

May/June 2024

# Cancer Wellness Newsletter

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**June is Pride Month**

*...and more, inside!*



For more information about the Loran Smith Center programs or to register for a class, please email [loransmithcenter@piedmont.org](mailto:loransmithcenter@piedmont.org) or call **706.475.4900**.

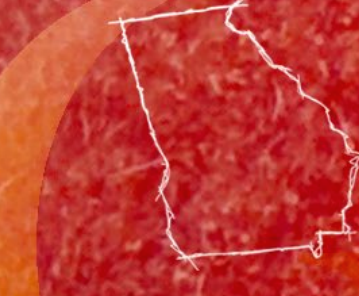
*This newsletter is made possible by the Thomas J. & Sara Cooney Endowment.*

*Empowering cancer care close to home.*

**LORAN SMITH CENTER**  
*for cancer support*



*Real change lives here*



At Piedmont Athens Regional, we treat the patient—not just the disease. Because cancer treatment involves more than medical care, free programs such as yoga, cooking demos, expressive art classes, and counseling are available to anyone affected by cancer at any phase in his or her journey. The Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support at Piedmont Athens Regional serves anyone regardless of where they received treatment.

## What's Happening at the Loran Smith Center

Sandy Pyle, BSN, RN, ONN-CG

We officially rolled into spring this week and the blooms are popping in the garden. Aside from the pollen, spring in Athens is my favorite time of year (not counting football that is!). The days are longer and warmer, the dogwoods on Prince are in full bloom and summer is around the bend. There is a lot going on at the Center too!

First, we are getting ready to wish our MSW intern Tim Platz farewell. I know many of you met him during his two semesters here, and he certainly will be missed by us. Tim has made great connections with our clients and has done outstanding work with our men's group and grief workshop. He kicked off our new "Coffee Hour" on Wednesday's from 12:30–1:30 p.m. This group is for all patients and caregivers, it's an opportunity to drop by, relax and connect with others that may be experiencing similar challenges.

On Tim's heels we will welcome Ian Marburger—a dual degree intern from UGA majoring in Public Health and Clinical Social work. We look forward to the gifts he will bring to the Center. I have reflected on how fortunate we have been with the caliber of the interns we've received from UGA. We get to be their final stop before graduation and provide them with a well guided work experience, I marvel at the work they go on to do and we are fortunate to have many here in our community.

We are in the process of preparing for our National Cancer Survivors Day Block Party – Sunday, June 2 from 3-5:30 p.m. in the parking lot of the Center/Healing Lodge. All are welcome to attend. Hope to see you there! Check out the photos from last year's celebration in this issue!

With Peace and Love,

*Sandy*

For more information about the LSCCS programs or to register for a class, please email [loransmithcenter@piedmont.org](mailto:loransmithcenter@piedmont.org) or call **706.475.4900**.



# May is *Brain Cancer Awareness Month*

*Robin Black, RN*

Brain tumors occur when abnormal cells form within the brain. This type of cancer may exert pressure on adjacent tissue, cause fluid to accumulate in the brain, cause bleeding and/or block the normal circulation of cerebrospinal fluid through the spaces within the brain.

Brain cancers account for 1.4% of all new cancer cases. Twenty-three thousand people are diagnosed annually with a primary diagnosis of brain cancer; however, the American Brain Tumor Assoc. estimates between 200,000 to 300,000 metastatic brain tumors are diagnosed each year. Brain Cancer is the 10th deadliest cancer in the U.S. and there are 130 different types. African Americans have a slightly higher incidence of primary tumors but Caucasians have a higher incidence of malignant tumors.

The symptoms listed below are not always indicative of brain cancer; but, if you experience any of the following symptoms, please seek the care of a medical professional:

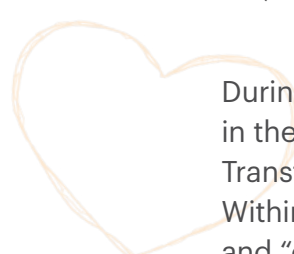
- Seizures
- Changes in mental status or mood
- Personality or behavioral changes
- Loss of balance or coordination
- Changes in ability to see, smell, or hear
- Extremem pulse and respiration rate changes
- Changes in ability to perceive heat, cold, light touch, or sharp objects
- Prolonged severe headaches increasing in intensity with change of position or bearing down
- Changes in speech



# May is *Oncology Nurse Month*

*Robin Black, RN*

During the month of May, Oncology Nurses are celebrated and recognized for their role in the care of clients diagnosed with cancer. This year's theme is "Empowering Hope and Transforming Care". These nurses impact patient care through determination and dedication. Within their scope, there is explanation of diagnosis, navigating patients through treatment, and "celebrating victories and providing comfort for those going through the unimaginable".



# Farewell from Tim

Tim Platz, MSW Intern/UGA

Hi all, this is Tim Platz, the social work intern from UGA and sadly although I know we've only just met, it's time to say "See you later." This May marks the end of my internship at the Loran Smith Center and I can't say enough positive things about my experience. As a novice in the field, the support I received from my coworkers was invaluable and it stood out immediately that this was a place where I'd be treated not as an intern but as a competent member of the staff.

What followed was a preliminary glimpse into the world of oncology that has truly been one of the most inspiring experiences of my life. It is an honor to share space with anyone affected by cancer, whether it's the patients and family members who face the diagnosis, or the staff of social workers, nurses, doctors and more who tend to their needs.

I've witnessed an immense capacity for depth and compassion in these individuals. Many times, I've heard a patient express gratitude for their illness because it helped them achieve a deeper sense of meaning. This is a world full of people who find fulfillment by being of service, for whom a regular visit with mortality is inspiration to make the most of the time we have.

I encourage you to make the most of the time you have. It could be as simple as going for a walk or treating yourself to one of the 157 flavors of popsicles at La Michoacana. I recommend the mango with chile, but the chocolate covered bananas are also top notch.



# Introducing Ian Marburger



Hey there! I'm Ian Marburger. I'm a graduate student here at UGA, obtaining a master's in Public Health (with a concentration in Health Promotion and Behavior) and a master's in Social Work (with a concentration in clinical social work). I find psychology, humans, and behavior exceedingly fascinating, so I knew I wanted to work with people, but I wanted to broaden my horizons in my graduate school pursuit. Social work allows me to pursue clinical applications (such as therapy) and help people while also allowing me the flexibility to explore the many opportunities the field offers. I also love the social work approach of examining people with the broader systems in which they exist and through their strengths. That context is imperative, as humans do not exist in a vacuum, and we must take all of these variables into consideration if we are going to initiate social progress. As much as I love to help individuals, sit one-on-one with someone, and dive deeply into what makes them who they are, I also desire to make larger, impactful changes. I'm eager to help communities by listening to and understanding their needs and helping initiate behavioral changes through the public health lens.

Having a great conversation and making people laugh are my favorite things to do in life. I'm painfully curious, so I can ask a million questions when getting to know someone. For fun, I love to run trails, travel, spend time with my wife and loved ones, play with our dog Gimli, listen to music, play drums, laugh/be a goofball, and EAT. Food is awesome!

# Cancer Survivors Day Block Party

The first Sunday in June is designated as National Cancer Survivors Day. It is the day to acknowledge all who have traversed the cancer journey along with their family, friends and healthcare providers and with those engaged in cancer research. Anyone living with a history of cancer, from diagnosis through the remainder of life, is a cancer survivor according to the National Cancer Survivors Day Foundation. The day was established to bring awareness to the need for more research and resources and increase public awareness in an effort to improve the lives of cancer survivors.

This day provides an opportunity for us all to connect, celebrate and recognize all survivors and those who have supported them along the way. I encourage you to join us as we welcome and celebrate patients, caregivers and members of our community.

Our Cancer Survivors Day Block Party will be held at The Loran Smith Center/Griffin-DuBose Healing Lodge on Sunday, June 2 from 3-5:30 p.m. It is an afternoon filled with music, food, games, raffles and face painting (and maybe some surprises!). I hope you will join us for a day of fun and celebration! Check out the photos below from last year's celebration.





## June is *Pride Month*

### **What is Pride month, and why is it in June?**

Pride Month is celebrated every June to honor, recognize, and celebrate the LGBTQ+ community, commemorating the Stonewall Riots that began in June 1969. The Stonewall Riots are often considered the spark that ignited the LGBTQ+ rights movement.

### **Who can celebrate Pride?**

Everyone! While Pride Month is a time to commemorate LGBTQ+ individuals – it’s also a time for allies to show their support. Just remember that the earnest and ongoing support of allies is needed year-round and not just during Pride Month.

### **What exactly does LGBTQ+ stand for?**

This acronym has grown over time to be more inclusive. LGBTQ+ (also shown as LGBTQIA+) stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual. The “+” is often included to signify all of the gender identities and sexual orientations that letters and words fail to capture.

### **What about cisgender? What does that mean?**

In Latin, “cis” means “on this side,” while “trans” means “on the other side.” Cisgender just means

that your gender identity aligns with the sex you were assigned at birth. So, if you were assigned female at birth and identify as a woman today, you’re cisgender. Someone whose gender identity differs from the sex on their birth certificate is transgender.

### **How does cancer affect the LGBTQ+ community?**

Research shows elevated rates of cancer and later stage diagnoses within the LGBTQ+ community. There are numerous contributing factors, and more research is desperately needed to understand and address these issues. It’s important to note that this community faces unique barriers to accessing healthcare, and the risk of discrimination plays a large role.

While this speaks to a much greater need for addressing barriers, it’s important to remember that a balanced diet, exercise, and annual health exams help with both prevention and early detection of cancer and many other health issues.

### **Where can I get more information about Pride Month, the LGBTQ+ community, and local events?**

PFLAG: [pflag.org](http://pflag.org)

Human Rights Campaign: [hrc.org](http://hrc.org)

Athens Pride and Queer Collective: [athenspride.org](http://athenspride.org)

Atlanta Pride: [atlantapride.org](http://atlantapride.org)



# Programs

Please keep in mind that all of our program dates and locations are subject to change.

## KNOWLEDGE

### Hormone Therapy Class

This class is for women on hormone therapy for estrogen receptor positive breast cancer (Tamoxifen, Arimidex, Aromasin, Femara, etc). In this class you will learn the science behind the treatment and discuss methods for managing side effects. **RSVP required. Call 706.475.4900**

**Mondays, 7/15, 9/16, 11/4; 4–5:30 p.m.**

## MOVEMENT

### Tai Chi

Tai Chi is a moving meditation that improves fitness of mind and body. We warm up with gentle qigong exercises and practice tai chi forms from the Tai Chi for Health Institute. Movements can be done standing or seated and can be adapted to your body.

*Drop-ins welcome, but some prior experience with tai chi suggested for best experience.*

**Tuesdays, 11–11:45 a.m.**

### Yoga for Peace, Calm and Hope

This ongoing, weekly yoga class is designed for the cancer patient. The class incorporates gentle movement in a nurturing environment. To help increase energy, remove pain, and recover strength.

**Fridays, 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.**

## PEACE

### Healing Touch and Reiki

Individual sessions that focus on the energy system of the body to promote relaxation, reduce stress, and minimize side effects.

**By appointment only, 706.475.4900**

### Mindfulness for Mind and Body (In person)

*Facilitated by Brooke Bidez, LMSW*

Learn a variety of techniques focusing on the breath, observing your body for tension or discomfort and noticing all five senses. Studies suggest many positive benefits of mindfulness including reduced stress, help in coping with pain, improved cognitive ability and increased sense of well-being.

**Every Thursday, 10:30–11:10 a.m.**

*Out of respect for others, we ask that you do not enter class after 10:25 a.m.*

### Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (Online)

*Facilitated by Mike Healy, Ed.D.*

Learn ways to reduce stress, lessen physical and emotional pain and cope better with everyday demands.

Call Mike at 706.248.8918 for more information.

**Second Friday of every month**

## SUPPORT

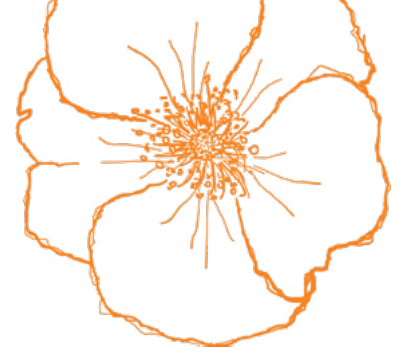
### Breast Cancer Support Groups

*Facilitated by Sandy Pyle, RN, BSN, ONN-CG, and Robin Black, RN Nurse Navigator*

A group for women with a diagnosis of breast cancer to share information, resources, and experiences.

**Second Thursday of every month, 5:30 p.m.**





### **Women's Cancer Support Group**

*Facilitated by Robin Black, RN and Brooke Bidez, LMSW*

A group for any woman with any type of cancer diagnosis. A group to discuss treatments, side-effects, coping, stress reduction and survivorship in a safe, confidential setting.

Second Tuesday each month 1-2:30 p.m.

### **Mondays for Men, Cancer Support Group**

*Facilitated by Joel Siebentritt, LCSW*

A confidential setting for male cancer patients to discuss treatment, side-effects, and survivorship. Any man from any diagnosis, currently in treatment through long-term survivorship is welcome.

Fourth Monday of every month, 12-1:00 p.m.

### **Triple Negative Breast Cancer Support Group**

*Facilitated by Robin Black, RN, Oncology Nurse Navigator*

A group for women diagnosed with Triple-Negative Breast Cancer, aimed to address the unique needs of this community.

Fourth Monday of every month 2-3 p.m.

### **Illness Adjustment Counseling**

Individual sessions to address issues such as stress, anxiety, treatment decisions, and family communication.

By appointment only, 706.475.4900

### **Grief Support**

Individual and group support for grieving adults.

By appointment only, 706.475.4900

### **Healing Grief Workshop**

*Facilitated by Lauren Liverman, LCSWs*

A nine-week workshop for those who have lost someone through death. The loss does not have to be a cancer-related death.

Please contact the center at 706.475.4900 for more information and to register. Registration Required.

Next workshop begins in September.

### **Individual Support for Adults**

By appointment only, 706.475.4900

## SUSTENANCE

### **Nutrition Counseling and Side-Effect Management**

Individual sessions by physician referral.

By appointment only, 706.475.4900

"I feel so much better after talking with you, I feel like I can handle this now."

— a grateful patient



# Thank you to our donors!

Gifts in support of Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support guide patients and their families through their cancer journey. To make a donation and help continue to make these programs possible, checks may be made out to The Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support or visit [give.piedmont.org/lscs](http://give.piedmont.org/lscs).

## Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support

ABB Motors and Mechanical Inc.  
 Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan M. Brockmann  
 Mr. and Mrs. Craig Canfield  
 Angela Irvin  
 Ilka McConnell  
 Gloria Moon  
 Mrs. Kristina Schultz Tanner and Mr. Matt Smith  
 Mr. and Mrs. Marks Towles  
 University Cancer & Blood Center LLC  
 Emily Waring

## Loran Smith Center Tribute

In memory of Ron Alexander  
 Gary L. Morris  
 In honor of Laura D. Shedenhelm  
 Amanda Hodge

## Lymphedema Therapy Program Fund

Mr. and Mrs. Craig Canfield



## May 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Coffee Hour, 12:30 p.m.	2 Mindfulness, 10:30 a.m. Healing Touch, by appt.	3 Yoga, 11:30 a.m.	4 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
5	6 Healing Touch, by appt.	7 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	8 Coffee Hour, 12:30 p.m.	9 Mindfulness, 10:30 a.m. Healing Touch, by appt. Breast Cancer Support Group, 5:30 p.m.	10 Yoga, 11:30 a.m.	11 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
12	13 Healing Touch, by appt.	14 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m. Women's Cancer Support Group, 1 p.m.	15 Coffee Hour, 12:30 p.m.	16 Mindfulness, 10:30 a.m.	17 Yoga, 11:30 a.m.	18 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
19	20 Healing Touch, by appt.	21 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	22 Coffee Hour, 12:30 p.m.	23 Mindfulness, 10:30 a.m.	24 Yoga, 11:30 a.m.	25 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
26	27 Healing Touch, by appt. Men's Cancer Support Group, 12 p.m. Triple Negative Breast Cancer Group, 2 p.m.	28 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	29 Coffee Hour, 12:30 p.m.	30 Mindfulness, 10:30 a.m.	31	

# June 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
2 Cancer Survivor's Day Block Party	3 Healing Touch, by appt.	4 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	5 Coffee Hour, 12:30 p.m.	6 Mindfulness, 10:30 a.m. Healing Touch, by appt.	7	8 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
9	10 Healing Touch, by appt.	11 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m. Women's Cancer Support Group, 1 p.m.	12 Coffee Hour, 12:30 p.m.	13 Mindfulness, 10:30 a.m. Healing Touch, by appt. Breast Cancer Support Group, 5:30 p.m.	14 Yoga, 11:30 a.m.	15 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
16	17 Healing Touch, by appt.	18 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	19 Coffee Hour, 12:30 p.m.	20 Mindfulness, 10:30 a.m.	21 Yoga, 11:30 a.m.	22 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
23	24 Healing Touch, by appt. Men's Cancer Support Group, 12 p.m.	25 Healing Touch, by appt. Tai Chi, 11 a.m.	26 Coffee Hour, 12:30 p.m.	27 Mindfulness, 10:30 a.m.	28 Yoga, 11:30 a.m.	29 Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 a.m.
30	Triple Negative Breast Cancer Group, 2 p.m.					



## Juneteenth

Robin Black, RN

Juneteenth is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the ending of slavery in this country. The designated date is June 19th and is often celebrated the 3rd Saturday in June. Before being nationally known as Juneteenth references have been made to Jubilee Day, Emancipation Day (Texas), Black Independence Day and Freedom Day. Celebrations are marked by festivities, parades, and church services. On this celebratory day African American history, progression, and culture are showcased.



Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support  
1199 Prince Avenue  
Athens, Georgia 30606

*"Hope and encouragement through  
support and information"*



## BEAUTIFUL YOU BOUTIQUE

*Beautiful You is a cancer wellness boutique  
specializing in products for women who have  
had or are going to have breast surgery.*

For more information and to learn more about all  
that we offer, please visit our website!

[piedmont.org](http://piedmont.org)



706.475.4811



Piedmont Athens Regional  
Medical Services Building



[BeautifulYou@piedmont.org](mailto:BeautifulYou@piedmont.org)