Paul deal with what he refers to as the “battle within the battle.” Fighting cancer isn't just a physical battle, it's a highly mental and emotional battle as well.

Reflecting back to his hospitalization at Albany Med, Paul told me about a 16 year old girl whose parents were taking shifts to ensure their daughter was not alone. He remembers thinking “Will she walk down the aisle one day?” The 16 year old, like so many others stricken with cancer, likely needed blood and/or platelets. As I sat there listening to Paul talk about her, I could only hope that she is a survivor.

My meeting with Paul ended with him reflecting how we shouldn't sweat the small stuff, although not knowing one's fate isn't small stuff. After ten years in remission, recalling his fight still takes his breath away. He encourages everyone to **donate blood or platelets** – don't wait for it to happen to you. I also am hopeful that our readers will be

proactive and take the first step in making a difference. Contact your local Red Cross for information on up-coming blood drives, or to find out where you can donate platelets. Visit [www.BeTheMatch.org](http://www.BeTheMatch.org) to learn about **becoming a bone marrow donor**. Without a bone marrow transplant, I will not live. Start the ripple effect within your circle of family and friends. You really **can save a life!**

– Nola Myers-Byrne\*

*\* Nola was diagnosed with, and determinately fighting, Hodgkin s Lymphoma since May 2012. She has been at death's door and returned, always keeping Hope with a smile on her face. Nola offers her writings in hopes of making a difference in the lives of those affected by cancer.*



Share your story!

[WarrenCountyRFL@gmail.com](mailto:WarrenCountyRFL@gmail.com)



*A note from your 2014 Event Chair & Editor:*

*Whoa. What a year! In closing out Queensbury Relay for Life 2014, our 19<sup>th</sup> Relay, I have some ponderings that I would like to share.*

*Every day for the past few years, leading up to this day, has brought Relay deeper into my life. Although I spent a good deal of time in fundraising and event-related tasks, the depth of the importance in what I ponder, however, is how Relay has affected my heart and soul.*

*I met a young woman last year whom has forever changed me. A woman who has redefined bravery for me. This young woman was given a 10% chance of survival due to her battle with lymphoma. She was asked once whether, if she had the chance, she would choose to have never received her diagnosis, and amazingly her answer was "no." No? She wouldn't choose to return to a younger, healthier time as opposed to experiencing the mental anguish of her diagnosis, the pain of chemo, the burns of radiation? No? When her entire life revolves around IV's, sickness and fighting to live? No. You see, when she was healthy, it is true that she didn't have to experience all of these dreadful things, nor did she experience the depth of the human spirit, of the love and kindnesses extended to her in her time of need. I regret that my friend had to get sick in order to experience such love and kindnesses. If only all of us could experience the warmth, comfort, compassion and love that she has experienced since her diagnosis. Nola Byrne has changed my life, has made me a better person. Relay for Life has changed my life, has made me a better person.*

*I have been very fortunate in my 49 years of life, blessed with two beautiful, healthy children, a best friend for a husband, many friends whom I call family, and rewarding work and healthy, life experiences. I never would have considered that when I donned my first Relay for Life shirt, that I would one day realize that Relay is one of the greatest steps in my life's journey. I began Relay to help "make a difference." Little did I know that Relay would also make a difference in me.*

*I will never forget all that I have learned and experienced these past few years. I am so proud and in love with my Relay family – my arms are open to each and every one of you with a heart-felt invitation to join our family. I promise you, it will change your life.*

**Rebecca Turner Cullen**  
**2014 Relay for Life Event Chair**



**YOU MEAN TO TELL ME**



**YOU HAVEN'T SIGNED UP FOR RELAY  
YET?!**