



Walk Talk!

American Cancer Society Relay For Life News from the Windham Area

Relay For Life: Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back.

September 4, 2009
43 Days 'til Relay!

A Letter From Our Co-Chairs



Chris & Jessie at Third Thursday

As Relay approaches, we would like to thank all of you for the work you do to try to beat this disease. We all share the same goals: to raise money to fund research to find a cure for cancer, help families who have been afflicted by this disease, and to raise awareness within our community. Many of us Relay in honor of someone's battle, and many Relay in memory of someone who lost his or her fight. We have all been touched by cancer, whether it has been a relative, friend or other loved one, and we will continue to Relay and raise funds until we find a cure. At the October 17th & 18th ACS Relay For Life Windham event, we will be celebrating those who have fought cancer, remember those we have lost to cancer, and we will fight back so there is no more cancer.

2009 Calendar of Events

Committee Meeting:
Oct. 1, 7 pm, WCMH

Team Captain Meetings
Sept. 9: **Chaperone's Meeting – Mandatory for school & youth teams**

Sept. 16
MANDATORY T-shirt order drop off, forms and money drop from 6- 8 only. **T-shirt Deadline**

Relay:
October 17th & 18th
ECSU Sports Complex,
Mansfield

Visit the American Cancer Society Relay For Life's virtual home at www.RelayForLife.org!

Celebrate, Remember, FIGHT BACK!

~Chris Lataille-Santiago & Jessie Shea, Event Co-Chairs

Society Funding Launches Researcher

In 2002, Daniela Dinulescu, PhD, was one of the researchers with a promising new idea who was disappointed to learn that there wasn't enough money available from the American Cancer Society to fund her proposal to better understand ovarian cancer – a particularly deadly cancer that often is diagnosed too late to be treated successfully. Dr. Dinulescu was placed on the Society's Pay-If Research Application list. A few months later, she was funded by a group of generous New England donors. Their investment paid lifesaving dividends: In 2005, the prestigious Burroughs Wellcome Fund recognized Dr. Dinulescu with a Career Award in the Biomedical Sciences for her groundbreaking study of endometriosis and endometrioid ovarian cancer. Her work will now help other scientists better understand the nature of ovarian cancer. Dr. Dinulescu credits the American Cancer Society for being the first to support her work.



Important Contact Information

Event Co-Chairs:

Chris Lataille Santiago
poohgirl1675@yahoo.com

Jessie Shea
SheaJL@mansfieldct.org

ACS Community Executive:

Shannon Stahecki
shannon.stahecki@cancer.
org
(860) 887-2547 (press 3)
or (800) 270-9199 (press
3).

Survivorship

By Nancy Austin, Survivorship Chair

It seems that lately that I am always meeting people who are cancer survivors. The other day in the locker room at the pool there were four of us who are survivors. This really is a good sign. It tells me that for many, the treatments are working. It emphasizes the importance of research. I remember when I first became a nurse that many people did not survive. We have come a long way. In most situations it is possible to diagnose early in the disease process. This then increases a person's chance for surviving. We still have a long road ahead of us, but with continuing research, hopefully a cure will be found

The survivorship committee is getting ready for Relay. We have fruit donated by Stop& Shop. Committee members Marie and Lil are looking for baskets to put on the tables for the fruit to be in. Windham Hospital is again donating our lunch, which is much like last years. It consists of soup, turkey or veggie wrap sandwiches and salad. Beverages are water, milk, cranberry juice or apple juice, and of course there's a dessert.

This year we are doing the survivors' photos differently. The photos will be taken with a digital camera and loaded onto a screen.

See you at Relay!

Patients Need Rides to Treatment

The American Cancer Society needs Road to Recovery volunteers to drive cancer patients to and from their lifesaving treatments. Volunteer drivers provided more than 18,000 rides to local cancer patients last year.

All volunteers are trained by qualified American Cancer Society staff. Volunteer drivers use their own vehicles to drive patients to and from their treatments. The schedule for volunteers is flexible; treatment appointments take place weekdays, primarily during business hours. Volunteers can give as little as two or three hours per month to help a cancer patient. Volunteer coordinators are also needed. For more information please call 1-800-227-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.

Working to Make Healthcare Accessible

Every story of survivorship is a story of access to care. With more than 11 million cancer survivors across the country, no organization is more ready to improve access to quality healthcare to all Americans than the American Cancer Society. The American Cancer Society and its partner advocacy organization, ACS-CAN will demonstrate that we cannot win the fight against cancer without drastically improving access to care for all Americans. For example, right now, only 1 in 5 eligible women have access to a federal program that provides lifesaving breast cancer screenings. The Access to Care Campaign increases the value of funds raised for cancer research by working to ensure medical breakthroughs will be available to everyone who needs them. Visit cancer.org to learn more, share your story, and advocate for the affordability and availability of the advances we've made together.

Online website notes:

- If you register for a team online, you must give your \$10 to the team captain. You can't pay online.
- Don't purchase luminaria online. Download the form and give it to a team member or mail it to the local ACS office, and write "Windham Relay for Life" and the name of your team on the form.
- We do not have survivor t-shirts. Survivors will receive another gift.

Silent Auction Items Needed!

Our Silent Auction committee is still looking for items for the Silent Auction. Popular auction items in the past have included:

- Hand-knitted items such as small afghans, throws, and layette sets
- Jewelry
- Pottery

We're also looking for volunteers to staff the Silent Auction booth at Relay on Saturday and Sunday. Contact Laurie Rose, Silent Auction Chair, at laurierose0549@sbcglobal.net for more information.

More Website Info!

From Joan Doiron

Relay Maps

A map of the Relay site, showing where all of the booths and activities will be taking place, can be downloaded at both websites. Copies will be available at the next Captain's Meeting.

A map that shows the surrounding streets and geographical area can be downloaded from both websites, and will be available at the next Captain's Meeting. This map also shows where the ECSU Parking Garage is located, and explains how parking will work this year.

Reminder of websites: www.windhamrelayforlife.org is our "unofficial" website while www.relayforlife.org/windhamct is our "official" online website. Remember...check them out. There's tons of info. The entertainment/special laps & activities/ hours of booth operation will be posted on these sites when they are finalized. There are some great team fundraisers coming up that are advertised on these sites.

2009 Committee Contact Information

For general relay information, contact the event chairs -
Chris Lataille Santiago at (860) 208-9916 or email at

poohgirl1675@yahoo.com

and Jessie Shea at (860) 208-3647 or email at SheaJL@mansfieldct.org.

- Online Website Assistance: Joan Doiron at jdoiron@eosmith.org
 - Survivorship: Joyce Burdick at joyceburdick@aol.com
 - Team recruitment: Anne Trudel at ATrudel@wcmh.org (only team recruitment questions)
 - Corporate Sponsorship: Shawn Maynard at smaynard@wcmh.org
 - Advocacy: Kim Silcox at silcoxk@easternct.edu
 - Campsites and Data Management: Millie Brousseau at milliebrousseau@charter.net
 - Children's Events/Activities: Sandy Cohen at sandcastles16@yahoo.com
 - Luminaria: Brian Roy at br1an@snet.net
 - Publicity: Tom Doyle at doyletom1@charter.net
 - Silent Auction: Laurie Rose at laurierose0549@sbcglobal.net
 - Track Signs: Leslie Pendleton at gngpendleton@aol.com
 - Volunteers: Marina Quarticelli at mquarticelli@wcmh.org
 - Walk Talk: Nan King at nan24seven@yahoo.com
 - Youth Team Coordinator: Jennifer Thompson at thompsonjj@mansfieldct.org
 - Finance Management Fred Brown at brownfw@charter.net
 - Gear Store: Rita Kinstler at mkinstler01@snet.net
 - Logistics: Lorraine McDevitt at montimac@sbcglobal.net & Pat Brown at brownpw@charter.net
 - Entertainment: Sue Fowler at minione65@yahoo.com and Leslie Pendleton at gngpendleton@aol.com
- Shannon Stahecki, our ACS Representative, can be reached at Shannon.Stahecki@cancer.org

Are you a writer? Even if you're not, if you have a story to share, you can contact Nan King at nan24seven@yahoo.com to see it in the next Walk Talk.

Special thanks to Monique Roy for her loving tribute to Shirley Lafontaine and Tina Popeleski.

Tina and Shirley

By Monique Roy

St. Mary's Footprints Relay for Life team will never be the same again. The passing of our beloved team founders and captains have left a huge void that can never be filled. Most importantly, they were our friends. Two wonderful, beautiful, faithful and courageous women who took on cancer, determined to beat it. It beat them.

Tina was a private and reserved person. She sang in our parish Folk Group and always insisted on standing behind someone so she wasn't standing in front. She loved children, especially babies. In December 2001, she was being treated for thyroid problems. It was actually cancer. She wasn't diagnosed until July, when she was in stage 4 ovarian cancer. In December of the same year, her husband died. She felt guilty about not being able to take care of him yet she trudged on. Shortly after diagnosis, Tina expressed her dream to hold her first grandchild in her arms. There were no prospects of a grandchild in the near future and I had doubts that it would ever happen. In June of 2006, she was given six months to live. The following month, her daughter-in-law became pregnant. Six months came and went but Tina survived. In April 2007, her granddaughter was born and Tina's dream came true. In fact, she enjoyed 18 months with her grandchild. Tina endured years of pain and suffering, rarely taking more than Extra Strength Tylenol and almost never complaining. She was so resilient and such a fighter that it came as quite a shock to her and everyone else when treatment was stopped in early November. She never gave up. She was tender hearted, yet strong as a bull.

Shirley was a social butterfly. She was active in many different parish groups and very family oriented. She was committed to everything she did. She was diagnosed in 2003 and was given a two year life expectancy. Shirley had grueling treatment, during which she lived on chicken noodle soup. She could eat little else. She and Tina began our Relay team. Her Relay work was so dear to her. A few years ago she took a trip to Hawaii with the Lebanon Seniors. It fell during Relay and Shirley called several times to check on things. Even when her treatment stopped and she knew that her time on this earth was short, she worried about Relay. My mother (Maggie Dubois) and I assured her that we would take care of things. I'll never forget what she said to me and my mom about dying: "I can't really complain. The good Lord gave me a great life. I have a wonderful husband, children, grandchildren and friends. I hoped to live longer but God has other plans. I'm at peace. I'll go to see my parents, my brother and my granddaughter." She said this without wavering and in fact, with a smile on her face. She planned her service down to the last detail – she made me chuckle when she stated she would not use "the F word" (funeral) or "the C word" (coffin). Instead, it was a "memorial service and flower box". At her calling hours, the line went out the door and quite far onto the sidewalk. It was a deserving tribute to a wonderful woman.

St. Mary's Footprints was founded by Tina Popeleski and Shirley Lafontaine in 2003. Both Tina and Shirley were diagnosed and died within months of each other. Their amazing faith, strength and endurance is something to celebrate yet it's hard to understand why a cure hasn't yet been found. Shirley's daughter, Donna stated: "We can send people to the moon but we haven't found a cure for cancer." What more reason do we need to Relay? I told Shirley that if she and Tina had any way to order us nice weather on Relay weekend, that we would be grateful. While I'm eating my bowl of chicken soup sitting under Tina's tent on October 17th, my heart, along with so many others, will be heavy. Tina and Shirley's "footprints" will forever be imprinted on many of us. May you rest in peace, dear friends.

What will your token be?

This year, we are adding several new things that are fun and exciting to Relay this year. One of them is a new contest for all teams. Each team is being encouraged to create a token which represents their team. It can be a hat, belt, decorated baton, decorated sweatshirt, etc. This token would be something that your team member would carry with them or wear when they are taking their turn on the track. Have fun with this and pick something that represents your teams theme, decorations or style or makes a statement about why your team Relays.

More things you need to know.....

Team Parade – There will be a team parade as part of the end of the event. We are encouraging team captain's to get as many of their team members there at closing as possible. You can put on costumes, carry a team banner, carry your token, dress up only your team leader, but be there and show us your team spirit. Prizes will be awarded for the team with the most people and the team with the most team spirit.

Campsites – due to the addition of the Cancer Prevention Study this year, campsites are being moved around a little for this year only. We need for teams to sign up for their campsite as soon as they can. Please contact Millie Brousseau at brosseaumc@mansfieldct.org and reserve your campsite today. Additionally, if you are planning on having a camper at Relay, please note that campers can not be more than 24 feet long if they are parking along the fence. We have limited space for ones that are bigger than this – 1 or 2 spaces. Spaces for campers are first come, first serve. These fill up quickly so if you are planning on having a camper, please be sure to reserve your space today. The spaces for this are set by ECSU and can not be changed or added. We are asking that you not give Millie a hard time if they are all taken by the time you reserve yours.

Shirts – T-shirts are a free gift from the American Cancer Society and in no way associated to the \$10 commitment fee that each person must pay to participate. The t-shirt deadline is Sept. 16. There will be a drop time in the lobby of the hospital between the hours of 6 – 8 pm. You may drop t-shirt orders, survivor forms, money, Luminaria forms, etc. on this evening. No shirts will be ordered after this date. We are encouraging teams to order a few extra shirts if they are thinking they might add a few people to their team after this date. Please don't call, email, or ask for extra shirts after this date because we will be unable to get them. If your team plans on ordering extra shirts they must pay the anticipated commitment fees before ordering. All teams commitment/registration fees must be paid in advance of ordering shirts.

Youth Teams – please take note of the youth team meeting scheduled for Sept. 9 at the Windham Hospital at 6pm. Each youth team must have a team captain and a chaperone attend this meeting. It is a mandatory meeting. We will discuss all the things youth teams need to know as well as answer any questions you may have. Our youth teams are important to us so we want to make sure everything you are all set.

Campfires – Campfires will be allowed in a fire pit only. Fires must be attended at all times. You must have a fire extinguisher on hand. If you don't have or can't get a fire extinguisher, please let Jessie know and she'll check to see if the local fire dept. might be able to provide some.

Basket Drawing – Each year the Relay event has a huge Basket Drawing which brings in a sizeable sum of money for our cause. We ask that each team decide on a theme for their basket and put together items that would go great with the theme. Please be sure not to put in perishable items, alcohol of any kind, or chocolate. You can put in gift certificates for items of this nature. We ask that you put a list of the items on the outside of your container so people will now what's in it as they are placing their tickets. We also ask that you make sure that you completely enclose your basket in plastic. Bags to enclose baskets can be purchased at Walmart. Please share your basket theme with or direct any questions on the basket drawing to Melinda Walencewicz at melindaw@remax.net or (860) 985-4363.

For patient services or any



kind of cancer information,
please contact 1-800-ACS-2345
or cancer.org