



A newsletter for cancer patients,  
their families and friends.

*Celebrate Life!*

May/Jun/Jul/Aug 2021

**ONCOLOGY SUPPORT PROGRAM of HEALTHALLIANCE HOSPITAL**

*is dedicated to supporting people living with cancer. OSP offers innovative programming, education and comprehensive psychosocial support. We honor the spectrum of human diversity and provide a nurturing environment that promotes dignity, wellness and celebrates the fullness of life.*

*Since 1994*

**Individual and Group Support—Healing Arts Classes—Wellness & Integrative Programs—  
Educational Lectures and Discussion Groups—Library of Cancer-Related Books/Resources**



**SUPPORT GROUPS/PROGRAMS ARE OPERATING VIRTUALLY  
DUE TO COVID-19**

**OSP Social Workers continue to be available for your ongoing support.  
Please call (845) 339-2071 to speak with a member of our staff.**

## Oncology Support Program

Mailing Address: 105 Mary's Ave., Kingston, NY 12401

Location: Herbert H. & Sofia P. Reuner Cancer Support House, 80 Mary's Ave., Kingston, NY

Phone: (845) 339-2071 Fax: (845) 339-2082

Email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

Website: <https://www.hahv.org/oncology-support-program>



**HealthAlliance**

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

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

**ADVANCING CARE. HERE.**

## Greetings from OSP

It has been over a year since the COVID pandemic changed our lives and how we spend time with one another. Many of you have been staying home during the winter months in an effort to stay safe while at the same time missing your family, your friends and your communities. We hope that the virtual support groups and classes offered by OSP have provided some connection, learning and a sense of purpose during these isolating times.

We are grateful to continue to share with you as the world opens up a bit. We have some wonderful new programs taking place during the next few months. We are honored to have renowned researcher and oncologist, Dr. Carvajal, present on novel treatments for melanoma that have brought hope to cancer patients including those in our own community. Recognizing that there are several children and teens struggling to cope with cancer of a loved one, we will be offering a Kid /Teen Group during the summer months that will combine creative arts with therapeutic support. We also have started a new Survivorship Support Group since we recognize, all too well, that dealing with cancer does not end after a person's last treatment...the effects continue as does the need for support. And that is in addition to the many emotional support groups, creative arts programs and wellness classes we already offer.

The Oncology Support Program continues to be here to address your needs in a host of ways as you navigate through the complexities of a cancer diagnosis. We continue to be honored to walk with you on your journey and look forward to a time when our groups will once again fill the living room of the Reuner Cancer Support House...we trust that this day will come soon! In the meantime, let's stay safe and stay connected.

Warmly, *Ellen Marshall*, MS, LCSW-R, OSW-C, Director of the Oncology Support Program

### ONCOLOGY SUPPORT PROGRAM STAFF

OSP Director & Certified Oncology Social Worker: Ellen Marshall, MS, LCSW-R, OSW-C, ext. 103, ellen.marshall@hahv.org

Certified Oncology Social Worker: Elise Lark, PhD, LCSW, OSW-C, ext. 102, elise.lark@hahv.org

Certified Palliative Social Worker: Jennifer Halpern, PhD, LMSW, APHSW-C, ext. 101, jennifer.halpern@hahv.org

Administrative Assistant: Doris Blaha, ext. 100, doris.blaha@hahv.org

Founder: Barbara Sarah, LCSW

MHC Intern: Sara Loughlin, ext. 100, sara.loughlin@hahv.org



## 21st Annual Cancer Virtual Survivors Celebration SURVIVING & THRIVING!

Friday, June 4, 7:00 p.m.



We don't want another year to go by without honoring our cancer survivors! Since it is a bit too soon to host a large in-person gathering due to the realities of the COVID pandemic, we have decided to host a virtual Survivors Event.

This will be our hospital's 21st Annual Cancer Survivors Event in recognition of National Cancer Survivors Day. Even though we won't be able to offer one another handshakes

and hugs or share delicious food, we still will be able to rejoice together and experience some of our beloved rituals... blessings and songs, inspiring words and even a candle lighting ceremony...you'll just need to bring the candle to your screen! Although we're all longing for one another's company, we want to stay safe while still honoring you...our amazing cancer survivors. Please join us!

Inspirational Speaker: **Tara Ryan**, cAncer Hope Coach, Survivor Thriver

To register and receive the remote link, please call OSP at (845) 339-2071  
or email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)



By Glenn Grubard

# SUPPORT SERVICES AT OSP

The following groups are continuing to be offered virtually.

You can connect to a support group virtually through computer, phone or call-in.

If you would like join a group, please call OSP at (845) 339-2071

**Women's Cancer Support Group**, facilitated by Jennifer Halpern, PhD, LMSW, APHSW-C  
2nd Fridays, May 14, June 11, July 9 & Aug. 13,  
11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
Share common concerns and learn about living with cancer during and after treatment. Please contact OSP at ext. 101.

**Linda Young Ovarian Cancer Support Group**, facilitated by Ellen Marshall, LCSW-R, OSW-C.  
Wednesdays, May 26, June 30, July 28, Aug. 25  
7:00-8:30 p.m. An informative and supportive setting for women diagnosed with ovarian cancer at any stage. Please contact OSP at ext. 103.

**Men's Cancer Support Group**, facilitated by James Askin, Social Work Intern  
1st Wednesdays, May 5, June 2, July 7 & Aug. 4,  
6:00-7:30 p.m. A supportive, confidential setting for men who have been diagnosed with any type of cancer. Please contact OSP at ext. 100.

**Caregivers' Support Group**, facilitated by Jennifer Halpern, PhD, LMSW, APHSW-C. Mostly  
3rd Wednesdays, May 19, June 23, July 21 & Aug. 18,  
5:00-6:30 p.m. Bringing caregivers together for mutual support for the unique challenges they face. Individual support also available. Please contact OSP at ext.101.

**Younger Women's Support Group**, facilitated by Elise Lark, PhD, LCSW, OSW-C  
3rd Thursdays, May 20, June 17, July 15 & Aug. 19,  
5:30-7:00 p.m. This group focuses on issues common to young women with cancer including: body image, managing work, sexuality and intimacy, relationships, fertility, talking to children about cancer and self-advocacy. For women age 55 and younger, with any type of cancer. Contact OSP at ext.102.



The Younger Women's Support Group has partnered with **Young Survival Coalition**  
<https://www.youngsurvival.org/>

**YSC** is an organization dedicated to addressing the critical issues unique to young women who are diagnosed with breast cancer when they are under the age of 35. To join our local YSC's Younger Women's Support Group social networking page, go to: [www.meetup.com/Kingston-NY-Young-Survival-Coalition-Face-2-Face-Network/](http://www.meetup.com/Kingston-NY-Young-Survival-Coalition-Face-2-Face-Network/)



## Coping Skills for Cancer: *Finding Ease & Inner Balance*

Whether we are newly diagnosed with cancer, a long-term cancer survivor or a caregiver, a cancer diagnosis can be overwhelming. In this group, we will explore practical skills to help us regulate our nervous system and find inner balance as we face cancer-related stressors, from anxiety related to medical procedures to fear of recurrence. This group integrates techniques of somatic experiencing, yoga breathing practices and mindfulness.

Facilitated by Ellen Marshall, MS, LCSW-R, OSW-C & Sarah Loughlin, MHC Intern

2nd Tuesdays, 11:00 a.m.—12:30 p.m.  
May 11, June 8, July 13 & Aug. 10

To register, please contact OSP at (845) 339-2071 ext. 100 or email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

## NEW Cancer Survivorship Group for Women: *"Ever After Cancer"*

From symptoms to diagnosis, surgeries and treatments, cancer is a sudden earthquake in life as we know it. In the best of circumstances, we have stellar professional and personal supports throughout this treacherous and unpredictable journey, giving us a sense that we are not alone and can lean on others. What about after treatment is over, when we are either in a place of remission or ongoing care? What kind of supports are available to sustain us?

As women, we grow up with fairy tales of trauma that resolve in the notion of happily ever after. Yet, after treatment there is no knowing if the cancer will return or flare up, and side effects may impact our quality of life. This can be stressful and isolating. Cultural messages about women often silence us, stirring feelings of anger, shame and grief, telling us that our job is to care for others when, in fact, what we need is radical care of ourselves - our body, mind, emotions and spirit.

This support group will address these very concerns in a forum of empathy and compassion as we move from surviving into thriving. We will gather together in a collaborative and co-creative safe space in which to share our stories, fears, obstacles and strategies. Through guided meditation, mindfulness and discussion, we will explore our unique experiences and self expression as we sister ourselves and each other in the ever after of our lives.

4th Wednesdays, June 23, July 28, August 25,  
10-11:30 a.m.

Facilitated by Marjorie Berman, LCSW-R  
Contact OSP at ext. 100 or email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

## Living Well with Advanced Cancer

**1st Thursdays, May 6, June 3, July 1 & August 5, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.**

**Facilitated by Elise Lark, PhD, LCSW, OSW-C** (Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

A group for individuals with advanced stage or recurrent cancer who wish to explore pathways to a more fulfilling and meaningful life.

For further info or to pre-register, please contact Elise Lark at (845) 339-2071 ext. 102 or email: [elise.lark@hahv.org](mailto:elise.lark@hahv.org).



### Palliative Care Social Work Inpatient Support

If you are in the hospital and suffering with distress or pain, ask your nurse for a palliative care social work referral. OSP Palliative Care Social Workers can help you learn ways to control your symptoms through complementary techniques, help you communicate your needs and wishes to the medical staff and/or assist you in connecting with a palliative care physician in the community upon discharge.

### Outpatient Community-Based Palliative Care and Pain Management Resources

Community-based palliative care is appropriate for patients with serious or life-limiting illnesses, no matter their prognosis. This type of care focusses on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness, with the goal of improving quality of life for the patient and the family.

Palliative care can be provided at the same time as curative and aggressive treatment at any stage of illness.



#### *Hudson Valley Medical Health Choices, P.C. — Dr. Lisa Sager*

Community palliative care affiliated with Hudson Valley Hospice, provides services in the home, in an assisted living facility, in a nursing home, or wherever a person calls home.

For information, call: (845) 240-7557 or go to: <https://www.hvhospice.org/palliative-care/>

#### *Nightingale Medical — Dr. Maggie Carpenter*

Community palliative care provides patients and their families with peace of mind and an extra layer of support for managing symptoms of advanced illness.

For information, call: (845) 633-8122 or go to: <https://www.nightingalemedical.org/>



*Elvis W. Rema, MD*

#### *Dr. Elvis W. Rema*

Person-centered pain management in Kingston, N.Y.

Treatment for numerous conditions including cancer-related pain.

For information, call: (845) 245-6033 or go to: <https://www.epain.net>

### Loss and Bereavement Support Group

**facilitated by Marjorie Berman, LCSW-R**

**Wednesdays, May 12, June 9, July 14 & August 11, 10:00-11:30 a.m.**

(Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

Grief is often many-layered. You may have experienced the death of a parent, a partner, a child, or friend from illness, including COVID-19. Other losses may be stirred up as we grieve. Through guided meditation, mindfulness, sensory awareness exercises and discussion, we will explore, share and process our unique loss stories in a non-judgmental environment that supports our healing.

*Marjorie E. Berman, LCSW-R practices individual, family and group therapy in Woodstock, NY.*

*Her practice includes working with people living with illness and their loved ones.*

To register, please call (845) 339-2071 at ext. 100 or email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

## OSP Memoir Writing Workshops

Members of our community who are affected by cancer have an opportunity to support one another by writing and sharing memoirs.

**Thursday  
Memoir  
Group**  
facilitated  
by  
**Abigail  
Thomas,**  
**3:00-5:00  
p.m.**



(Virtual via computer  
or phone)

**Friday  
Memoir  
Group**  
facilitated  
by  
**Ann  
Hutton,**  
**2:00-4:00  
p.m.**

For information or to join a workshop,  
please call (845) 339-2071 at ext. 100 or  
email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

## CREATIVE ARTS GROUP



Our weekly virtual group provides a vehicle for you to connect and share in the creative process.

Try collage, painting, drawing, jewelry making, fiber arts, knitting, and more.

Bring your own ideas to share.  
No art experience is necessary.

Group is facilitated by volunteer artists & art educators  
**Marilyn Fino & Bev Nielsen**, along with guest artists.

**Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.**

(Virtual via computer or phone)

For information or to join a workshop, please call  
(845) 339-2071 at ext.100 or  
email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

## Kid/Teen Connection Summer Support Program



When your parent or someone you love is diagnosed with cancer, you may feel sad, anxious, scared, confused, angry or alone. It may be helpful to come together with other kids or teens who know what you're going through.

The Kid/Teen Connection Support Group will meet outside the Reuner Cancer Support House at 80 Mary's Ave. in the Linda Young Healing Garden. We'll do some art work together, connect with nature, relax, share, and hopefully have a bit of fun. We look forward to having you join us. (Although this group will meet outside in the fresh air, we will still be adhering to COVID safety guidelines. We will be subdividing the group according to age in order accommodate the needs of both children and teens.)

**Facilitated by Aileen Walsh, LCSW-R and OSP staff.**

*"My natural inclinations and professional pursuits have always been in the area of the arts and the healing/helping disciplines. I have a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Masters of Clinical Social Work. My career has focused to a great extent on working with children and families within a variety of settings including hospitals, school and in my private practice. I am interested in creating group experience where young people can develop life skills that build resilience. Multi sensory activities such as art, nature awareness and relaxation techniques offer a natural, non-threatening way to process experiences. I look forward to collaborating with the Oncology Support Program and providing a healing milieu for children and teens dealing with cancer in their families."* (Aileen)

**DATES: Mondays: July 12, 26, Aug. 9, 2-3:30 p.m.**

**Refreshments will be served.**

If you know a child or teen who would like to join the group,  
please call OSP at (845) 339-2071 or email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)



**Linda's Healing Garden**

## WELLNESS/EXERCISE PROGRAMS (Virtual via computer)

We look forward to the time when OSP-sponsored exercise classes will resume in person, but for now we are continuing to offer the following classes virtually via computer. If you are interested in attending, please call OSP at 845 339-2071 or email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org) and we will send you the virtual link.



**Tai Chi Zoom class with Annie LaBarge: Mondays, 10:00-11:00 a.m.** Learn Long Form Yang Style Tai Chi, a moving meditation and slow-motion martial art. The practice increases cognition, strength, balance and flexibility.



**Medical Qi Gong with Betty Gilpatric: Fridays, 8:30-9:45 a.m.** Learn simple yet powerful techniques based on traditional Chinese healing practices to improve your health and sense of well-being. EBQT or Evidence-based Qigong was developed by Dr. Yan Yang, PhD, who is a researcher and instructor at Memorial Sloan Kettering. There are also a few YouTube videos you can watch on your own. The links are:

**Warm Ups :** <https://youtu.be/FhmcPM0U9e0> **8 Brocades of Silk:** <https://youtu.be/8q1PVbh2ysM>



**Yoga with Marianne Niefeld: Wednesdays, 10:00-11:00 a.m.** A Kripalu-style gentle yoga class that stretches, strengthens, focuses the mind and awakens your energy through movement and breathing.



**MOVING FOR LIFE: DanceExercise for Health® — An Exercise Program for Cancer Recovery**

**Free online classes** combine aerobic dance, strengthening and flexibility exercises, music and somatic movement and are personalized to meet the needs of participants. Movements can be done seated or standing and are safe and accessible to women at all phases of cancer treatment. <https://movingforlife.org/>



## Miso Happy Cooking Club with Kathy Sheldon, RN (Virtual classes)

Miso Happy formed in 2005 to support prevention, healing and recovery through healthy eating practices incorporating a plant-based diet. Due to COVID safety concerns, we will continue to offer classes virtually. Although we won't be sharing a meal, we'll be able to connect and learn together. Advance registration is requested via email to: [kathy.sheldon@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.sheldon@gmail.com) or [doris.blaha@hahv.org](mailto:doris.blaha@hahv.org). Classes will be recorded and made available to those registered. \$10 suggested class donation.

### Cooking Soups, Bean Dishes and Vegetables with Bettina Zumdick (part 3)

**Tuesday, May 4, 10:30 a.m. (Virtual via computer)**

An early glance at summer eating. Let's cool off with light soups, summer salads with beans, and pressed vegetables, with a bonus refreshing summer kanten recipe.

*Bettina Zumdick is a chef, teacher, counselor and author who has integrated modern knowledge of the West with the wisdom of the East. With a strong background in Food Science and Nutrition from Wilhelms University in Munster, Germany, she has shared her knowledge of food as medicine for over 30 years. She is a co-director of Planetary Health, an educational not-for-profit which offers weekend retreats and an annual conference. For more information, go to: [www.culinarymedicineschool.com](http://www.culinarymedicineschool.com)*

The Miso Happy Cooking Club will be taking a summer break .  
We look forward to reconnecting in the Fall. — *Kathy Sheldon.*



## The Linda Young Garden Project

**Would you like to get some fresh air, share "social distanced" companionship and have your very own place to plant flowers, herbs and vegetables? If so, The Linda Young Healing Garden is calling you!**

We could use your help beautifying the garden and in return, you get to take home some of its bounty. We have three garden boxes where you can plant vegetables or herbs and we have garden space to plant bulbs and flowers. We'll provide the gloves, shovels and materials.....,you provide your time, energy and creativity.



If you are interested joining us, please give us a call OSP at (845) 339-2071 or email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org).

## Integrative Cancer Support and Educational Group

Participants share resources and experiences with integrative modalities and learn from guest speakers.

Facilitated by **Tara Ryan** and **OSP Director, Ellen Marshall**

Tara Ryan is a *Cancer Hope Coach* who has considerable experience with conventional and integrative treatments along with immunotherapy for the treatment of metastatic melanoma.

See the May and June Programs below. (***The Integrative Group will be taking a break during the Summer months.***)



## In recognition of Melanoma Awareness Month, The Integrative Cancer Support and Educational Program presents: ***Novel Therapies for Melanoma*** with **Dr. Richard D. Carvajal**



As Associate Professor of Medicine, Director of Experimental Therapeutics and Director of Melanoma Service at Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC), Dr. Carvajal is focused on the development of novel therapeutics for patients with melanoma and other cancers, with the overall objective of controlling and curing these diseases.

Dr. Carvajal has used the increasing knowledge of the underlying biology of cancer to rapidly integrate this knowledge, novel therapeutic agents, and efficient trial design in order to improve the outcomes of cancer patients everywhere. Working closely with laboratory scientists, the group is using the techniques of molecular biology to identify specific proteins, genes, or other molecules that influence the growth of each person's cancer, with the goal of selecting the most promising therapies for individual patients.

Dr. Carvajal's research has been supported by the National Cancer Institute, the Food and Drug Administration, the Conquer Cancer Foundation, the Melanoma Research Alliance Program, and the generous philanthropic support of patients and their families. He has authored or co-authored more than 50 peer-reviewed manuscripts, books, and book chapters.

In addition to Dr. Carvajal's work at CUMC, he serves as co-chair of the International Rare Cancer Initiative Uveal Melanoma working group, a joint initiative between the National Cancer Institute, the European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer Research UK to enhance international collaboration in the conduct of clinical trials for uveal melanoma.

We are grateful and honored that Dr. Carvajal will share how novel therapies bring hope to patients diagnosed with melanoma.

**Wednesday, May 12, 6-7:00 p.m.** (Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

If you are interested in attending, please contact OSP at (845) 339-2071 ext. 100 or email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

## The Integrative Cancer Support and Educational Group presents: **Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)** with **Holistic Cancer Coach, Melissa Eppard**

EFT is a stress-reduction practice that has been effectively used to support people who suffer from anxiety, chronic pain, addiction, and fear. By tapping on specific acupressure points while repeating a series of phrases, you can effectively switch the body out of fight, flight and freeze mode and send calming signals to the nervous system. Please join Melissa Eppard for a general introduction to this helpful technique.



Melissa Eppard holds an ACC certification through the International Coach Federation and is certified as a Holistic Cancer-Coach. She completed her coaching training through the internationally recognized Coaches Training Institute and has trained in EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique). Melissa was diagnosed with Breast Cancer in 2014 and uses her own personal and professional experiences to support others diagnosed with cancer through her blog and coaching work. She has served as a Life Coach at Omega Institute, Woodstock Healing Arts and has a private practice in Kingston.

For more information about Melissa's work, go too: <http://melissashealinghope.com/> or [www.MelissaEppardCoaching.com](http://www.MelissaEppardCoaching.com)

**Wednesday, June 9, 5:30-7:00 p.m.** (Virtual via computer, phone or call-in)

If you are interested in attending, please contact OSP at (845) 339-2071 ext. 100 or email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

## Immunotherapy From A Patient Perspective

by **Tara Ryan** March 2021



Magic in the world of cancer, in my case Metastatic Melanoma, is happening right before our eyes and is a miracle in this era! This magic is called *immunotherapy*. I am so fortunate to be a pioneering patient of the immunotherapy drug Keytruda. I'm the second patient in Ulster County to receive it, the first for Stage 4 Metastatic Melanoma, also the patient to have received it the longest in our County to date.

The protocol in the beginning was one year. I received it for 36 straight months. I realized recently that I have an honorary PhD in Stage 4 Cancer. Don't call me a survivor. I'm a survivor **thriver!** March 2021 is my six-year anniversary. Currently, I'm 16 months tumor-free and all of my scans just came back NED, NO Evidence of Disease, for the first time...a statistic that didn't exist before immunotherapy for Metastatic Melanoma.

Six years ago on March 27, 2015, during a desperate appointment with my hairdresser to feel more beautiful and get past the winter blues, my living angel found a reddish brown spot the size of a half dollar with a small black center on top of my scalp. It wasn't raised, so I didn't feel it when washing my hair. I had no symptoms nor any idea it was there. I thought it was a dead tick in my scalp with a bullseye. I was in Friday night mode. But thankfully my hairdresser stressed that I must have it checked out ASAP. Please realize the miracle that I listened and saw my doctor Monday morning. One week later I learned I had an aggressive malignant melanoma. I was in shock! It was the beginning of my world being rocked! People don't take melanoma seriously. They often say, "Oh, It's just that skin cancer. You can just have it cut off." If melanoma metastasizes it is a beast. Dr. Jim Allison, the scientist behind one of the latest miracles of immunotherapy, says that prior to this treatment, a Metastatic Melanoma patient had an average life span of 7 months. Let that sink in. Those are the statistics I beat! Watch the amazing 2019 film by the way: [Jim Allison: Breakthrough](#), narrated by Woody Harrelson.

During my five-year cancer journey, I had 13 tumors in my neck and brain, eight months of seizures, and five surgeries including brain surgery. I was in a coma for 2.5 days, on life support and wasn't expected to survive. I was given maybe five years to live if my doctors could keep prolonging my life through surgeries. There was no treatment for me for the first 18 months, except surgeries. It is known that chemo and radiation are not effective for melanoma. I was told originally that there was hope down the road if I made it that far. New studies were finding great success with progressive immunotherapies, but they were not available yet. I prayed like only a cancer patient and a parent can pray!!! My instinct was to throw myself into research like a 9-5 job. I went organic and got all toxins (including people) out of my house. My home became a sacred space. Every moment I breathed I worked intentionally on healing and on believing that answers would come. IMPORTANT! I was my own best advocate. I thought, if I could start now feeding every new cell in my body with the best nutrition, maybe I could be alive and healthy enough to receive a treatment if one did become available. That's exactly what happened! Though my cancer was aggressive, my medical team was floored at how healthy my body became. I consumed foods only for healing, I exercised, and I took intentional quiet time every single day. I followed my passion and I danced as much as possible to feed my soul as much joy as I could. I told my research doctor, "I'm going to be a new statistic and a great one!" I was determined to do everything in my power to save my life.

I can count every terrible thing that has happened to me, but I cannot count the miracles. When my cancer metastasized to my brain, which elevated me to stage 4 cancer, I had emergency brain surgery days later. At that exact time Keytruda became available as a prescription for Metastatic Melanoma metastasized to the brain. I know it sounds crazy, but I am so thankful for my brain cancer. It saved my life! I was very scared. But up until that point there were no answers for me except continued surgeries with a lot of healing and recovery time, and likely death. Immunotherapy saved my life, and I had no side effects except for being tired. The side effects were much more intense from surgeries, seizures, and serious brain recovery. I was stage 4 for three years while my tumors kept shrinking.

This is your life, your body, your most important job! What you do today affects your life. Despite your fear, knowledge is empowerment. If you see or feel something odd with your body, get it checked out ASAP. Research and get the best information. Eat smart! Move your body every day and surround yourself with positive people.

I've had a journey, but the daily details don't matter. The science, though, is stunning! I am living proof of the power of science and its miracles! I'm so thankful for every person who showed up for me, from the scientists, doctors, nurses, friends, family, and for OSP for their emotional and financial support. Now I'm a cAncer HOPE Coach, an ImmunoAdvocate for the Cancer Research Institute, and I facilitate the Integrative Cancer Support & Educational Group through the WMC HealthAlliance Oncology Support Program (OSP). My favorite quote is: Live life as though everything is rigged in your favor! I did just that. I continue to do everything in my power to stay healthy! I pray and make empowered choices. Now I am seizure - and tumor free- and I wouldn't change a thing!

**Office for the Aging/ NY Connects:**

Assists with supports for elderly (60+) and disabled: Legal Counsel, Medicare counseling, home care services, Med Alerts and transportation. Home-delivered meals for residents 60+ on a limited income, not on Medicaid and have no one to shop for them; frozen meals available for pick up or delivery at sites in Saugerties, Rosendale, and Ellenville. Go to: <https://ulstercountyny.gov/aging> or call (845) 340-3456

Aging

**Resource Center for Accessible Living (RCAL):**

Assists with benefits applications and advisement, Medicaid coordination, pooled trusts, nursing home transition & diversion. (845) 331-0541

**Legal Services of the Hudson Valley:**

Free legal services for financially eligible individuals. (845) 331-9373

**EPIC (Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage Program):**

Additional drug coverage and premium assistance for seniors (over 65) with Medicare Part D who financially qualify. (800) 332-3742

**Jewish Family Services of Ulster:**

In-home, non-sectarian supportive mental health counseling. Caregiver support. Shopping for seniors in coordination with the Jewish Federation.

(845) 338-2980

**Edible Independence:**

Dietician- and health department-approved meals delivered to your home. (845) 331-MEAL (6325)

**The Kingston Emergency Food Collaborative**

Provides weekly groceries to people in the Kingston City School District and to anyone in a DSS hotel. Call the hotline at: (888) 316-0879

For a *comprehensive list of local resources*, go to: <https://rupco.org/covid-19-help-emergency-food-in-ulster-county/>

**Ulster County Community Action Committee, Inc. Free Food Banks**

Highland Outreach: Begins @ 11:00 AM  
15 Church Street, Highland (845) 338-8750, Ext. 300

Ellenville Outreach: Begins @ 12:00 PM  
85 Center Street, Ellenville (845) 338-8750, Ext. 310

Kingston Outreach: Begins @ 1:00 PM  
70 Lindsley Avenue, Kingston (845) 338-8750, Ext. 110

**Local Financial Assistance for the Cancer Community**

**The Rosemary Gruner Fund:** \$500 Hannaford's and/or Stewart's gas cards annually to financially eligible people in active cancer treatment. Contact the Benedictine Health Foundation. Call: (845) 481-1303. Fax: (845) 663-2221



**Miles of Hope Fund for Breast Cancer Patients:** Financial assistance to eligible people in treatment.

*Breast Cancer Foundation* Ulster & Greene Counties—call Family at (845) 331-7080, ask for Carol Sisco. Dutchess County—call Community Action at (845) 452-5104, ext.142 or ext.124.

**Miles of Hope Breast Cancer Foundation** funds support services, education and outreach for people affected by breast cancer within the 9 counties of the Hudson Valley: financial assistance for people in treatment; scholarships for college-bound high school seniors whose lives have been affected by breast cancer; a Peer to Peer Hotline staffed by trained survivors; and complementary medicine programs. Contact [info@milesofhope.org](mailto:info@milesofhope.org) for more information or go to [www.milesofhope.org](http://www.milesofhope.org)

**Transportation Assistance to Medical Appointments**

*(advance notice required and availability may be limited due to COVID-19)*

- Seniors **60** or older: Free bus twice weekly to medical appointments and once a week for shopping. Complete an application with **Office for the Aging (NY Connects)** by calling **(845) 340-3456**
- Seniors can call UCAT at **(845) 340-3333** for a **Para Transit Application** or download the application at: <http://ulstercountyny.gov/ucat/senior-services>
- If you have active **Medicaid**, call **(866) 287-0983**

Hudson Valley Region

**Cancer Services Program**

Your partner for cancer screening, support and information

**FREE Cancer Screening for Uninsured or Underinsured**

**Breast Cancer Screening:**

**Mammogram, Clinical Breast Exam (age 40-64)**

**Cervical Cancer Screening:**

**Pap Test, Pelvic Exam (age 40-64)**

**Colorectal Cancer Screening:**

**FIT Test (age 50-64)**

Call CSP to find out if you are eligible: **(855) 277-4482**



**Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Online Chats.** Free, live sessions moderated by oncology social workers who help guide discussions and provide resources, information and support. Topics include: *Living with NHL, Living with Myeloma, Living with CML, Living with Acute Leukemia and Young Adults Living with Leukemia, Lymphoma & Myeloma.* **Go to: [www.LLS.org/chat](http://www.LLS.org/chat)**



**CANCERcare®** provides free online or telephone support groups led by oncology social workers to help people affected by cancer along with information about cancer and resources. **Call 800-813-HOPE (4673), ext 3 [https://www.cancercare.org/support\\_groups](https://www.cancercare.org/support_groups)**



**Breast Cancer Options**

SUPPORT, HEALTH ADVOCACY & INFORMATION

845 339-HOPE (4673)

[hope@breastcanceroptions.org](mailto:hope@breastcanceroptions.org)

Think Pink Locally

**[www.BreastCancerOptions.org](http://www.BreastCancerOptions.org) (845) 339-4673**

**Breast Cancer Support Groups including Mixed, Young Survivors & Metastatic Groups.**

**Camp Lightheart for children of breast cancer survivors**

**Annual Metastatic Breast Cancer Retreat**



**Mesothelioma.net**

Over 20 years of fighting for mesothelioma patients and families

**<https://mesothelioma.net/> 1-800-692-8608 [info@mesothelioma.net](mailto:info@mesothelioma.net)**  
An organization dedicated to providing mesothelioma patients with information and support.

**Online Resource Guide for the Hudson Valley Cancer Community**

**HUDSON VALLEY CANCER RESOURCE CENTER**

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



**Gilda's Club**

**Gilda's Club of Westchester**

**Free Bilingual Cancer Support Hotline. Call (914) 997-6006**

**<https://gildasclubwestchester.org/gildas-launches-breast-cancer-bilingual->**



**Adelphi NY University Breast Cancer Hotline Program. Call (800) 877- 8077**

**[www.adelphi.edu/nysbreastcancer](http://www.adelphi.edu/nysbreastcancer)**



**ONLINE SUPPORT PLATFORMS**

**[LotsaHelpingHands.com](http://LotsaHelpingHands.com) and [CaringBridge.org](http://CaringBridge.org)**

These websites provide an all-in-one intimate, safe place where those living with chronic illness, their caregivers, family and friends can share information and request meaningful help 24/7.

DEDICATED EXPERIENCED SUPPORT



for women facing breast or ovarian cancer

**SHARE**

Help for women facing breast or ovarian cancer.

(English & Spanish)

**Call: 844.ASK.SHARE or (844) 275-7427**

**<https://www.sharecancersupport.org/support/about-us-helpline/>**

**SUPPORT CONNECTION**



Offers an ovarian cancer national toll-free phone support group.

**Call (800) 532-4290**

**[www.supportconnection.org](http://www.supportconnection.org)**



Because Every Nest Should be Protected

**Sparrow's Nest helps families of caregivers diagnosed with cancer or families of children diagnosed with cancer. The fund provides two meals, once a week, to eligible families in which the caregiver or children diagnosed with cancer is in treatment. The fund may also assist families for a period of time after the loss of a loved one.**

**For more information, call (845) 204-9421 or go to: [sparrowsnestcharity.org](http://sparrowsnestcharity.org)**



Find it. Treat it. Live.

The **LUNgevity Foundation** is the nation's largest lung cancer-focused nonprofit, committed to changing outcomes for people with lung cancer through research, education, and support. For information, go to: [Lungevity.org](http://Lungevity.org)  
For the Lung Cancer HELPLine, call **(844) 360-5864**



Your One-on-One

Cancer Support Community

Provide s comfort and understanding for all cancer fighters, survivors, previvors and caregivers through a personalized, one-on-one connection with someone who has been there. **<https://imermanangels.org/> (866) IMERMAN (463-7626)**

# May 2021

All programs are online via computer, phone or call-in, unless otherwise noted.  
Call the Oncology Support Program 845-339-2071 for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	4 Miso Happy Cooking "Three Classes, Three Dishes, Three Seasons, Part 3" 10:30am  Creative Arts 1-3pm	5   Gentle Yoga 10-11am REMOTE VIDEO  Men's Support Grp. 6-7pm	6   Living with Advanced Cancer 12:30-2pm  Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	7 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	8 
9 Happy Mother's Day 	10 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	11 Coping Skills: Finding Ease & Inner Balance 11am-12:30pm  Creative Arts 1-3pm	12 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Loss & Bereavement Group 10-11:30am  Integrative Support Group "Novel Therapies for Melanoma w/ Dr. Carvajal" 6-7pm	13 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	14 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Women's Support Grp. 11am-12:30pm  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	15
16	17 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	18 Creative Arts 1-3pm	19 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Caregivers' Support Group 5-6:30pm	20 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm  Younger Women's Support Grp. 5:30-7pm	21 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	22
23	24 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	25 Creative Arts 1-3pm	26 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Ovarian Support Group 7-8:30pm	27 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	28 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	29
30	31   CLOSED  					

# June 2021

All programs are online via computer, phone or call-in, unless otherwise noted.  
Call the Oncology Support Program 845-339-2071 for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> Creative Arts 1-3pm	<b>2</b> Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Men's Support Grp. 6-7pm	<b>3</b>  Living with Advanced Cancer 12:30-2pm  Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	<b>4</b> Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm  Annual Cancer Survivors Celebration Surviving & Thriving! 7pm	<b>5</b>  
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	<b>8</b> Coping Skills: Finding Ease & Inner Balance 11am-12:30pm  Creative Arts 1-3pm	<b>9</b> Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Loss & Bereavement Group 10-11:30am  Integrative Support Group "Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)" 5:30-7pm	<b>10</b> Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	<b>11</b> Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Women's Support Grp. 11am-12:30pm  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>   Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	<b>15</b> Creative Arts 1-3pm	<b>16</b> Gentle Yoga 10-11am	<b>17</b> Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm  Younger Women's Support Group 5:30-7pm	<b>18</b> Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> Happy Father's Day    Summer Solstice  	<b>21</b>   Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	<b>22</b> Creative Arts 1-3pm	<b>23</b> Gentle Yoga 10-11am  "Ever After Cancer" Survivorship Group 10-11:30am  Caregivers' Support Group 5-6:30pm	<b>24</b> Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	<b>25</b> Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	<b>29</b> Creative Arts 1-3pm	<b>30</b> Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Ovarian Support Group 7-8:30pm			

# July 2021

All programs are online via computer, phone or call-in, unless otherwise noted.  
Call the Oncology Support Program 845-339-2071 for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Living with Advanced Cancer 12:30-2pm  Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	2 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	3
4 Independence Day 	5 Independence Day Observed  <b>CLOSED</b>	6 Creative Arts 1-3pm	7 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Men's Support Grp. 6-7pm	8 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm  Advance Care Planning 5-7pm	9 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Women's Support Grp. 11am-12:30pm  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	10
11	12 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am  Kid/Teen Connection 2-3:30pm	13 Coping Skills: Finding Ease & Inner Balance 11am-12:30pm  Creative Arts 1-3pm	14 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Loss & Bereavement Group 10-11:30am	15 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm  Younger Women's Support Grp. 5:30-7pm	16 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	17
18	19 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	20 Creative Arts 1-3pm	21 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Caregivers' Support Group 5-6:30pm	22 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	23 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	24
25	26 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am  Kid/Teen Connection 2-3:30pm	27 Creative Arts 1-3pm	28 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  "Ever After Cancer" Survivorship Group 10-11:30am  Ovarian Support Group 7-8:30pm	29 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	30   Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	31

# August 2021

All programs are online via computer, phone or call-in, unless otherwise noted.  
Call the Oncology Support Program 845-339-2071 for more information.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	3 Creative Arts 1-3pm	4 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Men's Support Grp. 6-7pm	5 Living with Advanced Cancer 12:30-2pm  Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	6 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	7
8	9 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am  Kid/Teen Connection 2-3:30pm	10 Coping Skills: Finding Ease & Inner Balance 11am-12:30pm  Creative Arts 1-3pm	11 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Loss & Bereavement Group 10-11:30am	12 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	13 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Women's Support Grp. 11am-12:30pm  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	14
15	16 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	17 Creative Arts 1-3pm	18 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  Caregivers' Support Group 5-6:30pm	19 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm  Younger Women's Support Grp. 5:30-7pm	20 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	21
22	23 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	24 Creative Arts 1-3pm	25 Gentle Yoga 10-11am  "Ever After Cancer" Survivorship Group 10-11:30am  Ovarian Support Group 7-8:30pm	26 Memoir Writing Workshop 3-5:30pm	27 Medical Qigong 8:30-9:45am  Memoir Writing II 2-4pm	28
29	30 Tai Chi 10:00-11:00am	31 Creative Arts 1-3pm				



## NURTURING NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

**Are you facing a cancer diagnosis?  
Would you benefit from one-on-one support from  
someone who's been through it?**

You might like to be matched with a Nurturing Neighbor, a local volunteer and cancer survivor trained through OSP to offer peer support.

For further information on linking with a Nurturing Neighbor or becoming one yourself, please contact OSP at  
(845) 339-2071 at ext. 100 or  
email: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

## We Lovingly Remember:



Joyce Colouris      Terry Januzzo  
Linda Kaplan      Jon Ricks  
Deanna Theodore      John Valenti  
Anita Wetzel

*I'd like the memory of me  
to be a happy one,  
I'd like to leave an afterglow  
of smiles when life is done.*

*I'd like to leave an echo  
whispering softly down the ways,  
of happy times and laughing times  
And bright and sunny days.*

*I'd like the tears of those who grieve  
to dry before the sun,  
of happy memories that I leave  
when life is done.*

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

In Memory of  
**Madeline Strang**  
Janis Jansen

Cynthia Brown  
Wenda A. Rodriguez

Linda Cox  
Lee Ann DeBerry

Linda Freeman

### DONATIONS

In It to Win It  
Marissa & Cassandra Blaha  
Rhonda Garcia

Elizabeth Barton and Hannaford friends.

Radio Woodstock 100.1 WDST

Ulster County Italian American Foundation

### **SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:**

Ann Hutton, Abigail Thomas, Craig Mawhirt, Kathy Sheldon, Marilyn Fino, Bev Nielsen, Marjorie Berman, Tara Ryan, Betty Gilpatric, Matt Corsaro, Annie LaBarge, Marianne Neifeld, Mira Fink, Bettina Zumdick, Abbey Semel, Erica Halwick-Williams, Sara Loughlin, James Askin, our Nurturing Neighbors and other fabulous volunteers.



### READER SUBMISSIONS ARE WELCOME!

We invite you to submit writings which may be included in our newsletter. Please send to [ellen.marshall@hahv.org](mailto:ellen.marshall@hahv.org)

The information in this newsletter is for educational purposes only and is not intended to be used as medical advice. Please consult your physician about questions regarding your treatment.

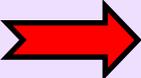
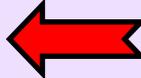
You can also find this newsletter at:  
<https://www.hahv.org/celebrate-life-newsletter>

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HealthAlliance Hospital, WMC Health Network  
Oncology Support Program  
105 Mary's Avenue  
Kingston, NY 12401

Location:  
Herbert H. & Sofia R. Reuner Cancer Support House  
80 Mary's Avenue, Kingston, NY

 **We are trying to go PAPERLESS.**  If you currently receive our newsletter by postal mail but are able to receive it by EMAIL instead, please notify us by sending an email to: [oncology.support@hahv.org](mailto:oncology.support@hahv.org)

**Financially Support the Oncology Program All Year Round!**

At the Oncology Support program, our services are free or available at a very low fee. This is possible thanks to the support of WMC/HealthAlliance as well as donations from the community. Your donations also enable us to provide emergency financial assistance to those in need. Please help us continue to support people affected by cancer by making a tax-deductible donation to OSP or the Linda Young Ovarian Cancer Support Program.

Your donation will be acknowledged in the next edition of *Celebrate Life!* You can donate electronically by visiting:

<https://www.foundationupdate.org/donate/oncologysupportprogram/>

or... Make checks payable to: **The HealthAlliance Foundation** (Indicate OSP or LY in memo)

Mail check to: **Oncology Support Program, 105 Mary's Ave. Kingston, NY 12401**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make my gift in memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make my gift in celebration of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send acknowledgement to: *Name* \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_