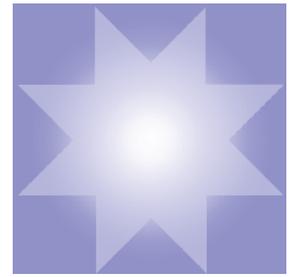


Lifeliink

Cancer prevention, early detection, treatment and support



Winter 2016

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Queen of the Road

Sharing her breast cancer journey helps Sandi Hall stay in the driver's seat.



Most Saturdays from April to November, Maryville resident Sandi Hall and her husband Eddie ride in charity events hosted by Blount County motorcycle and riding clubs. So, when Sandi was diagnosed with breast cancer in March at age 43, members of the local riding community were among the first to know.

"I am around at least 100 people I know every weekend, so I told everyone," says Sandi, 44, who rides a three-wheel Can-Am



Sandi Hall

Spyder motorcycle with the Goodfellas RC (Riding Club). "Everybody said that cancer picked the wrong person because of my attitude. I'm not going to back down. I'm not going to let this deter me because I've got kids. And, while I do not want to be a grandmother right now, I might want to be one later. Yes, I'm going to lose my hair, but maybe it will come back fire-engine red to match my personality."

Hall readily admitted to her friends that she hadn't "been the best person about" performing monthly breast self-exams or having an annual mammogram. In fact, a letter reminding Hall to get a follow-up mammogram at age 40 (a 2007 mammogram showed a distortion but no cancer) sat on her dresser "for years," she says.

"I never found anything and never felt anything, but my doctors kept telling me to get a mammogram," Hall adds. "This time around, everything was the same on the mammogram, but the biopsy came back

Queen of the Road, cont. on page 2

Comprehensive
Cancer Care.
Close to home.



Blount Memorial
Cancer Center

www.blountmemorial.org

Accredited by the
American College of
Surgeons' Commission
on Cancer Care

Could surgical weight loss reduce your cancer risk?

Learn how achieving a healthy weight can help prevent cancer.

Obesity is a serious risk factor for cancer. According to the National Cancer Institute, people with an abnormally high and unhealthy proportion of body fat have an increased risk, in particular, for esophageal, pancreatic, colon and rectal, breast (post-menopause), endometrial, kidney, thyroid and gallbladder cancer.

Losing significant weight — and keeping it off —

Surgical Weight Loss, cont. on page 3



Bariatric and general surgeon
Dr. James Ray

Queen of the Road, cont. from page 1

and it was positive. Going into the biopsy, I had no reason to believe it was cancer because I have no family history of breast cancer.”

Not only did Hall have breast cancer, it was aggressive. To achieve the best-possible outcomes, Hall’s cancer care team — including Blount Memorial board-certified general surgeon Dr. Julie Ann Corcoran and Blount Memorial board-certified medical

oncologist Dr. Eric Schrock — created an aggressive treatment plan. The first step was a double mastectomy and removal of 17 lymph nodes in April. Next, Hall started her first round of chemotherapy in June. Her second round of chemotherapy ended just before Thanksgiving. After that, Hall says, she began the first of 33 radiation treatments. If all goes according to plan, she will be done with the chemotherapy treatments by September 2017.

“I guess then they check to see if it [the treatment] is working or if the cancer has spread,” says Hall, whose future plans include breast reconstruction surgery at Blount Memorial.

She also plans on continuing to tell her breast cancer story in hopes that other women will get screened. Recently, Hall received a text from a fellow rider who had considered canceling her mammogram appointment, but went through

BY THE NUMBERS:

Screening Recaps

144 = the number of men who took advantage of the free September prostate cancer screenings offered at East Tennessee Medical Group in Alcoa. Of the 144 men tested, 19 were found to have elevated PSA (prostate-specific antigen) levels.

19 = the number of women who participated in October’s Mammograms in the Moonlight after-hours event at the Blount Memorial Breast Health Center. Of the 19 women who had screening mammograms, three were referred for follow-up testing.

with it after thinking about Hall.

“The woman told me, ‘I don’t think you really understand the inspiration you are to all of us. Because of what you have gone through and the way you are talking about it, I went for my mammogram and everything came back fine,’” adds Hall. “To me, that is the reason I got cancer, because I am very vocal. I don’t care if you have insurance or you don’t have insurance. I don’t care if you have family history or not. I don’t care if you are male or female. You need to get checked.” ♦

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Breast Cancer

By performing monthly breast self exams, women are more likely to notice any changes in their breasts. Tell your health care provider if you experience any of these symptoms:

- a change in how the breast or nipple feels
- a lump or thickening in or near the breast or in the underarm area
- nipple tenderness
- a change in how the breast or nipple looks
- a change in the size or shape of the breast
- a nipple turned inward into the breast
- scaly, red or swollen skin on the breast, areola or nipple that may have ridges or pitting so that it looks like the skin of an orange
- fluid discharge from the nipple

Source: National Institutes of Health

SURVIVOR SERVICES:

Pelvic Floor Dysfunction Physical Therapy

Some cancers and cancer treatments in or near the pelvic area — such as prostate, bladder and urethra, cervical and uterine — can damage, change or put stress on the muscles and nerves that control urination. In addition, pain medicines (which can slow the muscular action of the bowels), chemotherapy, scar tissue, iron supplements, low potassium levels and being physically inactive can cause chronic constipation in cancer survivors and those undergoing treatment.

Losing urine involuntarily or not

being able to empty the bowels makes it difficult to fully engage in life after cancer. In addition to health concerns — such as skin irritation and breakdown with incontinence and pain, cramping and nausea with constipation—symptoms can cause embarrassment, social isolation and depression.

If you’re experiencing pelvic health issues related to a cancer diagnosis or treatment, help is available through Blount Memorial Total Rehabilitation.

Pelvic Floor Dysfunction, cont. on page 3

Certified pelvic rehabilitation practitioner Candace Jarrett



Pelvic Floor Dysfunction,

cont. from page 2

Blount Memorial physical therapist and certified pelvic rehabilitation practitioner Candace Jarrett is specially trained in an innovative and non-invasive approach called Pelvic Floor Dysfunction, or PFD, physical therapy.

PFD can help people learn to manage incontinence and constipation without surgery or medication. Rehabilitation plans are customized to fit each patient's comfort level, pace, needs and goals. A plan could include education and behavior modification, manual therapy, biofeedback, and exercises for strengthening and flexibility. ♦

Learn More: Total Rehabilitation is a Direct Access provider, meaning that patients can self-refer for physical therapy (if permitted by their insurance provider). For more information about PFD physical therapy or to schedule an appointment with Jarrett, call Blount Memorial Total Rehabilitation at 865-238-6118 or toll-free at 844-355-3001.

Surgical Weight Loss, cont. from page 1

helps improve overall health and reduce cancer risk. For people who have tried, yet failed multiple times to achieve a healthy weight, bariatric surgery at Blount Memorial can be a safe, effective option for both weight loss and cancer prevention. Blount Memorial board-certified bariatric and general surgeon Dr. James Ray specializes in both minimally invasive gastric banding (formally known as Laparoscopic Adjustable Gastric Banding, or Lap-Band®) and gastric sleeve procedures. Both approaches reduce the stomach's capacity, helping people feel full faster and stay fuller longer. As a result, patients are more likely to maintain a healthy weight for a lifetime.

If you have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of at least 40 or a BMI of at least 35 plus one or more obe-

sity-related medical conditions (such as adult-onset diabetes, gastric reflux, infertility, joint pain caused by arthritis and sleep

▼
For people who have tried, yet failed multiple times to achieve a healthy weight, bariatric surgery at Blount Memorial can be a safe, effective option for both weight loss and cancer prevention.

apnea), you could be a candidate for bariatric surgery at Blount Memorial.

For more information or to register for a free, no-obligation bariatric surgery seminar, call 865-977-4673 or toll-free at 866-300-8644. ♦

Leading the Way

Expanded nurse navigator program helps lung cancer patients and their families.

Being a cancer patient is hard work. In addition to dealing with symptoms and side effects, you have to keep track of multiple appointments for office visits, scans, laboratory tests and procedures. Balancing everything can be overwhelming, which is why the Blount Memorial Chest Center offers the services of a nurse navigator. In her role with the program, Blount Memorial Chest Center nurse navigator and registered nurse Cheryl Campbell helps people newly diagnosed with lung cancer (and their families and caregivers) access medical care, emotional support and other resources.

“When a patient is diagnosed with lung cancer — or sometimes before if a diagnostic test is highly suspicious



Chest Center nurse navigator Cheryl Campbell

What's the Chest Center?

Blount Memorial's Chest Center is an innovative, three-step approach designed to improve outcomes for people with lung nodules or other lung diseases.

Step one: Blount Memorial physicians screen patients at high risk for lung cancer using low-dose computed tomography (CT) scanning, a diagnostic tool now covered by Medicare and most private insurance.

Step two: A new incidental nodule program (launched in October) uses state-of-the-art software to identify abnormal lung results seen on any chest CT scan performed at Blount Memorial. When an abnormal finding (such as a nodule) is identified, the patient will be notified within a few days of their scan.

Step three: Any patients with a newly identified lung nodule or other lung disease are seen quickly and can access the services of the nurse navigator. This rapid-access approach is designed to catch lung cancers early — before they develop or when they are more treatable — and make the diagnostic and treatment process as efficient, seamless and effective as possible.

Leading the Way, cont. on page 4

Leading the Way, cont. from page 3 of cancer — I become involved with his or her care,” says Campbell. “I try to meet patients in person and make them aware of the services available through Blount Memorial. But, most of all, I try to be there for support, and to steer them through that initial time of diagnosis, staging and treatment.”

Campbell acts as a cancer treatment project manager of sorts, communicating with all of the specialists (such as pulmonologists, radiation and medical oncologists, thoracic surgeons and primary care physicians) involved in a patient’s care. Having one person coordinate appointments and results helps

ensure that information is shared accurately and quickly.

Adds Campbell, “I follow patients from diagnosis through treatment, and on to survivorship planning. I would hope patients would always call me with any questions that relate to their illness, even after completing all treatment.” ♦

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Don Johnson

Don Johnson is living proof that it’s never too late to start volunteering. The Michigan native who retired to Blount County was 78 years young when, in 2002, he joined his wife Mary Lou as a Blount Memorial Hospice volunteer.

The couple volunteered together for several years before Mary Lou died in 2007. “It got to a point that it was a little bit difficult for my wife to volunteer because of her declining health, but we tried to do it as much as we could,” says Johnson, age 92. “After she passed away, there was a period of time when I wasn’t doing anything. I knew I wanted to be doing something, and volunteering at Blount Memorial sounded good because they took such good care of Mary Lou.”

Johnson, who was willing to work anywhere in the hospital as a volunteer, was assigned to the information desk at the Cancer Center. For several years he volunteered Tues-



day and Thursday afternoons. Since Johnson drives himself to the hospital and now lives in Knox County, he’s recently reduced his volunteering time to one day a week, Tuesdays from noon to 4 p.m.

Johnson explains, “When I started volunteering at Blount Memorial, I was living in Maryville, which made it easier to get there. Our oldest daughter, who lives in West Knoxville and who lost her husband, finally convinced me to come live with her. After

I sold the house in Maryville, driving from Knox County out to the hospital two days a week was too much.”

In his role as an information desk volunteer, Johnson greets and directs patients and family members. His primary motivation for volunteering, he says, is “being able to give of myself to others.”

“The more you give of yourself, the more you get back,” adds Johnson, who says he particularly enjoys the “cheerful and cooperative” spirit of the Cancer Center. “All of the personnel at the Cancer Center are wonderful, and the patients, after they get to know you and everything, smile and greet you. It’s a very nice atmosphere to be in.”

And, to everyone who thinks they are too old to be first-time volunteers, Johnson has one message: “Give volunteering a try because the longer you sit still, the faster you’re going to go.” ♦

Want to volunteer?

Volunteering at the Cancer Center or in any Blount Memorial department or facility can be a powerfully rewarding experience. Caring and reliable adults and students (age 14-17) are encouraged to apply to become Auxiliary volunteers. Adults typically work one four-hour shift per week, however there are no minimum or maximum time requirements. Teen volunteers serve in various hospital departments during school vacation periods.

For more information or to request an application, visit the Volunteer Services department, located on the hospital’s service level (S), Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. or call the Volunteer Services department at 865-977-5609. Or, download and print an application at www.blountmemorial.org, and bring it to the Volunteer Services department.

SAVE THE DATES

Blount Memorial Cancer Center Programs and Events

Make plans to participate in upcoming education, prevention, screening and survivorship events offered by Blount Memorial.

Adult Grief Support Group

**Blount Memorial Home Services and Hospice building
1095 E. Lamar Alexander Parkway,
Maryville**

This support group is a free, four-to-six-week series offering education, support and encouragement to any grieving adult age 18 and older. For more information or to register, call 865-977-5702.

Blount County Prostate Cancer Support Group

**Third Monday of each month
6:30 p.m.**

**Blount Memorial Cancer Center
conference rooms 1 and 2, second
floor**

Men who have been diagnosed with prostate cancer (and their family and caregivers) are welcome to attend, no matter where they live or where they are receiving treatment. Sessions include an informative prostate-related presentation by a Blount Memorial Hospital physician or staff member. For more information, call 865-977-5534, Pat Smith at 937-369-7641 or Gene Thompson at 865-984-4903.

Breast Cancer Support Group

**Third Monday of each month
noon - 1:30 p.m.**

**Blount Memorial Cancer Center
conference rooms 1 and 2, second
floor**

This monthly support group is open to all breast cancer survivors, regardless of where they received treatment. For more information, call 865-977-5534.

Grief Support Education and Fellowship

**First Monday of each month
6-7:30 p.m.**

Blount Memorial Home Services and Hospice building, 1095 E. Lamar Alexander Parkway in Maryville

This group is led by chaplain Jerry Scott

and focuses on fellowship and education. Light refreshments are provided. For more information or to register, call 865-977-5775.

Head and Neck Resource Support Group

**First Thursday of each month
2-3:30 p.m.**

**Blount Memorial Cancer Center
conference room 2, second floor**

This support group is dedicated to raising awareness and meeting the needs of head and neck cancer patients and family members. For more information, call 865-977-4729.

LifeStories

**Second Monday of each month
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

**Blount Memorial Cancer Center
conference room 2, second floor**

Preserve your memories by scrapbooking in this monthly art program. This support group is for cancer patients, survivors and their families. All supplies are furnished. Participants should bring the photos they wish to use. For more information or to register, call 865-977-5534.

Look Good, Feel Better

**First Monday of each month
10 a.m. - noon**

**Blount Memorial Cancer Center
conference room 1, second floor**

This national program is dedicated to teaching women who are cancer patients the techniques to help restore their appearance and self-image. You are invited to attend any one session free of charge, providing you are currently receiving either chemotherapy or radiation therapy at any hospital. A light lunch is provided. To register, call the Blount Memorial Cancer Center at 865-977-5534.

Lymphedema Support Group

**Meets quarterly
noon - 1:30 p.m.**

**Blount Memorial Cancer Center
conference room 1, second floor**

This support group for lymphedema patients focuses on home therapy and management techniques. A light lunch is provided. For more information or to register, call 865-980-5089.

Managing Your Cancer

**Second and fourth Tuesday of
each month**

1-4 p.m.

**Blount Memorial Cancer Center,
classroom 2**

This free class is available to anyone newly diagnosed with cancer or currently undergoing cancer treatment and their families and caregivers. Classes are tailored to fit each patient's type of cancer and plan of care. Topics may include managing side effects, emotional health issues, pain management and nutrition. For more information or to register (required), call 865-273-4004 or 865-980-4819.

Caregiver Consultations

Caregivers can discuss their situations and explore possible strategies and resources at a free one-on-one consultation with a Senior Services representative. For more information, call 865-977-5744.

Caregiver Coffee and Conversation

**First and third Tuesday of each month
10-11 a.m.**

**Vienna Coffee House,
212 College Street, Maryville**

This is a free opportunity for caregivers of other adults to gather at an informal setting to discuss the experiences of caregiving and the availability of resources. Edward Harper, Senior Services coordinator and licensed clinical

Programs and Events, cont. on page 6

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Programs and Events,

cont. from page 5

social worker, and Beverly Sherrod, Senior Services assistant moderate the program. This program is a collaboration between Blount Memorial Senior Services and Vienna Coffee Company. For more information, call 865-977-5744.

Caregiver Support Group

Every Wednesday

6-7 p.m.

Blount Memorial Hospital,
3-east classroom

For more information, call
865-977-5744.

LifeLink is a free newsletter published quarterly by the Blount Memorial Cancer Center. If you would like to receive future issues of *LifeLink*, call the Blount Memorial Foundation and Community Outreach at 865-977-5727 or e-mail foundation@bmnet.com.

New Breast Surgeon Joins Cancer Care Team

In September, Blount Memorial Hospital welcomed board-certified and fellowship-trained surgical breast oncologist **Dr. Randal Croshaw** to its active medical staff, and he began seeing patients in his office, located on the second floor of the Blount Memorial Cancer Center.



Croshaw specializes in diagnosing and treating breast cancer, breast pain, hereditary breast cancer, mastitis/infections and benign breast disease. He also offers genetic testing and counseling for many genes, including the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes, the two most commonly associated with breast and ovarian cancer. “The average woman’s risk of developing breast cancer is about 10 percent in her lifetime. If she carries a defective BRCA1 gene, however, then her chance of developing breast cancer may be as high as 80 percent,” Croshaw says.

To find out if you are a candidate for genetic testing to assess breast cancer risk or to schedule an appointment, call East Tennessee Medical Group – Breast Surgery at 865-980-5277.