2010 SEPTEMBER

Your Partner in Health

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Giving Back to Our Community

As the CEO at Port Huron Hospital, I am very proud of the hospital's reputation of leadership in women's health. Women's Wellness Place has received national recognition from The American College of Radiology as the only "Breast Imaging Center of Excellence" in a five-county area. As you might imagine, Breast Cancer Awareness Month is very important to all of us at the hospital. It's an excellent time to talk about preventive care and the availability of our continuum of women's services. Services such as the "Look Good, Feel Better" program - helping women with cancer heal by boosting their self image and confidence.

We have many friends in the community who support our efforts. Friends like the Kearns family - who turned grief into a triumphant annual fundraiser that benefits hundreds of women with cancer. And our friends at Salon PiZazz! – where stylists donate their talent and enthusiasm to get our community *"in the pink"* with ***"Let's Wear Pink Hair"***.

We support many programs for breast cancer survivors and their families. Plus, we offer free mammograms during October for women who don't have health insurance or have never had a mammogram before.

– Thomas DeFauw, President and Chief Executive Officer

"LITTLE BLACK DRESS" event honors a family matriarch; benefits breast cancer services

When a loved one is lost to breast cancer, many times the sadness evolves into a resolve to help others battle the disease. The Kearns family – with nine siblings - is no exception. Following the loss of their mother, Betty, to breast cancer, the three Kearns sisters, Carolyn Kearns Bonacci, Maureen Kearns MacCallum and Jackie Kearns Mackensen, along with Carolyn's daughter, Debbie Bonacci Reynolds, decided to raise funds in Betty's memory to benefit breast cancer services in the community. What started as a small fundraiser has become an annual event that routinely sells out its 475 available tickets. It's known as the Betty Kearns "Little Black Dress" event.

Enjoying the 2010 Little Black Dress event are (from left) Kim Eick, Barb Adler, Pauline Repp and Linda Kearns

"It's taken on a life of its own," says Carolyn Kearns Bonacci. "We started out hoping for 100 women – we got 150. It's just grown from there."

Women attending are treated to hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar, and music. The only men in attendance are the Kearns brothers and brothers-in-law who sell 50-50 and raffle tickets.

Last year the event raised $17,200 for breast cancer services at both hospitals in Port Huron. Port Huron Hospital uses the donation to fund its "Look Good, Feel Better" program.

Because of their strong Irish heritage, the Kearns family schedules the event during the annual Celtic Festival in March. While the event was created in memory of their mother, it honors both of their parents (they lost their father Edward "Ted" within a year of Betty) and their family in other ways. They lost their brother Denny to cancer last January. Memorial donations totaling $2,000 received at the time of Denny's death, were included in proceeds from the event.

"The name, *'Little Black Dress'* came from the memory of my mother wearing her little black dress while dancing with my Dad," says Carolyn. "They were enthusiastic dancers – taking lessons right through disco."

Bob Kearns counts out 50/50 tickets for the Little Black Dress event

Their dancing was often accompanied by popular local entertainer and keyboardist John Needham, who donates his talent for the event.

"We have such a good time and it's so special when we see three generations of women attending," says Carolyn. "Women are encouraged to wear their *little black dress* or slacks. And we see a lot of touches of pink for breast cancer awareness.".

"People ask us if we might be getting tired of doing it," says Carolyn. "Oh no - we're already on the books for next year!"

The next event will be March 4, 2011. Tickets will be available at the Kearns Agency, beginning January 1st.

"Look Good, Feel Better" provides support, confidence

When Ellen Hoover was diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2008, she faced a challenge that was compounded by her grief from her mother's death from the disease just two months earlier. She understood the battle ahead of her and wanted to take advantage of every resource Port Huron Hospital has available.

"From the day I found out to the last day of chemotherapy and beyond, I felt the hospital was with me all the way – I had so much support," says Ellen, who has been cancer free for two years.

One of the hospital's programs that provided Ellen with needed support is called "Look Good, Feel Better." The free American Cancer Society program is designed to help women anticipate and take control of the appearance changes that often accompany chemotherapy – fatigue, hair loss, changes in the skin and complexion. Specially trained volunteers run the program.

"I was so nervous going there," says Ellen, "I just didn't know what to expect. But almost immediately we all felt comfortable. There was a fast bonding among us because we were all going through the same thing. We were all in this together and it turned out to be a special evening. There was a lot of emotion and even some fun as the women experimented with makeup and hair techniques. We laughed and we cried."

Participants in the program leave the session with a wig, scarves they've learned to tie and wear, a personalized cosmetic kit, and a sense of confidence. Volunteers were able to help Ellen find a wig that looked very much like her natural color and hairstyle. When chemotherapy started, her hair thinned and she recalls, "I was worried that a wig would look fake. It looked much better than I expected. If someone didn't know I was having chemo, they wouldn't have known I was wearing a wig."

"I was able to continue as normal a life as possible," says Ellen. "I know it sounds like a slogan, but it's true. If you look good, you really do feel better."

In the Pink!

Live mannequin Rachel Kohanoz

In its well established tradition of sponsoring events that benefit local charities, Salon PiZazz! held its third annual ***Mannequins Making a Difference Charity Challenge Fundraiser*** during Boat Week in July. Live mannequins, representing local charities, posed outside the downtown Port Huron hair gallery/salon. Spectators voted with dollar bills for their favorite mannequins. Rachel Kohanoz finished in first place. Her designated charity, the Port Huron Hospital Foundation Donna Niester Breast Cancer Fund, received a $1,700 donation.

Three years ago, Salon PiZazz! owner, Kelly Strilcov, introduced another annual fundraiser – ***Let's Wear Pink Hair***. For $10 each, Salon PiZazz stylists have placed pink hair extensions in the hair of hundreds of women. This year Kelly is recruiting other hair salons to be part of an area-wide ***Let's Wear Pink Hair*** fundraising effort. All of the proceeds will go to the Donna Niester Breast Cancer Fund. Information about salons participating in ***Let's Wear Pink Hair*** is available at **www.letswearpinkhair.com**.

OCTOBER EVENTS

7th Annual Breast Cancer Survivor Luncheon
A luncheon for breast cancer survivors and their guests. Learn about the healing powers within from Renette Dickinson, healing touch practitioner and certified hypnotherapist.
Saturday, October 16
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
$12/person

Free Mammograms
Free screening mammograms for women who have not previously had a mammogram and or who do not have health insurance.
Entire month of October
Port Huron Hospital Women's Wellness Place

Let's Wear Pink Hair
Salon PiZazz!, along with other area salons, are again offering pink hair extensions to show your support. Stop by the salons or watch for dates when stylists will be at Women's Wellness Place. No appointment necessary.
Entire month of October
$10 donation

Studio 1219 Annual Events
Port Huron Hospital participates in Studio 1219's annual Breast Cancer Awareness Month events.
Studio 1219, 1219 Military Street

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer
Join our Port Huron Hospital team for this three mile American Cancer Society walk.
Saturday, October 9, 7:30 a.m.
St. Clair County Community College Campus

For more information call HealthAccess at
1.800.228.1484 or visit
www.porthuronhospital.org/events

Port Huron Hospital

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