

THE DEVILS' ADVOCATE

The Red Devils Supporting Breast Cancer Families

Spring 2013 Edition

Cancer Conquerors

To see the smiles of recognition and the hugs welcoming one another, you would think you were in the midst of a reunion of long-lost friends. But on a gorgeous day last fall, women who had not met before came together joined by two common bonds: they were cancer conquerors (their term) and their lives had been touched by The Red Devils.

It was Pamela who introduced the term, "cancer conquerors." She was first diagnosed with breast cancer in 1989, had a recurrence in 1998, and again in 2005. Over the years, Pamela has had radiation, chemotherapy, a bilateral mastectomy and hysterectomy, and is living with metastatic breast cancer. In spite of it all, she refuses to see herself as sick trying to get well, but instead as well and "the enemy is trying to make me sick. I see myself as a cancer conqueror. I don't like the word survivor anymore. I've survived too long; it's time to conquer," she said with a raised, clinched fist. "So I'm trying to

get folks to change their language...to transition to conqueror. I'm a cancer conqueror."

While the words others chose to describe their journey and resolve may have been different than Pamela's, there could be no doubt about their fortitude and faith in God, family, and people they would never meet to lift them along their path.

Sheila was diagnosed with Stage IV breast cancer in November of 2011. "They counted me out. I'm not supposed to be here. But this is October, and I'm still here and God counted me in." Sheila is one of GBMC's patients. She's had chemo, radiation, and a mastectomy, and tells us she feels great. "The people there are like my family, and The Red Devils...it's like people were helping me who I don't know and that means a lot." Sheila's motto is that she is not going to let cancer beat her; she's going to beat it. "I'm not going to let this turn me down or keep me down."



Sheila (right) with The Red Devils' Tricia Hayden

Michelle, a project manager by profession, learned quickly that, in her words, "You cannot project manage breast cancer." She became overwhelmed by the day-to-day big and little things, but would not admit to herself or to others that she needed help. After being in denial for a long time, she finally reached out and was set up with house cleanings. "You're thinking, 'I can do it myself,' but I wasn't doing it myself. I was seeping into depression. I live in a small house, but when you're going through chemo, suddenly your house gets very big." For Michelle, having her house cleaned made dealing with all the other things that come with treatment a little more bearable. "I realize that we're all here battling for our lives." Michelle told the other women. "Some of you have won this battle. I'm going to fashion myself after you."

We are grateful to these and so many other amazing women for letting us into their lives. To hear more from our cancer conquerors, visit us online at www.TheRedDevilsMD.org and click on the "Impact" tab.

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Patient Impact: What You Make Possible

"I am in awe of The Red Devils support. This has made my worry about covering meds disappear. When you are in treatment for any cancer, the less stress, the better, and The Red Devils has provided that for me."

Each year we measure the outcomes of serving our mission by asking ourselves two questions: How many patients' lives were we able to touch; and what differences did we make in their treatment journey and quality of life? Thanks to your generous contributions in 2012, The Red Devils made an immediate and profound difference in the lives of **642 Maryland breast cancer families**. For many of them, there was nowhere else to turn for help with family support needs, transportation to treatments, and medical services and treatment-related therapies. Here is the impact you made possible last year:

339 families received assistance with meals and groceries, house cleaning, rents and mortgages, utilities, and other family support needs.

232 patients were able to get to their treatments with the help of gas cards, taxi vouchers, and sedan rides.

166 patients' medical services and treatment-related therapies, including medical bills and supplies, prescriptions, and co-pays, were paid.

What outcomes did we see in our patients' quality of life? Based on their survey responses, 94% of those responding found our support services helpful. In fact, when asked about key quality of life indicators, nearly all said we positively affected their stress reduction, optimism, sense of normalcy, self-esteem, and peace of mind. Equally gratifying is the fact that 88% of those responding told us our support services played an important role in their remaining in treatment.



The scene at Chesapeake Harley-Davidson before kickstands go up.



Iron Order Motorcycle Club's "Joker" cares enough to wear horns of hope.

Donor's Corner: Harleys with Hearts

"Wind through your hair, everything seems a little bit better, especially if you share the same interests and it's a great sunny day." So says 98 Rock jock "Amelia," describing the delights of an annual 48-mile motorbike ride for breast cancer called "Amelia's Ace of Hearts Ride."

For the past several years, The Red Devils has been the beneficiary, with last year's event raising \$15,000, according to Wayne Smith, founding member of the Ace of Hearts Foundation. Smith also operates Vendetta Wear, a t-shirt company that designs and supplies the shirts sported by attendees who numbered about 500 in 2012.

In its 8th year, the 2013 ride is Saturday, June 15 at the same start location: Chesapeake Harley-Davidson, 4600 Thunder Court, off Conowingo Road/Rte. 1 in Darlington, MD. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. with kickstands up at noon. Cost is \$20 per bike/rider, with another \$10 for a passenger.

LaDon Hinchy, an event organizer, says two great bands are on board for the post-event entertainment at the Union Hotel in Port Deposit, MD: Whiskey Brothers and Scarlet Angel, which has previously performed. Whiskey Brothers is known for its precision guitar and bass playing, hard-driving drum beat and harmonizing vocals producing an "American rock, 'southern-fried'" sound.

Baltimore's Scarlet Angel was an all-female ensemble led by lead guitarist Michelle Armiger, who now is joined by Abby O, Kim Yates and one male: Barry Bergoffen.

Hinchy, who lined up the bands, reminds bikers to bring cash for great raffle prizes including a specially crafted guitar personally selected by Amelia, and a \$1,000 gift certificate to Chesapeake Harley-Davidson.

Amelia says this ride stands out for the scenic views offered and organizers' focus on safety, getting officials in both Maryland and Pennsylvania through which the ride winds, on board with traffic direction.

For more information visit <http://www.aceofheartside.org>

With a Little Help from Her Friend

Helen was receiving treatment for her metastatic breast cancer when she heard about The Red Devils. She and her husband have twin three-year-olds, and quickly discovered the family could use some help with housecleaning. Their rural location, described by Helen as "out in the middle of nowhere," presented an obstacle. Try as she might, Helen couldn't find a cleaning company to drive the distance. That is, until she spoke with Cyndee from Stress Free Cleaning. The first time Cyndee came to the house, "she went through it like a tornado. She's pure energy," said Helen.

With funding from The Red Devils, Cyndee has been caring for Helen's family's cleaning needs for over a year. In that time, as happens with many of the relationships between our service providers and patients, the bond between Cyndee and Helen's family grew to strengths neither would have imagined. "Cyndee doesn't need to ask what needs to be done, she just knows and she gets it done," Helen told us. If the twins are home, Cyndee eagerly spends time with them. In fact, it's not unusual for Cyndee to walk in with toys for the boys or meals for the family – often donated by Cyndee's other clients wanting to lend a hand."

When Helen's washing machine broke, Cyndee scoured her connections to see who could repair it. In the meantime, Cyndee took Helen's laundry home and washed it herself. According to Helen, "Cyndee checks in on us frequently." It was during one of those casual calls that Cyndee found out about Helen not having a ride to Philadelphia for a doctor's appointment. Without giving it a second thought, Cyndee rearranged her whole schedule to drive 3 ½ hours back and forth to get Helen to her appointment.

The cruelest of diseases and difficult circumstances brought these two women together. Cyndee describes Helen as "one of the nicest people I've met. She is not bitter about her cancer and she is so appreciative of everything that I do for her." And Helen says of Cyndee, "She has a way of making everyone feel safe and well cared for."

We're not certain whether or not Cyndee envisioned meeting Helen 16 years ago when she started Stress Free Cleaning but one thing is clear: the care, compassion, and selflessness she has shown Helen and her family have helped make them stress-free during a most difficult time.



Helen spending quality time with her twin boys.

Mark Your Calendars for These Red Hot Events

May 18

Spaghetti Dinner and Dance, Sykesville

June 5

Hard Yacht for Hooters, Dundalk

June 9

Running with The Devils, Goucher College, Baltimore

June 15

Amelia's Ace of Hearts Ride, Darlington

September

Bike 4 Breast Cancer

Saddlin' Up for the Cure

October

Pink Power, Synergy Women's Fitness, Columbia

Clays Against Cancer

Bras for the Cause

Saving Second Base

If you would like to organize a fund-raising event or for more information about scheduled events, visit www.TheRedDevilsMD.org or call 410.323.0135.

**The Red Devils Bull and Oyster Roast
Friday, November 1
Start planning now to fill your table.**



Supporting Breast Cancer Families
Sunday, June 9, 2013

Goucher College, Towson, MD

Walk-Up Registration and Village Opens: 7:00 a.m.

Starting Horn: 8:30 a.m.

Mail-In Registration Form

Please complete and mail or fax a copy along with your payment, (check or credit card) to the address below. You also may register online at www.RunningwithTheDevils.org.

REGISTRANT INFORMATION. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

NAME _____
GENDER _____ AGE _____ SHIRT SIZE (circle one) S M L XL XXL **5K or 1 mile (circle one)**
NAME _____
GENDER _____ AGE _____ SHIRT SIZE (circle one) S M L XL XXL YS YM **5K or 1 mile (circle one)**
NAME _____
GENDER _____ AGE _____ SHIRT SIZE (circle one) S M L XL XXL YS YM **5K or 1 mile (circle one)**
NAME _____
GENDER _____ AGE _____ SHIRT SIZE (circle one) S M L XL XXL YS YM **5K or 1 mile (circle one)**
I am (check one, if applicable) Forming a team ☐ Joining a team ☐ Supporting a participant ☐
Team Name _____ Participant's Name _____

REGISTRATION FEES

_____ Adults - \$35 per person
(\$40 on event day)

_____ Children 12 and under
(no charge)

\$ _____ DONATION

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED

\$ _____

CONTACT/BILLING INFORMATION. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____
☐ I would like to receive email updates from The Red Devils.
Credit card # _____
Visa ☐ MC ☐ Amex ☐ Expiration date _____

The Red Devils
Supporting Breast Cancer Families

RUNNING WITH THE DEVILS WAIVER

I hereby waive, for myself and all family members listed above, all claims against The Red Devils, run/walk sponsors, Charm City Run Baltimore County, Goucher College and any other person for any injury that I/we may suffer while participating in this event. I grant permission to The Red Devils to use photographs of me and my family members listed above in accounts of this event.

Must be signed by a parent or legal guardian if participant is under age 18.

Signature _____

MAIL COMPLETED FORM TO:

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Baltimore, MD 21212
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Presented by



THE DEVILS' ADVOCATE

The Red Devils

Supporting Breast Cancer Families

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To volunteer, please contact us at:
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Mission:

To fund services that improve the quality of life for breast cancer patients and their families.

What's in a Name?

The Red Devils name was inspired by Katherine Russell Rich, author of *The Red Devil—to Hell with Cancer and Back*, which opens a window into the heart of a woman whose life with cancer is marked with courage, grace, and humor. "The Red Devil" is a nickname for the chemotherapy drug, Adriamycin, often used to treat breast cancer.

