

Fall 2022

THE Voice of Friends

We Help People With Cancer

\$30K IN 30 DAYS

This *issue*

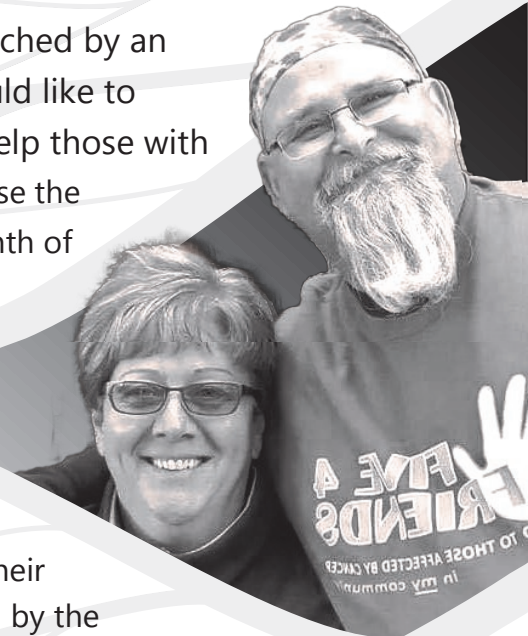
- p.2* Will Some Day be better than Today?
- p.4* You Are Worth the Effort
- p.6* Meet Marge Morford
- p.8* Support Group listing

- **Friends Together is a non-profit 501(c)3.**
- **Our mission is to help people with cancer in northeast Michigan.**
- **We operate solely on donations & fundraising.**



Friends Together
www.friendstogethermi.org

Friends Together was approached by an **anonymous donor** who would like to donate **\$30,000** to help us help those with cancer. All we need to do is raise the matching funds during the month of October. The donor has seen first hand what we do and how we help people with cancer, "We have witnessed the impact that cancer has on individuals and their families and have been inspired by the financial and emotional support we have seen Friends Together give to others impacted by cancer with no expectation of any type of repayment or thanks. We are honored to be able to support the Friends Together vision.



Candee & Joe Donajkowski

(continued on page 3)

Have a *Cancer Diagnosis?*

Contact Friends Together! You do not have to travel the cancer journey alone. When you walk through our door you open a world of hope and joy. We have traveled a similar journey. We understand. Let us help.

FOR DETAILS CONTACT talktous@friendstogethermi.org

Will 'SOME DAY' be better than TODAY?

"Today is my tomorrow. It's up to me to shape it, to take control and seize every opportunity. The power is in the choices I make each day. I shape me.

~ author unknown

How many of you have said the words, thought the words, written the words, 'some day?'

Some Day...I will take that road trip in the UP.

Some Day...I won't let that problem bother me.

Some Day...I will read the rest of that book sitting on the table.

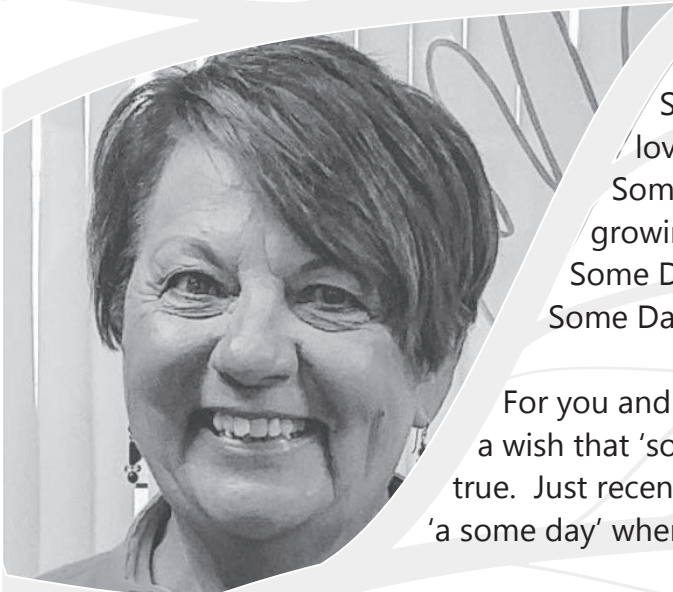
Some Day...I will call my old friend and just check in.

Some Day...I will forgive myself for the times I failed a loved one.

Some Day...I won't look back to those difficult times growing up.

Some Day...I will get over this loss.

Some Day...I will.....



For you and for me, we celebrate birthdays. Every year we make a wish that 'some day' this dream or 'some day' this wish will come true. Just recently I celebrated another birthday and thought about 'a some day' when I will.....???

For you and for me, today is the better day. Today we can pick up that book. Reach for the phone. Forgive and let go of a past pain. Live a life filled with joy and love. You and I cannot wait for 'some day.' Today is the Day!!!

Friends, you have been so generous over the years. From my heart, I thank you. Knowing we all do what we can, I ask you to ask those you know to donate to Friends Together, too. Our People really do need Your People. Together I know we can reach this goal given to us. With your help, together we will raise \$30,000 in 30 days. And when we do, we will have both accepted and given a great gift to those going through one of the most traumatic times in their lives.

With love and hope,

**Free support
is a call away**

(989)356-3231 (phone)

(989) 354-0813 (fax)

talktous@friendstogethermi.org

We listen.

We understand.

You are not alone.

Our People *Need* Your People

We were hoping that donors who want to support Friends Together would be motivated by our challenge knowing that any donation they make will be matched, doubling their support to Friends Together and the many people they dedicate their efforts to.

Because we did not want to distract or take away from any existing or planned donations, we were hoping that the challenge would bring in "new money."

We do recognize and thank the people who are already involved with or donate to Friends Together and invite them to participate in this new challenge while hoping that it also motivates many new donors."

Throughout the pages of this edition of The Voice of Friends, hear how people who have used Friends Together for support feel about our organization and why it is so important we each reach out to our friends and family and encourage them to donate to Friends Together.

Meet Our People

Candee Donajkowski shared with us that during her husband Joe's cancer treatment, they utilized many of the services Friends Together offers, saying, "With the support of Friends Together...I was able to share the most scariest parts of Joe's cancer journey (safely, without judgement)."

Debbie Hillert echoes Candee's thoughts, "Friends Together support groups provided me a safe outlet to express my feelings, fall



**Kathy &
Howard Danielson**

apart, cry, and feel above all else, that I am being heard and seen...by people who actually understand the journey."

Kathy Danielson told us, "I don't know how I would have gotten through it without Friends Together. I wasn't in a good place, frame of mind. I was a complete mess the day I first went to Friends Together. The staff dropped everything and listened to me. They gave me perspective and completely turned me around so I was able to accept treatment successfully."



**Debbie
Hillert**

You Are Worth the Effort

Just prior to moving to Alpena, my husband and I were living in the Chicago area. We had enough experiences in the big city with our young, small family and wanted to move back to Michigan.

I was so excited to become a part of my new community that I signed up to be a volunteer on my very first night in town. I kissed my family goodnight and off I went to volunteer, not a care in the world.

(To fully appreciate this story you have to keep in mind that cell phones weren't commonplace, nor was our landline installed.)

The fundraiser was wonderful. At the end of the night as I climbed into my car and drove out of the parking lot I realized, "I don't quite know where I live." It was the strangest sensation. After all, I grew up in Alpena. For the life of me I couldn't imagine why I didn't take note of my new address. All I knew was the house was yellow.

Wanting to be self-reliant, I drove around town hoping to recognize our rented house. But we moved in the winter and it was very dark by the time I had left the event. I had our only car, so there would be no car in a driveway to recognize. Somewhere out there was my husband and children. Thankfully my parents still lived in the home I grew up in and I did know how to get to their house. My parents, having helped us move into the rental house, were able to tell me where I lived.

It is a fun, ridiculous story that I laugh at every time I remember it. It was so easy to ask for help that night. After all, I didn't consider it a weak moment. Nor did I feel particularly vulnerable. It was easy to make fun of myself and my excitement. Asking for help was the obvious next step.

But that isn't the case all the time. When we feel vulnerable, weak, or simply not up to our normal self, asking for help can be difficult. It seems to require surrendering control to someone else. We self-reliant people don't like to do that. But that is only the first hurdle to get over when asking for help. In a society that praises self-help and self-reliance, it is becoming increasingly difficult for us to ask others to help.

Many people have fear rejection - being told no in an unprotected and exposed moment. The impending feeling of belittlement, judgment can be so distasteful that we allow ourselves to live in a less-than-optimal situation.

Asking for help can be draining. Regardless, do what you can to avoid becoming overwhelmed. Yes, bringing others in can be exhausting and humiliating. You may need to explain the situation and answer questions. Don't let that dissuade you! You are worth whatever effort it might take to get beyond a rough patch.

So how do you ask? First, it isn't just saying, "help me." It is respecting yourself and the person you are asking by being honest and upfront, "I've got this problem and I could really use some help. Can you help me work through it?" By bringing them in, you've put your trust in them and you've opened the door to a stronger relationship. It is a vulnerable place. But allowing yourself to be vulnerable is brave and can bring riches beyond measure.

Yes, it takes courage to put yourself out there. So spend a little time thinking about who you ask. There are many people and organizations willing to help. Maybe they can help you, just not in the way you envisioned. Be open minded. If you can assemble a small team, not only do you have a better chance of overcoming your current situation, but you've just broaden and deepened your connection with others and your community.

We all need to feel we matter and are appreciated. By asking and receiving help you will know you matter. Take advantage of this beautiful opportunity by expressing your gratitude to those who helped you as well. None of us are meant to go it alone. Sharing ourselves with others is one of the greatest gifts we can give. A life shared is a life well-lived.

~ Lesslee Dort, Program Director & Patient Advocate



(actively) Plug into your life

Free - 3 opportunities to attend & learn!

Great News! Friends Together is now able to bring back our very popular educational series! We have three (3) eager communities who are ready to host.

The topic of this year's series is *(actively) Plug into your Life*. As we come out of isolation from Covid it is important to reengage with our healthcare on every level.

If you haven't had the opportunity to attend one of these events, you are missing a fun way to learn from area professionals.

Here is how it works: Each of eight local professionals design and deliver an eight minute presentation for each of eight tables. At each table sits up to eight audience members. After eight minutes, the presenters switch tables, while the attendees comfortably wait in their seats for the next expert. In the middle of the 8, 8-minute presentations we take a short break to grab a prepared bite to eat.

Our educational series will be held in Alpena on October 13, in East Tawas on November 1, and in Rogers City at the Presbyterian Church on November 10. All events run from 6:00pm-8:30pm.

These evening events are free for participants, but registration is required.

Call today to reserve your spot! Limited seating. (989) 356-3231

Meet (more of) Our People

Friends Together helps people with cancer by helping with the cost of gas to get to and from treatment. We offer free rides to treatment for those without other options.

For those going out of town, we can pay for lodging to help offset the cost of treatment.

Max's parents, Sara and Chris Smith shared with us how much our support meant to them during Max's journey, "We cannot

Max Smith



express how much Friends Together means to us. When Max was in treatment, (you) helped us more than we could ever thank (you) for, from gas cards to hotel stays, (you) were our saving grace. "

All of this greatly helps. Though it may be the support groups that impact our friends the most. Patti Gloss recently told us that during her husband John's six year journey with cancer, "The group made it so much easier for both of us to cope with this terrible disease and I will, forever, be grateful."

**Patti
Gloss**



My experience as a Friends Together driver

I enjoy driving, and I've enjoyed getting to know the people I've met. Their stories are similar, yet each one has a unique experience to share. It feels good to know I can help them get to the treatment they need and help Friends Together provide this critical service.



Marge Morford,
Volunteer Driver

I've been a Friends Together volunteer for a long time, ever since my husband, Bill, "volunteered" me! Over the years I've helped at Comedy Nights, Connie's Festivals, and Five for Friends celebrations. I am the "behind the scenes" potato baker for the Pig Roasts along with my "team" of Judy, Joann, Bob, and Bill. I have many good memories from all these events.

When I retired from NEMCH in 2019, I looked around for new ways to be active. I knew from Bill's work at Friends Together that drivers were always needed for the transportation program. Many of our neighbors need this service to get to their medical appointments, so I decided to volunteer.

My first two drives were eventful! A snowstorm greeted me for my first drive to the Hillman area. I had to turn back. On my second drive, my car got stuck in the snow in the patient's driveway and I needed a tow to get out. Fortunately, my drives have been less stressful and much more enjoyable ever since.

Bill and I will soon celebrate our 45th anniversary. We enjoy our four children and our five grandchildren. We both look forward to all of our drives to see them throughout the year!

Need help getting to your cancer appointments?

Friends Together's transportation and lodging program is available for patients who have a cancer diagnosis. Having great cancer care nearby is only part of the survivor's journey. Getting to and from treatment appointments is one of the most common concerns for those battling cancer. A lack of reliable transportation and the cost of fuel and overnight lodging can cause many residents in our rural community to refuse life-saving treatment. Friends Together realizes this need! We currently operate 2 vans along with 20 plus volunteer drivers.

In July, volunteers drove over 5,900 miles getting patients to and from their critical cancer care. In addition, 22 hotel rooms were provided in the most urgent of care including early morning appointments, out of town for diagnostic testing, and surgeries.

If you or someone you know could use our services, please call us today at 989-356-3231!

Shelly Gibbs,
Transportation Coordinator

Van Safety

- **Van will be sanitized with each use.**
- **Drivers & passengers will wear protective masks.**
- **If passenger displays symptoms of illness, the scheduled transport will be cancelled or rescheduled.**
- **If driver displays symptoms of illness, a replacement driver will be sought.**

Ladies Only!

Events coming up

A Party is Brewing

We have brewed-up a brand-new fundraiser just for the ladies! Let's let our hair down and take a night out to have some fun and rock out to **Rod Stewart on October 22, 2022!**

Dress as witchy as you like for a chance to win prizes! We'll open the doors to the VFW on Connon Street at 6:00pm, the show starts at 7:30pm. Come sing along and have a howling good time with us.

We'll have a live auction and raffles, but the highlight of the evening is a professional Rod Stewart impersonator! Feel Forever Young with Hot Legs as we sway to Da Ya Think I'm Sexy!

Tickets are \$25.00 and can be purchased at Friends Together. Evening includes hors d'oeuvres, cash bar, Chinese raffle, live auction, and a 50/50 !

Grab your favorite gals and start putting together your best witchy look.

Come, warts and all, to celebrate Fall with us.

September

17 - Connie's Café Fall Festival

October

15 - WATZ Listener Appreciation 50/50

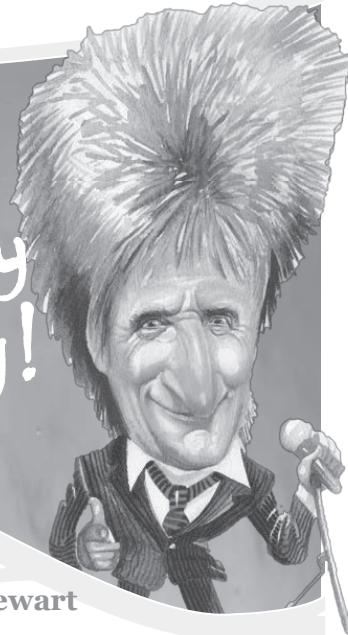
15 - Muzzleloader Hunt Raffle

22 - Ladies Night Out

December

16 - Kettle Nation Kettle Corn Sales

A Party
is Brewing!



**Come on out
with us on October 22,
listen to the music of Rod Stewart
while wearing your best witch outfit!**

You Are Not Alone

*"Sometimes the people around you
won't understand your journey. They
don't need to, it's not for them."*

~unknown



Weekly Support Groups

Please note: Support groups meet in-person at Friends Together and via Zoom., unless noted.
Please visit the calendar on our website friendstogethermi.org for Zoom link and more information.

All Friends Together Programs are Open to the Public and Free of Charge

Friends Together North - Rogers City

For men and women. Meets each Monday at 6:00pm at the Presque Isle Library. Note: Meets at Kortman's Restaurant on the 2nd Monday of each month

Friends Think Together

Strategies to overcome 'chemobrain'. Begins in April. Meets the first Monday of each month at 2:00pm. For men and women.

Friends Stretch Together

For both men & women whose swallowing and head/neck range of motion has been impacted by cancer treatment. Meets the first Monday of the first full week of each month at 4:00 pm.,

Good Grief

Meets Tuesdays at 10am.

Mindful Movement for Healing

Meets for five consecutive Tuesdays at 12:00pm. For women only. Whole body slow movement to improve balance and overall health during and after treatment. Runs September 6 - October 4.

Friends Together South

Men and women meet on Tuesdays at K of C Hall in East Tawas at 5:30pm.

Tuesday Nights Together

For both men & women with cancer, and their loved ones, too. Meets weekly on Tuesdays at 6:00pm.

Guys Like Us

For men with cancer. Meets each Wednesday at 10:00am.

Women on Wednesday

For women with cancer. Meets each Wednesday at 4:30pm.

Friends Breathe Together

Meets the first Thursday of the first full week of the month at 2:00pm. For men and women who want to improve breathing, speech, swallowing, and cognitive function following treatment.

Friends Eat Together

For both men and women with cancer who find eating in public uncomfortable due to dysphagia. Meets the first Thursday of the first full week of the month at 4:00pm.

Friends Together programs are offered in partnership with:



In accordance with federal law and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice & TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Need to Talk?

Friends Together is staffed with compassionate individuals who have personal experience with cancer. We understand what you are feeling and experiencing. While your journey is unique to you, we have walked a similar path and know how to navigate the terrain.

Please contact us or just stop in to talk. We are here during the week from 9:00am to 3:00pm each weekday. Plus, we have 11 different ongoing support groups each week. One is sure to fit your needs. See page 8 for a full list.

Each of our facilitators are qualified in their own way; each with a life's experience that they have chosen to channel into helping others. Join a group today. It is easier than you think. Call for more information.

You Are Not Alone

Friends Together supports you and your decisions on how to treat your diagnosis in the best way possible for you. We are here to listen, help and support.

Meet (more of) Our People

"When I was diagnosed with breast cancer, I had no family in Michigan. Now I have 20+ sisters to share this journey with, and I met them all at the Friends Together support group.

When we go through this this journey of cancer, it's not only for ourselves, but for others.

You never have to be alone."

That was what Michelle Walker had to say when asked why it's important that Friends Together be here for cancer patients for years to come.

Louie Waltz's daughter Donna may have summed up Friends Together best when she

**Michelle
Walker**



said, "They see the whole person, not just the cancer." Donna further shared, "The impact Friends Together had on my dad, Louie Waltz, and our family is immeasurable. Never, in my wildest dreams, did I ever think my dad would embrace sharing his cancer journey with anyone let alone a group of strangers. Today, it still blows my mind to think of him joining the Wednesday group. The group of men brought him so much solace and camaraderie throughout his entire cancer experience.

**Louie
Waltz &
his daughter Donna**



givingtuesday

Giving Tuesday is a day to flex those generosity muscles and support your favorite nonprofits or charities. Think of Giving Tuesday like an extension of that moment when everyone around the Thanksgiving table shares what they're grateful for — a day for not only counting blessings, but also passing them on to others in need.

Whether or not cancer has personally touched your life, it impacts many of your neighbors and community members. With all the research now being conducted, some types of cancer are becoming chronic conditions that need to be treated throughout our lifetime.

Friends Together, with your help, will be there for those who need our support. No one should have to face cancer alone.

GIVING TUESDAY



LeFave PHARMACY & COMPOUNDING
"Caring about YOU...Since 1976"

1202 W. Chisholm • Alpena
www.LefavePharmacy.com
(989) 354-3189

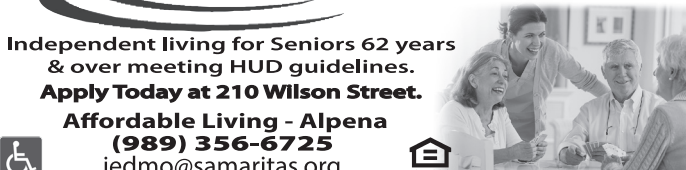
- **FREE** Medication Synchronization -get all your Rx's filled same day
- **FREE** Medication Strip Packaging -organized by date & time, clearly labeled, securley sealed
- **FREE DELIVERY** to Alpena and surrounding areas!
- **DRIVE THRU or CURBSIDE**
- **NOW OFFERING** Compounded Medications & Bio-Identical HRT

SKIBA VISION CENTER, PLLC.
VISION SOURCE Gerald A. Skiba II, O.D.
Tyler Skiba, O.D.

2368 U.S. 23 South • Alpena, MI 49707 • Alpena Mall
(989) 356-9096 • Fax (989) 356-3968
Emergency (989) 255-4404 • (989) 255-4828
www.visionsource-skibavision.com

Samaritas™

Independent living for Seniors 62 years & over meeting HUD guidelines.
Apply Today at 210 Wilson Street.
Affordable Living - Alpena
(989) 356-6725
jedmo@samaritas.org




Proudly Serving the Greater Alpena and Hillman Communities

Bannan Funeral Home

222 S. Second Avenue Alpena, Michigan 49707 (989) 354-8411
131 E. First Street Hillman, Michigan 49746 (989) 742-3993
www.bannanfuneralhome.com

KEITH D. WALLACE
of the law firm of
Isackson, Wallace & Pfeifer, P.C.
114 S. Second Ave., Alpena, MI 49707
989-354-8242
50+ Years of Experience in
Trusts, Wills, Probate and Medicaid Matters




TARKINGTON FAMILY DENTISTRY
Andrew C. Tarkington D.D.S. | Alex A. Tarkington D.M.D.

• NEW PATIENTS WELCOME •
215 S. Ripley Blvd., Alpena, MI (989) 354-8340

THUNDER BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

TBTA: (989) 354-2487
Call for out-of-town appts. & contracted services.
DART: (989) 356-4596
Dial-A-Ride is a curb-to-curb service within the City of Alpena & adjacent locations. Reduced fares for seniors and disabled riders.

3859 US 23 N. Alpena
www.thunderbaytransportation.com



Free Education Series
Come and learn how to (actively) Plug into your Life with us in October or November! This free educational program is hosted by Friends Together and designed for you!
See pg 5.

We Honor

We remember those who have touched our lives. Often, family and friends make a donation in their name.

Please contact us if you have any questions about this listing or would like someone to appear on a future newsletter.

Listed in no particular order.

Donna Kihn
Lillian Bartlett
Kirsten Jensen Guenther
Wayne Pake
Ruth Pauley
Tina Sager
Marsha Rouleau
Bill Collins
Ron Smith
Ken Ilsley
Lynnell Kitzman

Gordon Montroy
Therese Dietlen
Judy Wozniak
Dick Werle
Chris Ruby
Judy Wozniak
Alan Kalitta
Darlene Muszynski
Dave Parks
Dick Chowen



Alpena
Alcona
Area

Credit Union

ALPENA • ATLANTA • LINCOLN • OSCODA • OSSINEKE • TAWAS CITY

New Members
Always Welcome!

CALL 989-356-3577
www.aaacu.com



the drug store



Health Mart
PHARMACY

CBD Oils

The modern drug store where you are greeted with a friendly "Hello" and "How can we help you?"

...where Pharmacist Keith Misiak and Jim Straley will be glad to serve you!

2236 US-23 S • ALPENA • (989) 354-2171

- Accepting All Major Health Plans
- Free Delivery Service
- Drive Through Window

****COUPON****

CALL

989-356-1177

bannerrealty.com

Banner Realty

(ask for Margie*)

Mindful Movement for Healing

Join us on Tuesdays at noon for slow stretching. All women who've had a cancer diagnosis are welcome, free. Next class begins November 22.

Muzzle Loader Hunt Raffle

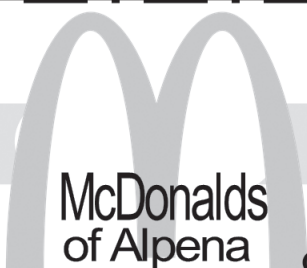
Get your raffle ticket now! Only \$10 for your chance to win a guided 2-day hunt during muzzle loader season. Enjoy the outdoors, camaraderie, and good camp cooking for you and a guest. Tickets at Friends Together

FOR YOUR FAMILY'S
TOUGHEST TIMES,
CALL OURS ANYTIME.

Let us help by calling (866) 323-5974.



DOING WHAT'S BEST.



Enjoy a FREE small Cup of Coffee
Friends Together is Celebrating 26 Years!

Thank you Friends and Volunteers!



expires 12/31/22

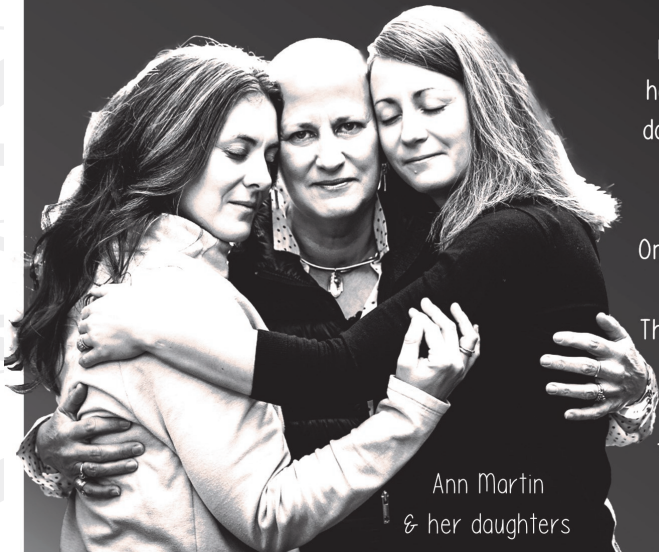


Friends Together

105 Prentiss Street
Alpena, MI 49707
(989) 356-3231

Non Profit
US Postage
PAID
Permit 157
Alpena, MI 49707

Our People Need Your People



“

My daughters held my reluctant hands and walked me through the doors of Friends Together to seek the support of others walking similar journeys.

Once I walked through those doors, the healing began.

This is not charity, but rather love, support, understanding, and a commitment to assist others through a difficult hurdle in life.

”

Ann Martin
& her daughters



This QR Code will take you straight to our online donation page for the **\$30K in 30 Days** campaign.

Please help us spread the word. After all, our people really do need your people.

"Your donation may ease a burden and even possibly save a life in ways unimaginable."

Please use the QR Code above, mail a check, stop by with a donation, or visit our website **help us raise the funds needed to match to the offered \$30,000.**

Call for details (989) 356-3231