



**CANCER SUPPORT
COMMUNITY**
VALLEY/VENTURA/SANTA BARBARA
Formerly The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura

News



Fall/Winter 2013

22 years of providing free cancer support, education and hope

Cancer Support Community
Valley/Ventura/Santa Barbara

530 Hampshire Road
Westlake Village, CA 91361
805.379.4777

www.CancerSupportVvsb.org
info@CancerSupportVvsb.org

CSCVSB ensures that all people impacted by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action, and sustained by community.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Suzanne Drace, MBA

Hope has an important presence here at Cancer Support Community Valley/Ventura/Santa Barbara (CSCVSB). Every visitor can hear people talk about finding hope, restoring hope, and opening the doors to hope. But, what is hope? How powerful is it?

And, above all, how does one acquire, maintain, and give hope?

Hope is generally thought of as an expectation that a wish or desire will be fulfilled. When cancer is involved, hope is first about a successful treatment regimen and regaining one's health.

When talking with the staff, cancer survivors, and caregivers at CSCVSB, however, it quickly becomes apparent that hope is so much more. It is also a wish for vitality, for a better life, for quality time with loved ones, for an extended life, for not being a burden. It can also be the wish for a peaceful death. Thanks to all of you, there are many unique stories of hope here at CSCVSB.



Since 1991, we have worked hard to ensure that the Cancer Support Community's programs and services are available free of charge to those affected by cancer. This year over 3,000 adults, children, and teens will benefit from the dedication, commitment, and generosity of our supporters.

We thank our supporters for giving the gift of hope. We thank our members for inspiring us with their courage.

We encourage each of you to be inspired....Give the gift of hope.

A COMMUNITY OF HOPE AT CSCVSB: Lynn Buchanan, Participant

"An important stage in recovery is giving back. I am glad to continue being an energetic volunteer at CSCVSB. It is very important to me that all cancer patients in my community have access to their valuable resources."

When given the news that you have cancer, it feels like your world is spinning. Something deadly has taken control of the steering wheel of your life. In crisis, you need a source of strength to help you rise above the fear. A significant source of strength is HOPE.

I found HOPE...in three important ways. My first source of strength is my amazing family and friends who provide moral support. Another source of strength comes from the excellent medical resources in our county.

Yet, even with support from friends and family, and excellent medical care, my fluctuating emotions were a huge distraction. My ability to make decisions for my health and well-being was impacted.



Soon after surgery, I joined the Breast Cancer Support Group at CSCVSB. I am among a wonderful group of women who are creating meaning from their journey. We listen to each other, we laugh... and we feel almost normal again. They truly understand what's happening to me, and that means a lot.

On my first visit to CSCVSB, I received a booklet that made a real difference in my relationship with my caregivers. It gave me insight into the fear and emotional turmoil they were going through.

CSCVSB offers a whole-person approach to emotional recovery. My hands are back on the steering wheel of my life. Imagine all this support was given to me at no charge! Those who contribute time and dollars are instrumental in helping cancer patients like me regain control of their lives.

Thank You to Our Program Sponsors!

Amgen, Inc.

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The Fanny and Svante Knistrom Foundation

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Hugh E. & Marjorie S. Petersen Foundation

Kaiser Permanente

St. John's Pleasant Valley Hospital

St. John's Regional Medical Center

UCLA Foundation

Wells Fargo Foundation

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES!



Open to Options is a program to help prepare for an upcoming scheduled doctor's visit at which treatment options will be discussed.



A PROGRAM of the CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY

Cancer Support Source™ is an innovative online tool to help you identify your specific personal needs unique to your cancer journey.

22 Years of Providing Hope

GROUP SUPPORT. STRESS MANAGEMENT. EDUCATION. INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING. SOCIAL EVENTS.

Welcome Jody Tompkins, MA, LMFT to the CSCVVSb Team

We are excited to introduce Jody Tompkins, MA, LMFT, our new VP of Programs at CSCVVSb. Jody has more than 20 years of experience as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. Her specialties include Family Systems, Anger Management, Anxiety and Depression, Couples Therapy, Grief Work, Art and Play Therapy for Children. Jody received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from California State University, Northridge, and a Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

A Message from VP of Programs Jody Tompkins, MA, LMFT

Joining the team at CSCVVSb has been such an exciting experience. Through the whirlwind of meeting new people and learning the ins and outs of this incredible organization, one thing that has continued to impress me has been the steadfast commitment of our administrative and clinical staff, board members, and volunteers to **ensure that no one faces cancer alone**.

By drawing from the resources and expertise at CSCVVSb and the community at large, we have put together a slate of programs for the fall that addresses the many different needs of people affected by cancer. The following are just some of the new opportunities we're excited to offer.

We continue to expand our program of emotional support and resources for those affected by cancer and their loved ones. Education and information are fundamental to the activities at CSCVVSb. This fall we are offering three Frankly Speaking About Cancer workshops. Frankly Speaking About Cancer is our landmark cancer education series, providing sound medical and psychological information to help inform and provide coping skills.

As always, we offer our entire program and all services at no charge, thanks to the generous support of our healthcare partners and donors. To learn more about our expanded services, educational workshops and other activities, please call (805) 379-4777 or visit www.cancersupportvvsb.org/programs/calendar.



"Dear Cancer, It's Me..."

In January 2013, we announced our inaugural high school essay contest, "Dear Cancer, It's Me..." We reached out to 100 high schools from Van Nuys through Santa Barbara. Seventy four students from twenty eight high schools responded!

The writings were extraordinary. A five month project evolved into an invaluable learning experience for many. Communication opened up within families. Students learned the therapeutic value in writing. CSCVVSb staff and facilitators saw the need for expanded teen programs. And perhaps the most important lesson learned...

So that no one faces cancer alone®... there is an entire community to support you.

Our 2nd Annual "Dear Cancer, It's Me..." contest kicks off later this fall. This year, photography categories have been added to the competition! For complete contest details, please visit www.cancersupportvvsb.org



22 Years of Giving Hope

The special appeal and live auction at this year's Evening of Hope Gala held on May 3, 2013 **raised over \$80,000!** We thank you for making a difference in the lives of those affected by cancer and their families when they need you the most. For people with this devastating illness and their families, the ability to access CSCVVS's services and programs free of charge is priceless. **Thank YOU!**

This year, a very special young lady spoke at our Evening of Hope Gala. Skhye Adolph, a participant in our Kid's Circle program, spoke about her experience with cancer and how CSCVVS helped her and her family through a tough time.

When Skhye learned of her mother's breast cancer diagnosis in April 2012, she was scared, sad and confused. She would talk to her friends at school, but they hadn't been through the same experience, so they didn't understand.

Skhye says, "One day my mom came home and asked me if I would like to go to a Kids Circle where I could listen and talk to other kids that were going through the same thing. I was excited to try it. The first day I was there, all of the kids and Joyce welcomed me. We shared our stories about what we were going through with our families and how we all felt. Everybody was very nice. From that day on I looked forward to going to this class. It helped me understand what cancer was by doing different activities. Joyce was helpful with allowing us all to express our feelings through activities and talking to each other."

"I love what Kids Circle has given to me and my family. Anytime that I have to miss a class, I get very sad. I am thankful that the Cancer Support Community offers so much support to the families that need it. It has been a true blessing that a community can provide this much love and support through the tough times. If any families need any kind of support this is the place to be. So many things are offered here for everybody. Most of all we share a lot of love. I absolutely love the Kids Circle!!!"



For Skhye's entire speech, please visit our blog at www.cancersupportvvsb.wordpress.com and click on "Skhye's Story."

*"I most enjoy that I am able to talk about anything with this group. It has been a great experience for me and if I could I would go to this group for the rest of my life."
~Skhye Adolph*

Save These Dates!

For more information, including sponsorship opportunities, please call Suzanne Drace, President at 805.371.0417.

WESTLAKE VILLAGE JUNIOR WOMEN'S CLUB GINGERBREAD BOUTIQUE: November 14th & 15th

GINGERBREAD EVENT AT THE OAKS: November 17th

HOLIDAY HOMES TOUR AND BOUTIQUE: December 7th & 8th

HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY & PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST: Kicks off in the fall, with Awards Luncheon on March 14, 2014

LET'S BAKE A DIFFERENCE (formerly Cupcakes for Cancer): March 9, 2014



Give the Gift of a Lifetime

A simple, heartfelt letter from his father motivated David Wank to become a supporter of the Cancer Support Community Valley/Ventura/Santa Barbara. David's father, Melvin, attended a CSCVVS support group after being diagnosed with bladder cancer in 1998. Two years after diagnosis, Melvin wrote a note of appreciation to his support group.



Unfortunately, he was not able to send it. David found the letter after his father's passing.

After thanking his support group facilitators for their love and support, Melvin wrote, "The most important things are love of family, friends, positive attitude, doctors, medicine, and The Wellness Community [former name of CSCVVS]." He ended his note by saying, "Tell my fellow cancer patients to never give up."

"For my father to thank the Cancer Support Community for its love and support showed me how important CSCVVS is in helping others," says David. "I wanted to help those who had helped my father during the toughest battle of his life."

In 2003, David was elected to the Board of Directors of CSCVVS. David, his wife Tami, and their three children opened their home to the public for the Holiday Homes Tour, two years later. "It was one of the most gratifying experiences and fulfilling in so many ways," says Tami.

The Wank family has taken their support even further by designating a percentage of their estate to CSCVVS as a planned gift. As Legacy Society donors, the family will help ensure that future generations will receive the loving support that helped David's father... and so many others on their cancer journey.

To learn more about how to give the gift of a lifetime, please call: Suzanne Drace, President, CSCVVS at 805.371.0417.



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Return Service Requested

In 2012, we provided
service to over 2,950
individuals, representing
more than 24,500 hours
of service!

To learn more
about our program:

please call (805) 379-4777
or visit
www.cancersupportvvsb.org

All services are
provided
FREE of charge.



Open the door to Hope this
holiday season!

Saturday, Dec. 7th, 10am - 5pm

Sunday, Dec. 8th, 10am - 5pm

Holiday Boutique Hours: 9am – 4pm

Tickets are on sale now!

For more information or to purchase
tickets, please visit our website at
www.CancerSupportVvsb.org
or call 805.379.4777

