For more information about the Loran Smith Center programs or to register for a class, please email loransmithcenter@piedmont.org or call 706.475.4900.

This newsletter is made possible by the Thomas J. & Sara Cooney Endowment.
It’s a challenge but also somewhat fun writing into the future, (it’s the week after Thanksgiving as I am writing this!). New Year is the time when we assess what has happened, what is happening and imagine what is to come. Here at the Center we recently said goodbye to Bernice Hector one of our Cancer Registrars that has been at Athens Regional for 34 years! Bernice retired at the end of November and we sent her off with a loving goodbye, she will be missed. I think about all of the dedication and hard work that Bernice has provided. She will leave a lasting impression on our cancer programs. For the first time, we have added an intern to our registry department – see the article from Kelly Connell on page 4.

We welcomed our new Nurse Navigator, Robin Black at the end of October. Robin has been at Piedmont-Athens Regional for 10 years (see her intro on page 3) and jumped right into the team at LSCCS, we are thrilled to have her here with us.

In December, we had our open house and got to see old friends for the traditional tying of colored ribbons on the tree in front of the Center. Our old friend Santa came for his annual visit, always good to connect with old friends.

As we start the year, we have made a few changes to our programming. Beginning Tuesday January 10th we will resume our regular Tai Chi class, 11:00 – 11:45 with Katie Calkin (see her article on page 4). Also on January 10th we add a Women’s Cancer support group – open to all women with a cancer diagnosis – this monthly group will meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 1:00 – 2:30 pm.

The staff (namely Lauren and Brooke) started putting plans in motion for a caregiver’s support group and hope to have this in place by early spring. We started thinking about the possibility of bringing back some of the creative art therapies – music, painting, writing and hope to have some offerings by summer (stay tuned!). For February, National Cancer Screening Month, check out the article from our MSW intern Melanie.

Erika Jantzen put together a lovely article on our long-time breast cancer survivor Tara Thomas. See her article on page 7.

We hope to see you soon at the Center, if you have ideas for programs or services we would love to hear from you.

With Peace and Love,
Sandy
Welcome Robin Black!

Hello, my name is Robin H. Black and I’m the new Oncology Nurse Navigator for the Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support. I’m extremely excited for this new opportunity. I have been a registered nurse for 36 years with a background in Orthopedics, Psychiatry, Dialysis, Mother-Baby and Endoscopy. I think of myself as a well-rounded individual and look forward to gleaning information as well as imparting it. I am originally from Spartanburg, SC and have lived in Georgia since 2012. My family life includes a husband, 2 children and 2 granddaughters. I’m an avid shopper and I also enjoy a good book, a good movie, and good food. I look forward to meeting and working with the community and collaborating with the team.

Welcome Katie Calkin, MPH, MCHES
Community Health Educator • Community Health & Relations

Tai Chi will return on Tuesdays from 11:00 – 11:45 am beginning January 10th.

I am a Certified Health Education Specialist with a Master’s Degree in Public Health. I have worked at Piedmont Athens Regional since 1999 providing education in the community on many topics such as first aid skills, quitting nicotine, coping with stress and improving nutrition. Movement classes are my favorite and I am certified in Tai Chi through the Tai Chi for Health Institute.

In our classes we will warm up with gentle qigong exercises and will practice simple tai chi forms. Tai chi has been shown to improve strength, flexibility, and balance. This mind-body practice can increase feelings of relaxation and focus.

Classes are open to all and can be adapted for your body. Movements can be done standing or seated. Drop-ins welcome.

I look forward to being a part of the Loran Smith Center family and moving mindfully together!
I am very thankful and honored to have been given the opportunity to intern in the Oncology Analytics Department at Piedmont Athens Hospital. I am currently a student at Greenville Technical College finishing up the Cancer Data Management program this December. Piedmont Healthcare is known as a leading hospital system in cancer care, and the opportunity to get hands on experience in the field of Oncology Analytics at such a distinguished institution has been very exciting and rewarding. Getting started in the field of Cancer Data Management has been rewarding both professionally and personally.

I became interested in pursuing work in the field of cancer after I had relatives and friends affected by cancer. I have had relatives and friends that have survived cancer, and unfortunately some relatives and friends that have passed away. I wanted to pursue work that in some small way that can help improve the lives of those patients affected by cancer. I researched different careers in the field of cancer and decided to become a certified tumor registrar.

A certified tumor registrar works in hospitals or cancer treatment centers to gather histories of cancer patients. The information they compile on treatment, diagnosis and patient history serves as an important resource for cancer researchers and those who work in public health. The data is used, to help monitor and improve cancer treatments and work toward better screening programs and cancer prevention. The data gathered can also be instrumental in helping to provide better follow-up to cancer patients.

This clinical internship at Piedmont Athens is an invaluable piece of my education and training before I sit for my CTR exam in March of 2023. I would like to thank the whole team in the Oncology Analytics department for giving me this opportunity for hands on experience. A special thanks to Michelle Saunders Lead CTR at Piedmont Athens who has taken the time to personally work with me one on one to prepare for this new career.
Barriers to Care American Cancer Society Transportation Grant

Sandy Pyle, Manager, Cancer Support Services

As a Commission on Cancer accredited institution, one of the standards we are required to meet each year is addressing Barriers to Care, in other words, addressing the issues that cause patients to miss appointments / treatments, etc. It can be cost of medication, lack of insurance, etc., and the one we chose to address for 2022 - Transportation. We cover a vast 17 county area with lack of adequate public transportation. We do not have Lyft / Uber services that cater to a patient population (they primarily cater to the student / football crowd) and have found them to be unreliable. We fortunately found a grant through The American Cancer Society that helped us address this issue. With the help of one of our stellar public health interns, Sam Hernandez, we applied for and were awarded $25,000 to put toward this issue. We have partnered with a newly formed Medical Transport Company – Classic City Connect, a mother/daughter team that is working closely with us to meet the needs of patients. Since October 1st, we have provided approximately 40 round trips for patient appointments!

While this has been a tremendous help for our patients, the grant is only in effect for one year. This year will give us an opportunity to look for other transportation resources and solutions. The American Cancer Society is dedicated to finding resources for patients as well. They are re-building their “Road to Recovery” program, partnering volunteers with patients to provide rides to appointments. While this program was in effect for many years, it was shut down during the height of the pandemic and is slowly coming back. With the growth of cancer programs in Athens and the surrounding area, I would love to see us help build this into a robust and sustainable program. Perhaps the new year has you thinking about ways to give back or help in some way. If so, this may be an opportunity for you. For more information and to get involved, contact The American Cancer Society at 800-227-2345.

Be a Road To Recovery Volunteer (cancer.org)
When your doctor suggests a screening test, it is important to remember this does not always mean your doctor thinks you have cancer. Cancer screening is intended for those who have no signs or symptoms of cancer to help detect any early signs of cancer. By the time symptoms appear or become noticeable, the cancer may have grown and spread which can make treating the cancer more challenging. The goal of cancer screening is to reduce illnesses and death that could result from cancer.

The CDC recommends screening for breast, cervical, colorectal (colon), and lung cancers and provides gender and age-based guidelines for when screening should begin. In addition to CDC recommendations there are other considerations to take into account including a person’s family history of cancer, racial and ethnic background, and their individual medical history. For example, the African Americans population has disproportionately high mortality rates from breast, lung, prostate, and colorectal cancers- therefore recommendations for screening suggest an earlier age for this population to begin testing in some circumstances.

Cancer screening guidelines can change as new research shows which populations would benefit most from screening with the least harm. It is best to discuss with your doctor how early or frequently you should be screened and for what types of cancers. Some of the most prevalent cancers and the common screening tests for them are as follows:

- **Breast Cancer**
  - Mammogram

- **Cervical Cancer**
  - Pap Smear

- **Lung Cancer**
  - Low Dose C-T Scan

- **Colorectal Cancer**
  - Colonoscopy

- **Prostate Cancer**
  - DRE (Digital Rectal Examination) or PSA Blood Test

- **Melanoma/Skin Cancer**
  - Visual full-body skin exam or Dermoscopy
Healing Grief Workshop
Facilitated by Lauren Liverman, LCSW

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. Next workshop - Wednesday February 15th from 3:00 – 4:30pm and every Wednesday through April 12th. Topics Include: Getting Acquainted, Stress Management, Understanding Grief, Anniversaries, Remembering, Memorialization, Accepting, Role Changes, Closure & Evaluation. Pre-registration is required.

Hormone Therapy
offered by the Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support

Increase your understanding of therapy for ER+/PR+ breast cancer and receive tools to manage these medications.

Please call (706) 475-4900 to Register!

In this class you will...
• Learn the science behind the treatment
• Discuss methods for managing side effects
• Learn about complementary therapies and their benefits

Upcoming Class Dates for 2023!
• Thursday, January 19, 2023  1:00—2:30 pm
• Thursday, February 23, 2023  5:30—7:00 pm
• Tuesday, March 7, 2023  1:00—2:30 pm
• Saturday, April 15, 2023 11:30—1:30 pm (light brunch served)
• Monday, June 12, 2023  4:00—5:30 pm
Tara Thomas is a power house. Always smiling and eager to share her story of encouragement, she has survived breast cancer not once, but twice. She received her first diagnosis in 2008. At that time she was a single mom, a student at UGA, and worked at a daycare. “I just didn’t have the time to think about anything else,” Tara said. “When I was a girl first menstruating at 15-years-old I could feel lumps in my breast tissue. They would disappear and reappear with each cycle. In 2008 they reformed and I sought medical treatment.” The mammogram confirmed invasive ductile carcinoma in her right breast.

Her treatment included eight rounds of chemotherapy. The process continued for the next seven months. It included a lumpectomy and ended with radiation. Her daughter, D’Ara was 10 at the time. “Her father helped us and my mother was with me every step of the way. She also had her secret weapon – homemade soup. I had to rely on my faith in God to pull me through. I prayed for complete healing.” During chemotherapy her menstrual cycles stopped and her gynecologist told her she could no longer have children. “But God had other plans,” Tara said. “My cycles returned and two months later I was pregnant with my second daughter, Morgan. I call her my chemotherapy baby.”

Cancer free for the next 13 years Tara was faithful to monthly self-breast exams when she found a lump in her left breast. She made a mammogram appointment and it revealed another form of breast cancer; a hormone driven ER+, PR+, HER2 invasive ductile carcinoma. She faced the reality of second course of treatment that mirrored her first regimen. Her faith tested again she made hard decisions concerning her quality of life. “I chose to complete only two of the required four chemo treatments. During this bout of sickness D’Ara made sure I had something to eat even when I felt nauseas. Mashed potatoes were her specialty but she made sure there was always water and peaches ready to go.”

Tara is now awaiting hormone therapy. Her work in the community continues: author of “Faith to Heal Breast Cancer,” and founder of “Just Tara’s Touch Pink” an organization that spreads the facts and dispels the fear surrounding breast cancer. She has chaired various Relay for Life events, hosted her own events, assisted with the Susan G. Korman organization, and is a member of the Ford Warriors in Pink Models of Courage Program with the Atlanta chapter.
Thanks to The Carriage House!

We are thankful to OJ and DJ from the Carriage House for donating Thanksgiving meals to some of our clients this year! Their generosity brought joy and gratitude to our families and staff.

Thank you to our donors!

To make a donation and help continue to make these programs possible, checks can be made out to the Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support or go to piedmont.org/locations/piedmont-athens/foundation

LORAN SMITH CENTER FOR CANCER SUPPORT

Jeannine Collins
Delena Brockman
Eula M. Cross
Harriet Canfield
Chantel M. Dunham
J.R. Chambers
Madge E. Edens
Stanley Cinnamon
Geneva H. Floyd
Terry Booth
Evelyn D. Hix
Shirley Bailey
Sally H. Boardman
John C. Knowlton
Margie L. Bridges
Dennis G. Bullock
Fannie L. Laborn
Kristina Schultz Tanner
Martha L. Clark
Linda Leito
Georgia M. Scott
Judith Clay
Dorris A. Lillard
Ann S. Malanoski

Joseph E. Mann
Ruth E. Marsh
Susie M. McKeever
Maureen G. Miller
James P. Morrison
Margie J. Noyer
Fareha Rahim
Hazel F. Roach
Carl E. Swearigen
Peter Van Dyck
Annie B. Williams
Martin J. Zivitz
Juanita Haley
Ischeel B. Meeler
Allen D. Stovall
Roger K. Thomas
Beverly Winburn
Carol V. Winthrop
Shawn C. Michael
Wilbert Pope
Alexander C. Perry
Primrose School of Athens
The Kathleen Conn Parker and Albert J. Parker Fund

LORAN SMITH CENTER TRIBUTE

• Mary L. Wiggans: In Memory of Jean Hopkins
• Larry I. Baumwald: In Honor of Karen Tillman
• Joseph S. Oliver: In Memory of Jenny Penney Oliver
• Peggy Hall: In Memory of Cecil Hall
• Leonard J. Sapera: In Memory of Vince Dooley
• Sylvia H. Arant: In Memory of Pierce and Meli Arant
• Margaret Head: In Memory of Doris Dowdle
• Margaret Head: In Memory of Edward G. Head
• Joy T. Elder: In Memory of R.D. Elder
• Shirley A. Johnson: In Memory of Wanda Dorsey
• Tom G. Nemetz: In Memory of Jean K. Hopkins
• Janet L. Crosby: In Memory of Jim Crosby
• Sherry G. Carson: In Honor of Dianne Graham
• Nicole T. Papst: In Memory of Skipper Brawley

LYMPHEDEMA THERAPY

Harriet Canfield
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. Funding for this program is provided by It’s the Journey. RSVP required. (For more info see page 7)

MOVEMENT

T’AI CHI CHIH
T’ai chi chih is a moving meditation that improves fitness of mind and body. It is easy to learn and can be done by people of all ages and ability levels. Ongoing, Weekly class, Every Tuesday 11 am to 11:45 am.

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. Class is Every Friday 11:30am to 12:30pm.

PEACE

Healing Touch
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-Based Stress Reduction (Online)
Learn ways to reduce stress, lessen physical and emotional pain, and cope better with everyday demands. Second Friday each month. Call Mike at 706-248-8918 for more information.

Facilitated by Mike Healy, Ed.D.

Oncology Massage
Massage is available to cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers if available. By appointment only: (706) 475-4900.

SUPPORT

Breast Cancer Support Groups
Facilitated by Sandy Pyle, RN, BSN, ONN-CG, and Robin Black, RN Nurse Navigators and Hayley Wingo, LCSW
A group for women with a diagnosis of breast cancer to share information, resources, and experiences. Second Thursday of each month 5:30 pm. Funding for this program is provided by It’s the Journey.

Grief Support
Individual and group support for grieving children, adolescents, and adults. By Appointment call (706) 475-4900

Women’s Cancer Support Group
A group for any woman with any cancer diagnosis. A group to discuss treatments, side-effects, coping, stress reduction and survivorship in a safe, confidential setting. Second Tuesday each month 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Facilitated by RNs Sandy Pyle and Robin Black and LMSW Brooke Bidez.

Illness Adjustment Counseling
Individual sessions to address issues such as stress, anxiety, treatment decisions, and family communication. By Appointment call (706) 475-490.

Mondays for Men - General Cancer Support Group
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 each month 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Facilitated by Joel Siebentritt, LCSW

SUSTENANCE

Nutrition Counseling and Side-Effect Management
Individual sessions by appointment.

Please keep in mind that all of our program dates and locations are subject to change due to covid-19 updates and hospital policy.

For more information about the LSCCS programs or to register for a class, please email loransmithcenter@piedmont.org or call 706. 475.4900.
### January 2023

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- **Center Closed**
- **Healing Touch - by Appt**
- **MLK Day**
- **Support Group for Men**
- **5:30 pm Breast Cancer Support Group**
- **1:30 pm Hormone Therapy Class**
- **3:30 Healing Grief**
- **8:30 am Mindfulness Practice Group**
Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support
1199 Prince Avenue
Athens, Georgia 30606

"Hope and encouragement through support and information"

For more information about the LSCCS programs or to register for a class, please email loransmithcenter@piedmont.org or call 706.475.4900.

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