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 class, 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 whether or not they are a Piedmont patient.

For more information about the Loran Smith Center programs or to register for a class, please call 706. 475.4900 or email loransmithcenter@piedmont.org.

This newsletter is made possible by the Thomas J. & Sara Cooney Endowment.
Laura Ward and the Golden Girls
Take Cancer Support to Another Level

Laura Ward has always been a person who takes care of others. She is known for her signature potato casseroles and constant encouragement for her neighbors and friends. Her breast cancer diagnosis in 2011, changed that (for a minute). After finding a lump under her right arm, Laura’s next mammogram became even more important. “I just knew I had cancer,” she recalled. Further tests did reveal a small but aggressive lump which required surgery, chemotherapy and radiation. Amazingly, Laura’s friends were there every step of the way. In fact, so many of them joined her at the surgeon’s office, she remembered Piedmont Athens Regional physician, Cody Gunn squeezing into the exam room saying he wished he had as many friends! This time, Laura was on the receiving end of the support and care she was so accustomed to giving.

It was Laura’s personal experience with cancer that led to the beginning of what we now know as the Golden Girls of Athens. This group of women, many of whom were 1964 graduates of Athens High and Industrial School, evolved their early bonds of friendships into a powerful coalition that raises awareness and funds each year to support programs at the Center and the community. As expected, chemotherapy caused her hair to fall out quickly. That’s when Laura found herself at the Loran Smith Center where she received her first wig. “It was a great experience,” she recalled, “I encourage others to take advantage of the Center whenever I can.”

“Laura’s cancer was the initial reason we started to get organized,” according to Bessie Freeman, the recognized leader of the Golden Girls. Laura never quit helping others even when she was receiving treatment. “Even through rough and emotional times, Laura had so much strength,” Freeman added. Wards response was almost predictable, “If you sit down and do nothing, you’ll always feel sorry for yourself.”

Since Ward’s treatment, the Golden Girls established the 50 Shades of Pink Affair, a gala event including dinner, gospel music and inspirational speakers all focusing on cancer awareness as well as support for individual cancer patients. The event has raised close to fifty thousand dollars in its six-year history, all of which was donated to the Center or given directly to local patients still in the throes of treatment.

Laura Ward, Bessie Freeman and the Golden Girls haven’t sat down for a while as they prepare for this year’s 50 Shades event to be held at the Classic Center on Saturday October 26th.

Joel’s Journal

By: Joel Siebentritt, Cancer Center Manager

Our cover photo is of a group of women I greatly admire. The Golden Girls of Athens represent Athens High and Industrial School’s graduating class of 1964. But these days they represent so much more. For the last six years these amazing women have been on a mission to alleviate suffering for cancer patients throughout our community. Their gala event: the 50 Shades of Pink Affair brings timely information to encourage cancer awareness and goes further by raising funds for the Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support. Hear more of the story from two Golden Girls in this edition.

In other news, help me congratulate Kris Schultz, APN, our local expert in cancer genetics. Kris’ knowledge and persistence contributed to the recent discovery of a new genetic mutation. Her work will be published soon in a national journal!

Also in these pages we’re highlighting another resident of the Piedmont Athens Regional Healing Garden, the AACA Angel (see photo inside). This lovely statuette recognizes the Athens Area Cancer Auxiliary’s fifty-year history of service to cancer patients across the community.

Thank you for a half-century of generosity!
From Puzzles to Publication

By: Kris Schultz Tanner, MSN, APRN, FNP-C, OCN

I’m the type of person who loves a good mystery: give me a puzzle, a whodunit movie, or even the clues sniffed out by the Scooby-Doo gang in the early 70s. I enjoy the challenge of piecing together symptoms into a diagnosis, knowing that getting some answers may lead to someone getting well or finding relief. Perhaps that’s what drew me to cancer genetics. My job consists of trying to find patterns in a person and their family, and then possibly shaking out a common root so we can even beat cancer to the punch.

Recently, I had the privilege of helping identify a gene mutation that hadn’t been seen before. A young patient had been identified as having a rare skin disease, but they couldn’t figure out if it was genetic or not. With the help of a doctor in London and a commercial genetic testing lab in California, we collaborated to get the patient’s family members tested to see if there was something in the patient that was not seen in them. Sure enough, a mutation seen in the patient was not found in the family. By identifying this, we now know we can test the patient’s children someday to see if they are also at risk for the disease.

Because I couldn’t find any information about this particular mutation in my searches of academic medical literature, I decided to ask the patient if I could write it up as a case study and submit it to an international journal. The patient consented, hoping this information could help others. I was overjoyed to hear Springer had accepted it for publication! Getting published as a solo author without an academic sponsor is quite an honor. The work will appear in an upcoming issue of Springer Nature’s Journal of Comprehensive Clinical Medicine.

There’s certainly something about having your interest blossom into something that will benefit others!

Thank you to our donors!

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

LORAN SMITH CENTER
Jeannine Collins
Athens BMW
Athens Area Cancer Auxiliary

IN THEIR SHOES
Harriet Canfield

50 shades of PINK

ANNUAL CHARITY EVENT FOR CANCER SUPPORT

To benefit the Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support and Financial Assistance to Patients battling cancer

Dinner | Live Entertainment | Smooth Jazz

Saturday, October 26, 2019
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Classic Center Ballroom
300 N. Thomas Street | Athens, Georgia

Event Ticket Donation - $40.00

Hosted by
The Golden Girls of Athens
We Are Supporting the Fighters
Admiring the Survivors

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE
for information, contact: 1-800-561-9068 Laura 706-206-3154,
Bessie 706-308-7065 or Lillie 706-207-5092

For tickets: Wilson’s Styling Shop, 343 N. Hull St., Athens & the Golden Girls

Cultivating Space
Pastoral Care Week 2019
October 20-26, 2019

Thanks to our spiritual care team Brenda Burton, Fabian Maganda, and Richard Smith!
The Athens Area Cancer Auxiliary celebrated 50 years of service to the community this year. The milestone was recognized on September 29 in the Healing Garden at Piedmont Athens Regional where an angel statuette was dedicated in honor of the auxiliary. Over its history serving cancer patients, AACA has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to support many organizations including the Loran Smith Center and the Breast Health Center at Piedmont Athens Regional.

We are going green!

Starting January 2020, look for our newsletter in your email!

To continue receiving a copy in the mail, please call us at 706.475.4900 or email us at loransmithcenter@piedmont.org.
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**For more information about the LSCCS programs or to register for a class, please call 706. 475.4900 or email loransmithcenter@piedmont.org.**

**BE ON THE LOOKOUT!**

The Center will be introducing new programs for our young adults to get connected with us and others with similar experiences.

**Questions?**

Email Grant.Lanser@piedmont.org

October 2019

1. Blood Cancer Support Group, Noon to 1 p.m. Healing Touch, By Appt
2. Oncology Massage, By Appt Reiki, By Appt
3. Yoga for Hope, Peace, and Cancer Recovery, 10 to 11:30 a.m. T’ai Chi OHC, 4 to 5 p.m. Prostate Cancer Support, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Oncology Massage, By Appt
4. Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
5. Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

6. T’ai Chi Chih, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
7. Gynecologic Cancer Support, 1 to 2:30 p.m. Healing Touch, By Appt
8. Oncology Massage, By Appt Reiki, By Appt
9. Yoga for Hope, Peace, and Cancer Recovery, 10 to 11:30 a.m. Breast Cancer Support, 5:30 to 7 p.m. Us TOO Prostate Cancer Support, 7 to 8:30 p.m.
10. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

11. Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
12. Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
13. Hormone Therapy Retreat, 10 a.m. T’ai Chi Chih, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Healing Touch, By Appt
14. Facing Cancer with Love and Laughter, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Reiki, By Appt
15. Yoga for Hope, Peace, and Cancer Recovery, 10 to 11:30 a.m. Oncology Massage, By Appt
16. Us TOO Prostate Cancer Support, 7 to 8:30 p.m.
17. Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
18. T’ai Chi Chih, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
19. Healing Touch, By Appt
20. Oncology Massage, By Appt Reiki, By Appt
21. Yoga for Hope, Peace, and Cancer Recovery, 10 to 11:30 a.m.
22. Mindfulness Practice Group, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
23. 50 Shades of Pink Affair at the Classic Center, 6 to 9 p.m.
24. T’ai Chi Chih, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
25. Healing Touch, By Appt
26. Oncology Massage, By Appt Reiki, By Appt
27. Yoga for Hope, Peace, and Cancer Recovery, 10 to 11:30 a.m.
HORMONE THERAPY RETREAT
Facilitated by Sandy Pyle, BSN, RN, Oncology Nurse Navigator
This retreat is for women on hormone therapy for breast cancer (Tamoxifen, Arimidex, Aromasin or Femara). During this retreat you will learn the science behind the treatment and discuss methods for managing side effects. Together the group will enjoy a healthy lunch and have an introduction to yoga. RSVP required. 10/14, 12/9

US TOO PROSTATE CANCER INFORMATION & SUPPORT GROUP
This is an educational group to support men with prostate cancer. Spouses, partners, and adult caregivers are welcome. 2nd Thursday each month

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. Mondays

YOGA FOR HOPE, PEACE, AND CANCER RECOVERY
Learn a combination of movements and poses, breathing techniques, and deep relaxation. Yoga can help reduce stress and anxiety, combat depression, improve sleep, and minimize side effects of treatment. Thursdays

DEDICATED MINDFULNESS PRACTICE GROUP
Experience different approaches to meditation led by members of the group. We invite practitioners of all levels: there are no prerequisites to join the circle of practice. Saturdays

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. Healing Touch - Tuesdays; Reiki - Wednesdays

MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION
Facilitated by Mike Healy, Ed.D
Learn ways to reduce stress, lessen physical and emotional pain, and cope better with everyday demands. Second Friday each month

ONCOLOGY MASSAGE
Massage is available to cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers if available. A licensed and oncology trained massage therapist offers four session weekly. By appointment only. Wednesdays and Thursdays

BLOOD CANCER SUPPORT GROUP
Facilitated by Lauren Liverman, LCSW
The Blood Cancer Support Group is open to any patient or caregiver with a blood cancer diagnosis. This includes anyone affected by Leukemia, Lymphoma, Myeloma, and other hematologic illnesses managed by an oncologist. First Tuesday

GRIEF SUPPORT
Individual and group support for grieving children, adolescents, and adults.

GYNECOLOGIC CANCER SUPPORT GROUP
Facilitated by Sandy Pyle, RN, BSN, Nurse Navigator
A group for women with a diagnosis of any gynecologic cancer. 2nd Tuesday each month

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

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP
Facilitated by Joel Siebentritt, LCSW
A confidential setting for the prostate cancer patient to discuss prostate cancer treatment, side-effects, and survivorship. First Thursday each month

NUTRITION COUNSELING AND SIDE-EFFECT MANAGEMENT
Individual sessions by appointment.

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