Our Community at 30

The doors of HopeWell Cancer Support, then known as The Wellness Community – Baltimore, officially opened on April 26, 1993. We have come a long way since then by adding programs, growing participation, moving to a wonderfully restored farmhouse, and carrying on during the pandemic. As we celebrate our 30th anniversary year, we are moving forward by opening up our home again, freshening the rooms, and offering hybrid programs so that all can participate in person or from home.

An event is planned each month of this special year to engage the community, thank our donors and volunteers, bring participants together, and honor this special place that supports so many. Already, we have had a community shredding event, a night at Camden Yards, and a One Mile Walk/Run fundraiser. We hope that you will join in the celebration by attending one of the future events, such as the Sip & Shop night at Laissez Faire & Company, dinner at Gertrude’s, Trivia Night, or HopeFest (see back page for events and dates).

Over the years, many participants have shared the importance of HopeWell during their cancer journey. In their own words:

“I think the great gift I’ve received is recognizing a deep well of compassion in the community. And the joy that can be generated even in adversity.”

“We when the service is free, you tend to invite more people from the community of all backgrounds to come.”

“You’ve got to come to see and experience the warmth, the information, and the support that’s given to all walks of life.”

“When I got to HopeWell, I found other people in the same situation and it was like comfort.”

“They want to see their friends; they want to know how other people are doing; they want to continue to share their experience, their journey with cancer.”

“I found this to be a unique organization because it separated itself from the treatment world.”

“When you come here, you feel joy and happiness and a connectedness that just makes everybody feel better.”

“There was a normalization that would happen, that would make us feel a little bit less isolated, a little bit less alone in this battle, as we all sort of realized that we had each other to count on.”

“This has sort of become the center, the heart of our recovery journey for us.”

We toast all who have been part of our 30 years thus far, as we look to a bright future for HopeWell participants, volunteers, donors, healthcare providers, staff, and board members. Please join us in the celebration!

HopeWell turned 30 on April 26, 2023, and is celebrating our 30th Anniversary with a year of events and activities.

We started the celebration in June with a Kick-Off Event, attended by staff, board, major donors, funders, and elected officials. This was our first major in-person event since 2020.

To increase our outreach in the community, we held a very successful Community Shredding Event fundraiser in July, complete with food truck and snowball truck.

While the Baltimore Oriole’s are hot, hot, hot, we received a donated block of 100 tickets and had a HopeWell Family Night at the O’s.

Just before this newsletter went to press, we held a One Mile Run/Walk Fun-Raiser at Meadowood Regional Park. Stay tuned for photos and details about that event.

We have many more events and activities to come – please see the back panel for upcoming events.
A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

VERONICA LAND-DAVIS

Dear HopeWell Community,

As we walk the cairns grounds of HopeWell, I admiringly reflect on the facts that, as we approach our 30th year of creating community, compassion, and hope.

Many in our community may remember that spring day in 1993 when a group of compassionate people came together to support one another even though each was dealing with their journey through cancer. We knew then this initial gathering would birth a community of equals that has lasted three decades and counting! From that spring day in 1993 to today, HopeWell has continued welcoming participants, caregivers, and their families at no charge. We have kept our day and evening programs free to the community.

The pandemic brought uncertainty, and like the rest of the world, we had to pivot and figure out how to continue serving our community. We immediately introduced our community to Virtual HopeWell, where our support groups, mind-body, spirit classes, the House of Speakers Series, and other educational programs continued with live discussion for our participants. As the world transitions differently to a state of normalcy, we at HopeWell recognize how important it is for us to re enter and create a safe space for our participants to return to our beautiful campus with generous donations from HopeWell’s Well Wishers, our dedicated staff have worked to upgrade the facility and install IT equipment to support and provide hybrid programs. After three years of delivering exclusively virtual programs, in the spring of this year, we have begun providing hybrid programs, and we are excited to report our new hybrid programming this year. Although navigating the pandemic was challenging, the one great benefit from living through an unprecedented historical event is that HopeWell can offer virtual, onsite, and hybrid programming for our community. We are excited to provide options that allow everyone to participate.

As the new executive director, with the support of the board, the staff, directors, volunteers, and the collective HopeWell community, my mission is to continue raising awareness of our mission, explore diverse funding opportunities, and continue to share about what support programs are needed to meet their needs as we continue our 30-year history of creating a community for all people with cancer and their families and friends. To be successful, I must turn to you, the friends of HopeWell, and ask for your support in meeting our 30th- anniversary goal to raise $100,000.

With your support, we will continue to create the presence of hope, for there is a community strength. Where there is strength, there is hope. With deeply felt gratitude,

VERONICA LAND-DAVIS

HOPEWELL THROUGH THE YEARS – A TIMELINE

1993
After over two years of planning and fundraising, The Wellness Community – Baltimore opened its doors on April 26, 1993, at The Dolaney Center II in Towson. We were the 13th center, and first on the East Coast, within a national network of cancer support organizations. Support groups and programs started with Suzanne Brice as the Executive Director.

1995
Through the foresight and diligence of the Ziv Family, one of our Signature Grants was leveraged and launched in November 1995. Teen circle was started two years later.

1998
The first REACHOUT & RUN was held on May 3, 1998, with 600 participants and 120 volunteers. The race continued for 21 years. At the time, Caleb was 7 and Coby was 5. Elise knew that she needed to find support for the boys, as they were dealing with so many different emotions of their own, and found it in HopeWell’s Kids Circle program. They participated in the Family Circle program for many years and made the best of their circumstances.

2000
Due to increased demand, our programs were expanded to include Young Adult with Cancer, Couples Support Project, and Ovarian Cancer Groups.

2003-2019
HopeWell hosted an Annual “Conference for Cancer Professionals”, a CEU program designed by the clinical staff. This CEU program continued as a community outreach effort and launched HopeWell’s professional development series.

2003
After a productive 10-year affiliation with The Wellness Community, we were ready to become an independent, local organization – HopeWell Cancer Support. That same year, we were able to purchase our current home – a restored farmhouse on 8.5 acres of meadowland, located just past the intersection of 1695 and 143 on Falls Road in Lutherville.

2005
A participant-led reunion replaces Cancer Survivors Day. We also held our first annual Memorial Service to honor the memory of HopeWell participants and loved ones.

2008
A generous gift from an anonymous donor allowed HopeWell to expand our campus. Artisan craftsmen, utilizing traditional carpentry tools and framework techniques, raised the Barn in a single day on April 1, 2008. As the coming months, the Barn was finished and Kids Circle and Teen Circle were the first HopeWell programs to use this new space.

2009-2011
With the addition of new space in the Barn, our Mind, Body, Spirit program expanded, with more classes, Aging, Stretch and Tone, Mindfulness Meditation, Yoga, Nidra, and more. The Zivs are so thankful for the existence of HopeWell.

2016
In-depth community conversations and extensive research reveal “financial toxicity” as a key cancer impact and validates our policy of never charging for our programs.

2020
In response to the onset of COVID, we closed our physical doors in March 2020, opened our virtual doors to offer all HopeWell programs and support groups virtually through Barn technology. During this time, we accomplished much needed upgrades to our facilities.

2021
A transition campaign was launched and successfully raised $1.25 million.

2022
HopeWell observed our 30th Anniversary on April 26, 2022, and started a year-long celebration with monthly activities being conducted each month through April 2024. The campus buildings undergo essential repairs and updates. A generous gift from a local tumor support group of state-of-the-art technology to support our programming. The HopeWell board is strengthened with the addition of five new board members. A Family Circle Fun Day was held on April 23.

2023
HopeWell reached back to HopeWell since 2020.
HopeWell’s 30th Birthday

Written by Karen Rabins, June 2023

We had a test when Covid came and quickly learned to zoom. We got quite good but hope that soon, in our house groups resume. The teams who work at HopeWell are so proud of what we do. We gladly give support and hope, and education, too.

With time comes change and that we’ve had; our teams, of course, have changed. And just this year we had a shift, our ED (executive director) we did exchange.

Our dear Suzanne, who led us all, through all our 3 decades, has stepped aside, (to get a life!), and earned great accolades.

Her wisdom showed when she did choose Veronica to take, The job from her, and grow with it – we know she’ll be just fine.

We’re thankful for our 30 years, we celebrate and smile. And hope that we will still be here for quite a long, long while.

The house is getting all fixed up and soon will be complete.

To those with cancer and their families, a calmness we did bring.

Ours is a name that we changed and bought a house, and HopeWell came to be.

And hope that we will still be here for quite a long, long while.

“...I think the great gift I’ve received is recognizing a deep well of compassion and the presence of hope. As the service is free, you tend to invite more people from the community of all backgrounds to come.”

“The doors of HopeWell Cancer Support, then known as The Wellness Community – Baltimore, officially opened on April 26, 1993. We have come a long way since then by adding programs, growing participation, moving to a wonderfully restored farmhouse, and carrying on during the pandemic. As we celebrate our 30th anniversary year, we are moving forward by opening up our home again, refreshing the rooms, and offering hybrid programs so that all can participate in person or from home. An event is planned each month of this special year to engage the community, thank our donors and volunteers, bring participants together, and honor this special place that supports so many. Already, we have had a community shredding event, a night at Camden Yards, and a One Mile Walk/Run fundraiser. We hope that you will join in the celebration by attending one of the future events, such as the Sip & Shop night at Laissez Faire & Company, dinner at Gertrude’s, Trivia Night, or HopeFest (see back page for events and dates).

Over the years, many participants have shared the importance of HopeWell during their cancer journey. In their own words:

“I found this to be a unique organization because it provided me with a place to go for information. The staff was knowledgeable and very helpful. I have had the opportunity to be a part of many events at HopeWell and have enjoyed the camaraderie with others.”

“HopeWell’s staff is truly dedicated and helpful. They were always there for me and my family whenever we needed support.”

“Thank you for your help and support. I am so grateful for the team at HopeWell.”

“Thank you very much for giving me support and hope. I feel that I am not alone in my battle.”

“We have many more events and activities to come – please see the back panel for upcoming events.”

“HopeWell turned 30 on April 26, 2023, and is celebrating its 30th Anniversary with a year of events and activities.

We started the celebration in June with a Kick-Off Event, attended by staff, board, major donors, funders, and selected officials. This was our first major in-person event since 2021.

To increase our outreach in the community, we have held a successful Community Shielding Event fundraiser in July, complete with food trucks and snowball truck. While the Baltimore Orioles are hot, hot, hot, we received a donation block of 100 tickets and had a HopeWell Family Night at the O’s.

“HopeWell’s 30th Anniversary celebrations continue through April 21, 2024. Please mark your calendars for these upcoming events and look for additional details to come prior to each event.

DECEMBER 4 Sip & Shop Fundraiser at Laissez Faire & Company in Cockeysville. Shop between 4:00-8:00 p.m. on this date and HopeWell will receive 15% of all purchases. There will still be time to make last-minute Hanukkah purchases and plenty of time to do your Christmas shopping.

JANUARY 18 HopeWell Fundraiser Dinner at Serotonin’s Chesapeake Kitchen at the Baltimore Museum of Art in Baltimore. Dine at Gertrude’s between 5:00-9:00 p.m. on January 18th and HopeWell will receive a percentage of your entire dining purchase. Reservations are strongly encouraged as this event will sell out. Call 410-889-3399 to reserve your table.

FEBRUARY Look for our announcement of a short documentary film to commemorate 30 years of HopeWell. We will be showing this film at several events around the country.

MARCH Trivia Night at the Barn and Via Zoom. A date will be announced later this fall for a fun Trivia Night. You can participate via Zoom or come to the HopeWell Barn and play in person. Create a team with friends/family/ co-workers and have a fun night.

APRIL 20-21 HopeFest
SATURDAY, APRIL 20 Concert for Hope at Harley’s Backyard Uptown in Towson. 7:00-11:00 p.m. Performance by BEATLEMANIA AGAIN
SUNDAY, APRIL 21 Family Festival at HopeWell (Details to come)