



Some of the Biggest Hearts are Here in Rome

The Volunteer Council of West Rome United Methodist Church have made it a mission to serve cancer patients, providing food for patients and their families through the West Rome Food Pantry.

It's not just groceries the church members are serving; it's nourishment for the body, mind and spirit.

"We were looking for a way reinvent ourselves to efficiently serve, and this mission actually found us," said Martha Morris, Volunteer Coordinator for West Rome UMC. "The Bagwell Food Pantry in Rome has always supported Cancer Navigators by serving their patients in addition to the whole community, and when this was brought to our attention by Kathy Akin Freeman,



a long-time supporter, facilitator, and volunteer of Bagwell, it was decided that we could pull that component out and exclusively serve Cancer Navigators patients. That's when the West Rome Food Pantry was born."

Church members say the pantry is about service, families and community—and most importantly, it's about doing all things through Christ—accordingly.

"Our dedicated volunteers so wanted to get it right for the patients and that's when Kathy said, 'This is not rocket science, you can't make a mistake!' Well, she was right, and since October 2013 we have served over 400 cancer patients, and the number is growing. We couldn't have asked for a better partner in Cancer Navigators!"

If you would like to make a donation to the West Rome Food Pantry or volunteer your time or talents to help the mission continue, or, if you are a patient on your cancer journey and in need of nutritional support, please call Cancer Navigators at 706.295.4119.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Connections

Because people shouldn't have to journey alone

Cast Off Event Coming

The 6th Annual Cast off Against Cancer event is scheduled for June 5, 2016. For information contact us at 706.295.4119.

WHAT'S Inside

Chairman Virginia Harmon discusses how our mission moves from paper to practice.



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CLIENT PROFILE: ALICIA BLACK

Cancer Navigators Is My Family

Every cancer journey is different, and every individual's response to a cancer diagnosis is his or her own. We asked Cancer Navigators client Alicia Black about her journey after being diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer.

"I am a single mother of two girls. I was diagnosed when I was 34 years old," Alicia began. "I will not lie. The day I was diagnosed, I was devastated. It was overwhelming. There was radiation, chemotherapy and so many doctors' visits. I was put on so much pain medication that I was floating through life."

In addition to her medical issues, Alicia faced new economic realities while learning to navigate the bureaucracy of health care and disability insurance. Alicia needed help.

"I was directed to Cancer Navigators," she said. "I am so grateful to these women. They opened their arms and took me in. Cancer Navigators has



resources to help patients financially, mentally and emotionally. Their main goal is to hold your hand, as a patient, and lead you to a road of recovery. That is what Alicia found at Cancer Navigators.



"Having cancer does not mean the end of life. If nothing, it has given me a reason to live."

"Scharla, Angela, and Denise have been there for me and so many others. I am so grateful for their love and support. I have come such a long way over the past year and a half, thanks to Cancer Navigators. I am proud to call these ladies my family. I now volunteer for Cancer Navigators, and I am a team captain for Cast Off Against Cancer."

Cast Off Against Cancer is Cancer Navigators' largest annual fundraiser. If you'd like to contribute to Alicia's Cast Off Against Cancer Team—Alicia's Anchors, or form a team of your own, contact Cancer Navigators or stop by our office at 255 W. 5th St. Cancer Navigators is located on the third floor of the Harbin Clinic's Tony E. Warren M.D., Cancer Center.



Cancer Navigators' Online Guitar Auction

Bids for the guitars can only be placed online at www.cancernavigatorsga.org/guitar-auction. See page 2 for details.



Get Your Oars Ready; It's Cast Off Time

Cancer Navigators will recognize National Cancer Survivors Day with a celebration at Rome's Heritage Park on Sunday, June 5. The annual commemoration gives attendees an opportunity to honor loved ones who have battled cancer. The event will also mark the conclusion of Cancer Navigators' Cast Off Against Cancer campaign, which raises money to support the organization's mission.

"This celebration provides all of us the chance to pay tribute to those in our lives who have lost their battle with cancer, those who continue to battle and the caregivers who tirelessly offer support," said Dan Sweitzer, Vice Chair of Cancer Navigators' Board of Directors.

The event will begin at Heritage Park where attendees will be able to view oars designed and decorated by teams participating in the Cast Off Against Cancer campaign. Prizes will be given for Best Oar, Most Money Raised and Most Team Spirit.

Attendees will also be able walk together to the pedestrian bridge that crosses the Oostanula River and take part in the annual daisy drop.

"I'm not sure there is anyone who hasn't been touched by cancer in some way," Sweitzer said. "The daisy drop gives all of us a chance to reflect on how we've been impacted as we watch our daisies float down the river in honor or memory of someone we love."



Country's Sam Hunt Signs On to Auction

Cancer Navigators' online guitar auction will conclude during the Cast Off Cancer event, and winning bidders will be announced. Three guitars are available to bid on. Two of the guitars have been autographed exclusively by Cedartown native, and American Music Award winning, Sam Hunt, while the third includes his signature, along with autographs from Tracy Lawrence, Lee Brice, Cole Swindell, Doug Stone and Kane Brown.

Bids for the guitars can only be placed online at cancernavigatorsga.org/guitar-auction

No Cancer Patient Should Have to Journey Alone

For the past several years, I have been honored to be a part of this phenomenal organization known as Cancer Navigators. I was inspired early on by the work of Dr. Matt Mumber and other dedicated doctors and staff in the Rome medical community who believed that effective cancer treatment means attention to not only the cancer patients but also their families in a holistic and caring environment. It astounded me years ago and it astounds me to this date that our little program remains almost unique in the greater medical community in its effort to create a single point of reference for cancer patients and their families where all of our community's resources to support them can come together in this manner.

Every single dollar raised by Cancer Navigators stays right here in our community to help cancer patients and their families.

Cancer Navigators has what sounds to be a simple and straightforward mission — that no cancer patient should have to journey alone. But what sounds so simple on paper can be quite complicated in practice. Cancer Navigators relies entirely on donations to meet this mission. We have been lucky enough in recent months to have been able to affiliate with Floyd Medical Center, which has been historically a strong and avid supporter of the mission of Cancer Navigators. This organizational affiliation allows Cancer Navigators to be relieved of

many administrative functions and costs and to relocate to the Tony E. Warren Harbin Clinic Cancer Center, where we can be much more convenient to our patients and their families. However, Cancer Navigators still must raise every dollar necessary to pay our amazing staff members and provide access for cancer patients and their families to the services which they so desperately need.

And let me make one thing perfectly clear: Every single dollar raised by Cancer Navigators stays right here in our community to help cancer patients and their families. Not only does every single dollar stay here in our community, our staff works non-stop to leverage each dollar donated into many more dollars in terms of the direct value of the services and products which they make available to our patients. Just looking at the numbers for the first two months of 2016, our Cancer Navigators staff has seen 157 cancer patients. We provide transportation assistance, nutritional education and supplements, food bank assistance, supplies such as wigs, hospital beds, ostomy supplies and assistance in obtaining benefits and grants. These are items patients are not aware of or had not been able to obtain before meeting

with Cancer Navigators staff. Our staff leveraged about \$5 worth of benefit to our local cancer patients and their families for every \$1 we received in donations.

In addition, our staff was able to facilitate housing for two patients who had previously been homeless. I don't know how you put a dollar value on that! It isn't hard to see that our staff makes a direct impact on the quality of life of cancer patients in northwest Georgia on a daily basis.

With the help of continued donations to fund our efforts, Cancer Navigators can expand its reach so that no cancer patient in northwest Georgia faces his or her journey alone. If you would like to become involved with Cancer Navigators or make a donation, please reach out to any member of our staff. If our staff has made an impact on your life, but you are not in a position to be able to give directly at this time, please know that your kind words and your hug around the neck are what keeps our staff going and reinforces their dedication to make a difference in the life of each of our patients.

—Virginia Harman
Cancer Navigators Chairman



Virginia Harman

Free Counseling Available Through Cancer Navigators

With a cancer diagnosis come a flood of emotions and questions for both the patient and the patient's family that friends and other family members may not be prepared to answer.

Cancer Navigators offers free individual and family counseling services to help answer those questions, process the emotions and forge a pathway that leads to personal growth and healing. Researchers agree that stress can affect the efficacy of traditional treatments and cause other complications.

Denise Powers, a licensed clinical social worker who provides counseling services at Cancer Navigators, says her patients may face any number of issues.

"Counseling can relate to their diagnosis, their treatment or any other life situation that happens to be concurrent with their cancer diagnosis," Denise said. "It could be that they were not getting along with their husband, but now it is really important to figure out how to get along. It could be that they are grieving for their fathers' death from

cancer or anything else, and they have to go through the grief process. It might be that they have post-traumatic stress disorder from previous medical situations and need to work through that to go through their treatment."

Sometimes, Denise said, patients come with their families to help them work on communication, "because nobody knows exactly what to say to the cancer patient."

Counseling needs are specific to the individual. Some discussions are very personal and deep rooted. Others receive assistance specific to their diagnosis. For some, they may attend only a few sessions while others seek counseling throughout their cancer journey. Regardless, it is the patient's choice, and it is free through Cancer Navigators.

Cancer Navigators also offers monthly education groups for caregivers to teach them how to take care of themselves while helping to care for someone else.

A weekly support group for cancer patients is also offered Fridays from 11:45 a.m. until 1:15 p.m. This group meets on the second floor in the Harbin Clinic's Tony E. Warren M.D. Cancer Center with Denise, Dr. Matt Mumber, Harbin Clinic oncologist and a founder of Cancer Navigators, and Heather Reed, who works with patients on such topics as mindfulness and living in the present.

"We try to have an environment where it is safe for discussion of whatever comes up," Denise said. Attendees know and appreciate that their frank discussions are held confidential and there is a tacit agreement that no one will try to "fix" the issues that are discussed. "This is not the environment for that," Denise said.

Counseling is an important component of healing for cancer patients and their families, Denise said.

"Cancer affects everyone, and there is no reason not to have a discussion about how it has affected you," she said.



Kim McAdams, a Floyd employee, Sarah Cooner, and Kathy Gower, Thirty-one independent gift consultants, donated chemo care bags on April 5, 2016. The beautiful bags contained goodies for Cancer Navigators' cancer patients.

We Salute

Our Board Members

So much of the success of Cancer Navigators is due to our board members. They give their time, their expertise and their financial support to ensure we can fulfill our mission, all while being advocates for cancer patients and their families in our community. It is with sincere thanks that we say "bon voyage" to our departing board members and "welcome aboard" to our 2016 directors.

Departing Board members

Skip Howse	Dr. Tommy Simpson
Kim Mauer	Dee Yancey
Mimi Richards	

2016 Board of Directors

Virginia Harman — <i>Chairman</i>	
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