

# When Cancer Strikes, The Community Is Here

By Linda Hanf McIntosh

When cancer is diagnosed, it is frightening. Patients and their families operate in a state of shock as they try to digest the news and what it means.

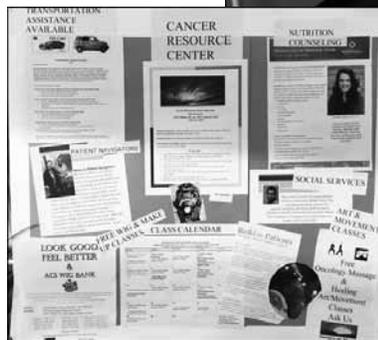
Today because of regular health screenings, such as yearly mammograms, and better understanding and treatments, the survival rate can be reason for celebration.

Here in El Dorado County, the Marshall Cancer Center has a program that provides support, direction and materials for wending one's way through the cancer journey. The program makes it possible for the newly diagnosed and current patients to get support and care right in El Dorado County without having to go down the hill. And it's open to the community to take advantage of the Center's many resources.

The Cancer Center is located in Cameron Park on Palmer Drive just up the road from the Bel Air shopping center. The Center is now made up of the Cancer Resource Center, the Marshall Medical Cancer Clinic, and the Infusion center. They are housed there under the same roof.

Over the years, the Cancer Resource Center had grown and in August 2015, the Clinic and the Cancer Resource Center opened under the same roof. Walking in the door, you'll step into the resource area. If you walk on through, you'll be in the clinic and the infusion center.

Thus, the new Cancer Center now serves as the hub for many cancer-related activities. As the Resource Center, community members can find books, booklets and digital media that pertain to the kind of cancer they are researching. While there, a unique set of support services are offered such as chemo orientation, nutrition counseling, no-cost mammograms, transportation



Class, group, event information



Max the therapy dog enjoys special privileges for his comforting presence.

assistance and support groups.

At the Oncology Clinic, medical care is provided including the infusions. "We have outstanding physicians, certified oncology nurses, and an independent pharmacy onsite to help patients with their cancer journey," says Wendy Goossen, director of cancer services.

The care is tailored to each patient and his or her individual

needs. The staff understands it is a difficult time for the patients and their family members as well. "We help serve and support them in the clinic and resource center and give them the treatment and comfort they need," she adds.

The Cancer Resource program has been rigorously evaluated and became accredited by the American College

Surgeons Commission on Cancer. Goossen, who was instrumental in getting the accreditation, says, "You can trust your care in us. We provide comprehensive medical care and support services. Most of the services offered at the Resource Center are free of charge."

"Images of Hope El Dorado" is a non-profit group that Goossen started. "It's a grassroots organization made up of a committee of volunteers who truly believe in helping others. They do several fundraisers, including the "White on White" event in June, which brings awareness to all cancers and celebrates cancer survivors.

The money the group raises and the generous donations and gifts from the community enable Images of Hope to support and even pay for many of the services that patients would otherwise have to pay for. The healing arts, massage, meditation, Pilates, yoga are a variety of classes to help support the patient during their cancer journey.

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# ... and The Community Helps

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Images of Hope, also pays for a harpist to come into the infusion center to play. Goossen says, "It creates a calm atmosphere. The patients love it."

"We also do 'Pink in the Night,' lighting up downtown Placerville in October. This event started as an awareness event for Breast Cancer but we believe it is important to note that women tend to make sure family members get screenings that help prevent the diagnosis of all cancers," she says.

The volunteers and staff have great compassion for the patients, their family members and everyone touched by cancer. It means a lot to volunteers to help others. Their passion shows when they are with the patients, Goossen notes.

Resource Center staff



Clinic nurses



The staff itself works as a well-oiled machine, even scheduling volunteer drivers to take patients to and from appointments.

"These are truly selfless people in our community," she adds. And then there is Max, the selfless therapy dog, who makes the rounds and brings forth smiles and a

warm hopeful feeling.

Community members are encouraged to drop by. The Cancer Center is located in Cameron Park at 3581 Palmer Dr., suite 400. — *Linda Hanf McIntosh is editor of Around Here Magazine, El Dorado County*

## Classes Groups and More

**Art Classes** - Each month, a variety of art therapy classes are available for a small fee. Open to anyone interested joining, classes will vary and be in sculpting, Japanese ink painting, and card making. Get more information, at the Cancer Resource Center, 530-672-7050. Scholarships available.

**Gentle Yoga** - Whether you are a yoga fanatic or new to the art, this class is for you. These six-week workshops will enhance your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being through the gentle art of yoga. Reservations required, \$50 per person. Scholarships available. Call the Cancer Resource Center, 530.672.7050, for details.

**Introduction to Chemotherapy** - Is chemo in your treatment plan? Every Wednesday 10-Noon, a nurse navigator, social worker and infusion nurse gather to educate patients on what to expect during chemotherapy. The Introduction is to ease the transition and eliminate any barriers to care. Reservations recommended. Family, friends and caregivers welcome.

**Look Good, Feel Better** - Designed for women going through chemotherapy and/or radiation, this free class, held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 1-3pm, helps women enhance their appearance and mood with make up, scarves, hats and wigs. Reservations required.

**Lymphedema Education** - Free class for those concerned about their risk of lymphedema. For more information call 530-672-7050 at the Marshall Cancer Resource Center in Cameron Park.

Also, the Center holds a class in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, has a Ostomy Support Group, a Prostate Cancer Support Group plus a Survivorship Support Group.

To find out about other classes, programs, and support groups for different kinds of cancer, call 530-672-7050 at the Marshall Cancer Resource Center in Cameron Park or just stop by and check out the many resources available. The Cancer Center is located in Cameron Park at 3581 Palmer Dr., suite 400, El Dorado County, Calif.