

In sights

.....
this
issue...

Community Participation

The art of healing...
pg. 2

Survivorship

Highlights from the 12th annual Survivors Celebration!
pgs. 3-6

Community Education & Outreach

IN their own words...

A message from one of the "Faces of Colorectal Cancer"
pg. 7

Colorectal Cancer Programs Receive Federal Funding

The Northeast Regional Cancer Institute has received \$100,000 from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control to support the colorectal cancer research and awareness programs. U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA), Chairman of the Senate Republican Conference, visited the Cancer Institute on June 29 to present the ceremonial check for \$100,000 in funding that he secured through the FY 2004 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.

The funds will be used to research the causes of higher incidences of colorectal cancer in Northeastern Pennsylvania and to educate the public about prevention and signs and symptoms of the disease.

"Colorectal cancer is a devastating disease that claims the lives of more and more Pennsylvanians every day," said Sen. Santorum. "I am pleased that the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute will receive this funding, crucial to understanding why Northeast Pennsylvania is afflicted with some of the highest rates in the nation."

According to research conducted by the Cancer Institute, colorectal cancer was the most frequently diagnosed form of cancer in Lackawanna, Luzerne, Wayne, Wyoming, Susquehanna and Pike Counties between 1996



U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum presented a check in the amount of \$100,000 to Bob Durkin, Cancer Institute president, in support of the colorectal cancer research and awareness program.

and 2000. Cancer Institute Board members, as well as local colon cancer survivors and Cancer Institute spokespeople Bob Lamson and Lackawanna County Judge Carmen Minora,

joined Cancer Institute representatives Bob Durkin, President, and Samuel Lesko, MD, MPH, Director of Research, in greeting Sen. Santorum.

"On behalf of the thousands of Northeastern Pennsylvanians faced with the challenges of colorectal

cancer, I want to thank Sen. Santorum for securing these funds," Durkin said. "If the community and researchers work together, we will have the best chance at discovering the cause of the high rates."

"This grant will allow investigators at the Cancer Institute to gather data from a population-based sample of newly diagnosed colon and rectal cancer patients. The Cancer Institute will also be able to identify supportive care in the region for patients at various stages of the illness," said Sen. Santorum.

Since January, 87 colorectal cancer patients have been interviewed. The Cancer Institute hopes to conduct a total of 500 interviews with colorectal cancer patients and another 500 interviews of people without the disease within the next year.



The Art of Healing

“Stay Happy.”
 “Never Give Up.”
 “Anything’s Possible.”

It’s hard to imagine that these bright and uplifting messages were written by people affected by cancer.

These words, accompanied by inspirational works of art, are just a few examples of the more than 650 ceramic tiles that have been hand-painted by cancer patients from throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania, as well as from destinations as far as Arizona and Florida.

The words and works of art of cancer survivors fill eight spires in the Cancer Institute’s Cancer Survivors Park at McDade Park. They will also fill your heart with hope.

The diverse images and messages on the tiles are united by a common theme of hope and inspiration. The ceramic tiles have been created by cancer patients through an art therapy program directed by Sharon DeNault, a 23-year cancer survivor and a Board-certified art therapist.

“The ability of patients to express their emotions can be instrumental in healing - not necessarily in a physical way, but in a spiritual way,” says Sharon.

She refers to art therapy as a form of “self-expression,” and, for many, a way to “leave a message that they’re OK.”

It’s a powerful form of healing for children and adults, and patients and their families, as Sharon points out.

One young girl has been hand-painting ceramic tiles at Survivors Celebration for several years. Her uplifting and spiritually-focused works provide a source of inspiration, even for a seasoned art therapist like Sharon DeNault.

“There’s a wisdom and maturity that shines through the work of this young cancer patient,” she says.

“Many cancer patients feel compelled to leave a message through a work of art,” says Sharon.

One such person was a mason who had helped install some of the ceramic tiles on the spires in Cancer Survivors Park. In his final stages of cancer, when he didn’t have the strength for physical therapy, he

would spend hours in art therapy to create a lasting message in the form of a ceramic tile.

Color - especially bright and pastel colors - is important in the works of art therapy patients.

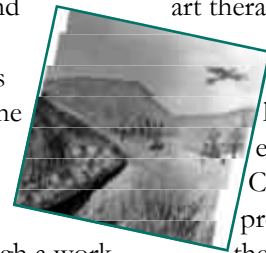
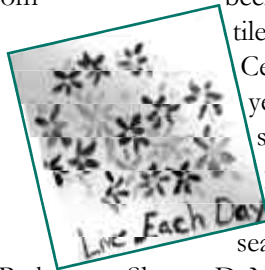
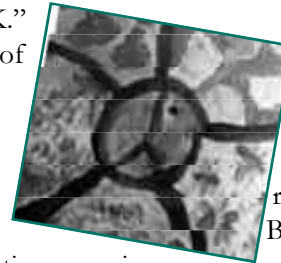
“We go through a lot of red paint,” says Sharon. Black, on the other hand, is used sparingly.

One of the other things that the ceramic tile project makes good use of is volunteers. “The whole community gets involved - from the masons who put up the tiles, to the volunteers who help me with the glazing,” says Sharon.

She sums up the significance of art therapy using a story about the parents of a cancer victim. In his final stages of leukemia, a young boy painted a ceramic tile through the Cancer Institute’s art therapy program. After his passing, the parents said that seeing the tile on display in Cancer Survivors Park is a positive permanent reminder of their son’s life and spirit.

Art therapy.

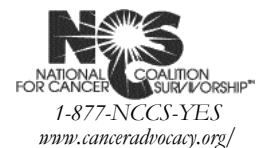
Some would call it the art of healing.



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Cancer Information Resources:



1-800-ACS-2345
 www.cancer.org

Survivorship



There's strength in numbers. United by the spirit of Survivorship, more than **1,500**

people gathered to celebrate life during the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute's *Survivors Celebration* on June 13 at Montage Mountain.

For its own part, the Cancer Institute had a number to celebrate, as it marked the **12th** anniversary of *Survivors Celebration*.

The theme for this year's event, "Unity: Together We Can," depicted the strength that comes from the support of families, friends and volunteers. To signify this unity among such a large number of people, attendees of *Survivors*



Celebration were invited to gather for a group photo.

Cancer survivors Maureen Besancon, a medical records transcriptionist at Wyoming Valley Health Care System, and Bob

Vanderheyden of Oldies 92&100 were the featured speakers. Frank Andrews of WYOU-TV served as emcee for the event.

Cancer survivors, their families, caregivers and friends enjoyed live music via Oldies 92 & 100 live broadcast, as well as

from **three**

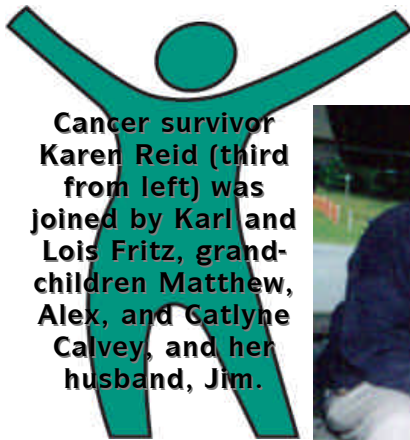
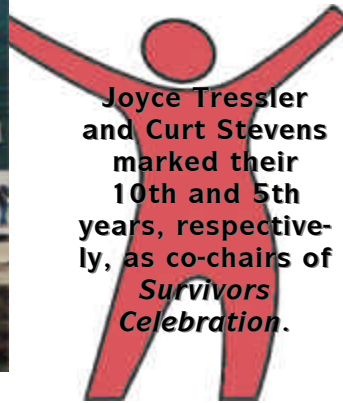
bands Pearl, Moonbagg and Doug Smith's Dixieland All-Stars Band and Kathy Elgaway. Jugglers and clowns, face painting, children's games, caricatures, food and refreshments rounded out the activities.



Survivorship



Joyce Tressler and Curt Stevens marked their 10th and 5th years, respectively, as co-chairs of *Survivors Celebration*.



Cancer survivor Karen Reid (third from left) was joined by Karl and Lois Fritz, grandchildren Matthew, Alex, and Gatlhe Calvey, and her husband, Jim.



Bob Vanderheyden of Oldies 92 & 100 was one of the featured speakers for the event.





WE CAN!

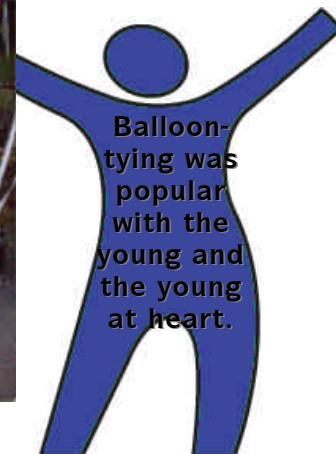
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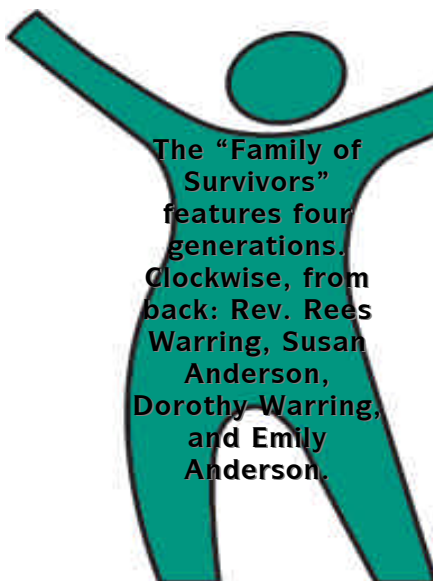
CELEBRATION



Balloon-tying was popular with the young and the young at heart.



The "Family of Survivors" features four generations. Clockwise, from back: Rev. Rees Warring, Susan Anderson, Dorothy Warring, and Emily Anderson.



...n are some of the 25 committee members who worked to plan the event.



Board Member Dr. Lisa Thomas enjoys some of the afternoon's activities which included face painting and caricatures.



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Northeast Regional Cancer Institute, 334 Jefferson Avenue, Scranton, PA 18510
Phone (570) 941-7984 • Website www.cancernepa.org



A powerful message about colorectal cancer

In his days a newscaster for WYOU-TV, Derry Bird was well-known as a reporter throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania. People throughout the region counted on Derry to deliver the latest news and an occasional weather forecast.

Today, the retired newscaster continues to deliver a powerful message to the people of Northeastern Pennsylvania as one of the “Faces of Colorectal Cancer” in a media campaign sponsored by the Cancer Institute.

Unlike the other individuals featured in the ads and public service announcements sponsored by the Cancer Institute, Derry is not a can-

cer survivor. However, he does have firsthand experience with the disease. Several of Derry’s family members have had cancer; some died from the disease.

While none of his family’s experiences involved colorectal cancer, Derry knows that it is one of the easiest forms of cancer to detect and prevent through screening. It was a story that the former newscaster wanted to tell.

In the ads sponsored by the Cancer Institute, Derry offers the following advice. “Don’t be mistaken and think you’re bulletproof when it comes to colorectal cancer. Get screened!”

Derry is one of an increasing

number of people throughout the region who are heeding this advice.

Cancer Institute statistics show that 41 percent of adults 50 years and older have been screened for colorectal cancer this year. This compares to an average screening rate of 32 percent for the past five years.

For screening information, contact your physician or the Cancer Institute at (570) 941-7984.



Bird

In their own words

An unforgettable valentine

Tomorrow is Valentine’s Day and I face my final treatment.
I looked back to the first Valentine’s Day when we first met.
You gave me a ring that had two gold hearts with a diamond set.

Tomorrow the first battle is over, but I fear the war is not won.
And I know whatever the future holds, I will not be alone.

I know you will help me calm my fears.
I look forward to sharing a long life together for many, many years.

I pray every day that this is what God has in store for us.
Raising our kids, and fulfilling our dreams, is an absolute must!

Growing old together and holding our grandchildren, I pray.
I love you more than ever, as we share this Valentine’s Day.

EDITOR’S NOTE:
“IN their own words...” features a letter, story or poem written by a member of the Family of Survivors.

This is an excerpt of a poem written on Valentine’s Day by Barbara Stangline for her husband, David. Barbara, a breast cancer patient, died in June.

To share your story with our readers, please call (570) 941-7984.

UPCOMING EVENTS

PCT Fall Classic

September 13, 2004
Huntsville Golf Club
Golf tournament to promote prostate cancer awareness
Sponsorship packages available
\$250 per player
For info, call 947-7446.

Family of Survivors Program

October 2, 2004
10:30 am - 12 pm
Cancer Survivors Park, McDade Park
Gathering of the Family of Survivors
Free and open to the public
For info, call 941-7984.

It’s all in the game!

November 11, 2004
6 - 9 pm
Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel
An evening of fun, food and games
Proceeds benefit Cancer Institute programming
For info, call 941-7984.

Northeast Regional Cancer Institute

.....
*Easing the burden
of cancer in
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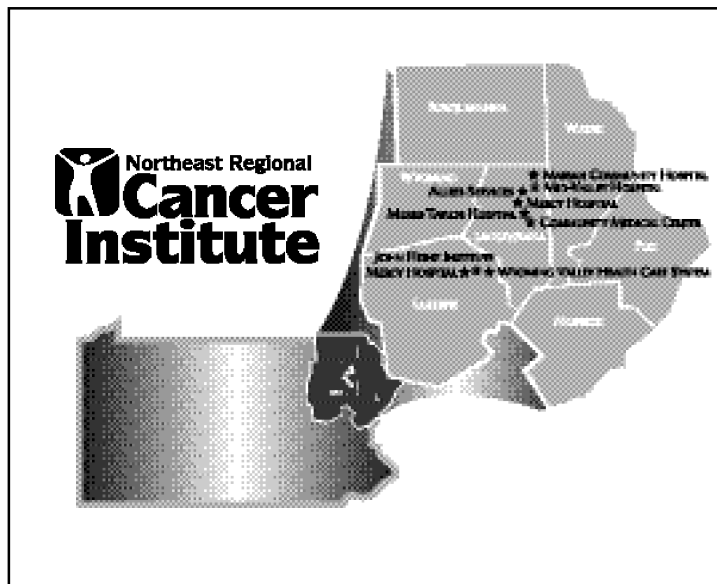
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The Northeast Regional Cancer Institute is a non-profit community-based agency working to ease the burden of cancer in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Focusing on research, education, and survivorship, the Cancer Institute is the only local cancer organization that invests all of its resources in this region.

The four main components of the Cancer Institute are the Epidemiology Research Program, the Regional Cancer Registry, the Cancer Risk Program, and Community Education and Support.

Partnering with the Cancer Institute to achieve its goals are community leaders, volunteers, healthcare professionals, and a cooperative network of nine partner organizations in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

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