



Spring 2017

Getting to know us

OUR 17th YEAR SERVING HALTON HILLS!

The apple is our wish for good health and hope



222 Mountainview Road North Georgetown, ON L7G 3R2 Tel: 905-702-8886 - Fax: 905-702-1822

A LIMITED EDITION FRIEND



WAYNE AMIRAULT

The only time a person can be brave is when he is afraid. Subtle changes in his mouth was concerning to Wayne. At first he was experiencing pain in his mouth while eating spicy foods. His dentist dis-

missed it as probably from biting his tongue. The same result was received after getting a second opinion from a head, neck & throat specialist in Georgetown. Since 8 years earlier, Wayne had seen a head, neck & throat specialist at Princess Margaret he called them hoping that they had not closed his file for a third opinion. Lucky for him he got through with a hurried appointment, a biopsy and cat scan. Results were promised in one week.

His persistence in feeling something was not right paid off although it wasn't news he wanted to hear. He was told by the doctor the results were in and he had some bad news and some good bad news. The bad news was that he had cancer. He remembers vividly that sinking

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HAPPINESS THROUGH THE EYES OF TRAGEDY



WENDY MOLNAR

When someone you meet says they went through cancer, you never truly understand their personal journey and what they went through. Every cancer is different; each person undergoes a different experience. For some, treatment is minor, while for others, it is much more intense, both physically and emotionally.

I have learned there are a few people out there who rise above their troubles and accomplish incredible feats. Wendy is a person who doesn't look back but celebrates many blessings of her life.

The day one realizes they have cancer is a day that can never be forgotten. On Mothers Day 2014, Wendy remembers rolling over in bed thinking she laid on a piece of Lego or a toy car. She then realized it was something on the inside. With cancer being so prevalent in her family she took no chances, nor did her family physician. The surgeon soon revealed the results of the biopsy as Stage 4 HER2 Positive. With this highly aggressive cancer, she wanted both breasts surgically removed. The doctor felt the surgery would

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www.cancerassistance.org
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A DEAD END STREET IS JUST A PLACE TO TURN AROUND!

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WAYNE & JOHN DIXON

feeling of being told. He could only think that cancer is a killer and scary. It was little consolation that the Dr. said it was good news with a 95% cure if treated immediately. On the drive home, Cathy, his girlfriend reminded him again of that high rate of hope. His anxiety heightened to know how to tell his daughters. How

did this happen? He never smoked, did not drink in excess, did not chew tobacco or smoke a pipe. Why did this happen to him. Although this was terrifying news, Wayne knew we are not meant to stay wounded. He was going home to research that type and his plan to fight.

A week after that consultation Wayne had surgery. After a couple of months of healing, he was ready to start the 35 radiation and 3 chemo treatments. The first few weeks of treatment were quite tolerable, however; a month later he experienced mouth sores, blisters, difficulty swallowing which made even soft pureed foods challenging. Chemo gave him severe heartburn and stomach reflux. The decision to put in a feeding tube for 4 months made it easier than dealing with the effects of eating. He was grateful for his special angels. His one daughter was recovering from a knee reconstruction so she was able to visit with him during the day to keep each other company. His other daughter was able to move in to tend to the house while he was in treatment. Recovering together with the eldest daughter was helpful. His "true little angel Cathy" did errands for him. Cooking pureed foods, picking up prescriptions and checking in on the house bound patient was a huge help and encouragement. He would use a white board to communicate. Although his parents and siblings lived out of town he appreciated their support, visits, texts and calls, when he could speak. Calls

from his colleagues at work were welcoming. Staying connected for the 6 ½ months of recovery meant a lot; although it was a waste to receive baskets of goodies that he couldn't eat. Iroically, despite not being able to eat or swallow, watching all the TV shows on the food network filled his days. When telling the Doctor what he did to pass the time, the Doctor, in jest, called it "porn" to someone who was on a feeding tube. Wayne called it "non-active motivation." He found it strange that his sense of smell was not compromised during his treatment time.

Although temporary, this busy electronics technician had to adjust from a busy life to being quiet and inactive. Wayne's two passions are golf and hockey. He knew he would have to give up hockey and not take the chance of getting injured but nothing was going to hinder playing golf. Today that magnetic smile and laughter tells me he is feeling healthy again. He still gets the tingling on his tongue and histaste buds are hit and miss. He was happy to get an invitation to a golf tournament in Acton. Little did he know that when he stepped into that golf cart that day he would meet someone that would be so important in his life. John Dixon was that person. He had the same cancer, same surgery, same treatment and same oncologist two years previously. Wayne believes you do not meet by accident but somehow you are meant to cross paths. He was anxious to make space in his life with this new friend. They exchanged cancer talk for 16 holes and have been buddies ever since. They are still enjoying golf together and John has been a huge encouragement to Wayne's road to wellness. Seventy rounds of golf were played last season.

Wayne was grateful for the CASHh drivers. He appreciated that they can tell your mood and respected the fact that he couldn't talk. They understood. He would recline and rest on his trips to Princess Margaret Hospital. His checkups, appetite and energy level are good. He now enjoys walking not riding for his games of golf.

Wayne appreciates that his unexpected friend, John was a blessing. It is startling to think that living in a universe of 8 planets and about 196 countries, you would find hope and encouragement when you least expect it on a golf course, in your very own town from a stranger in your golf cart with similar circumstances. Happy is the heart that believes in angels.

Sheila

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO FLY, LET GO OF THE THINGS THAT WEIGH YOU DOWN!

(Wendy continued from page 1)

only add more stress on the body so only one was removed. She needed the strength to fight, and she did that with the mindset to “load the cannons and hit me with your best shot because I am going to win!”

During surgery, 20 lymph nodes were removed, 12 being cancerous. Following recovery, six sessions of chemo began with nasty side effects. Of course, as Murphy’s Law would have it, her first treatment was brutal and that was the day she had to meet her husband’s new boss for the first time. A port inserted in her chest made the next few treatments three hours instead of four. The drugs on the fourth session were so strong, she overdosed and was hospitalized.

Her days in chemo brought exhaustion, fever, hair and nail loss and a severely itchy rash that still irritates years later. Five weeks of radiation followed the chemo sessions. Besides dealing with total exhaustion and intense skin blistering from the radiation, she developed a severe case of shingles. When the shingles lessened, she had to begin a year of Herceptin treatments every three weeks. The comfortable chemo chair was one chair she wanted out of, but this treatment helped to keep her in remission. She is now on a five-year plan with a daily Tamoxifen pill that brings on more nasty side affects.

Wendy expresses deep appreciation for an amazing husband, two sons and extended family and friends. Her husband pampered her by doing everything possible to keep her comfortable. The mutual bond with the CASHh drivers and office staff made her treatment appointments fun and exciting. She is quick to say, “CASHh is a true treasure,” and has appreciated her friends and family raising money in her honour. Her sons nominated her for “Best Mom.” On that first day home from the surgeon’s office, Wendy told her husband that her cancer was going to help others. Her positive out-look and happy character made laughing therapeutic. Both of her children handled her diagnosis differently. The youngest nicknamed her the ‘unibooper,’ which she loved. Her oldest is a little more reserved, but no less

concerned. He would not talk openly about her cancer; her looking great was sufficient comfort for him. When a UPS delivery came, Wendy was touched to see he had ordered new graphics for his motocross bike with the breast cancer ribbon and words “racing for Mom” all in pink. His actions really did speak louder than words.

I have always appreciated the remarkable attitude and bravery of people with cancer. One thing that was important to share with you is how amazing Wendy has lived her life as a naturally witty person despite a horrific past. Raised in a family with ten children, she experienced unimaginable tragedy. Her toddler brother Sam died from asthma. Her 23 year old brother Terry committed suicide. Her father Douglas was killed by a drunk driver. Her sister Pennie, 31, went missing and her husband was later charged with her murder. Her body has never been found. When another brother Doug, was diagnosed with lung cancer and given two weeks to live, he told Wendy he had a job to do on the other side; to bring their sister to a peaceful place. He died on Pennie’s birthday, in Wendy’s arms. Wendy’s Mom, Eva, had several strokes and eventually died of kidney cancer. Her last living brother, Larry, died within two weeks of being diagnosed with bladder cancer, she was at his side. Six months later, Wendy was diagnosed.

Wendy was always there to support a close friend who lost her battle with cancer but never missed making each day count with a smile and a laugh. Later on one particular chemo day, she noticed a lady sitting next to her looking very sad. She told her husband she was going to be her friend and

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WHAT DO WE NEED?

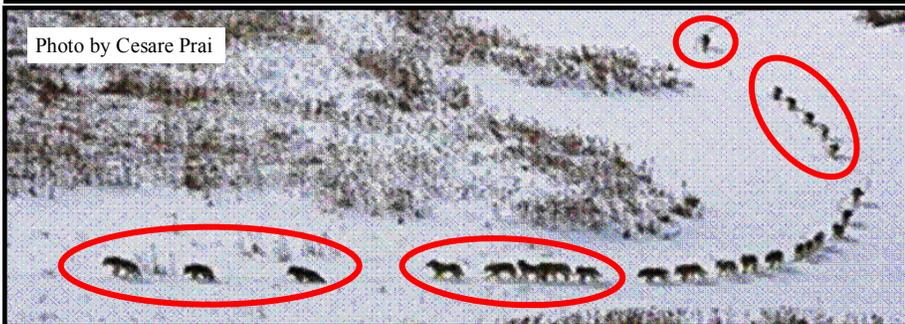
Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills (CASHh) needs volunteers and financial support to make our organization a vibrant success.

Volunteers are needed for fundraising, driving, patient support and other needs – even for an hour or two. Please commit some of your time.

**TO DONATE
OR VOLUNTEER PLEASE VISIT OR CALL OUR
OFFICE 905-702-8886**

A LESSON FOR US ALL "A wolf pack on the move"

Photo by Cesare Prai



- The first 3 wolves are the old or sick, they give the direction and pace to the entire pack. If it was the other way round, they would be left behind, losing contact with the pack. In case of an ambush they would be sacrificed;
- Then come 5 strong ones, the front line;
- In the center are the rest of the pack members;
- Then the 5 strongest following.
- Last is alone, the Alpha.

The Alpha controls everything from the rear. In that position he can see everything, decide the direction. He sees all of the pack. The pack moves according to the elders' pace and help each other, watch each other.

Wolves put the elders of the pack FIRST ... a lot of people on this planet should take note... they are to be seen up front, setting the pace and direction while enjoying the protection of the rest... and not invisible at the back of the line.

(Wendy continued from page 3)

turned to chat with her. This special friend had stage two cancer and a lumpectomy. Even when treatments ended they bonded through walks, shopping and spending time together. When a planned walk was cancelled, Wendy did not see any reason to worry and wished her a great day. She soon found out that her friend's depression prevailed despite beating cancer, and she ended her life. Wendy's sadness was intense and still painful to this day.

Wendy continues to fight, keeping memories of her friend in her heart. Wendy is back to work at the local newspaper company and still retains that bubbly, funny self.

I knew that getting to know this beautiful lady's story would help us appreciate that some people soldier on despite a life of battles and disappointments. Happy people live by choice not by accident. To meet Wendy is to find her presence inspiring. She is a true testament to the endearing spirit of the human soul. She is larger than life when she walks in a room and, when she leaves, the room seems smaller. She "just awesomes" all over the place.

Sheila

CASHh IS COMING YOUR WAY ...

You can help our Community by canvassing or walking to distribute flyers. Feel good investing a few hours of your time to CASHh during the month of April and/or have your donation ready when someone comes to your door. CASHh is the most trusted service in Halton Hills. We are one of a kind... you cannot get this in any other community. Together we are better! Call 905-702-8886.



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VOLUNTEER DRIVER FOR CASHh**

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ROCK BOTTOM IS ACTUALLY GOOD SOLID GROUND!