

SUMMER 2022

THE Voice of Friends

We Help People With Cancer

This *issue*

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SPICE OF LIFE

There is nothing like a palm-full of fresh herbs added to a meal to make it extra special.

You don't have the time, space, or experience to grow your own herb garden? No worries! We have you covered.

Stop by Friends Together anytime, day or night, and help yourself to our community Herb Box.

We have planted more than 15 different herbs. The Herb Box is located at the back of our building. Simply snip the leaves you need for your meal and enjoy the fresh aroma and taste of warm weather and sun. Try fresh thyme leaves in your scrambled eggs. Or, why not put fresh basil leaves in your salad. Even toss some chives on dinner. Enjoy!

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

Have a *Cancer Diagnosis?*

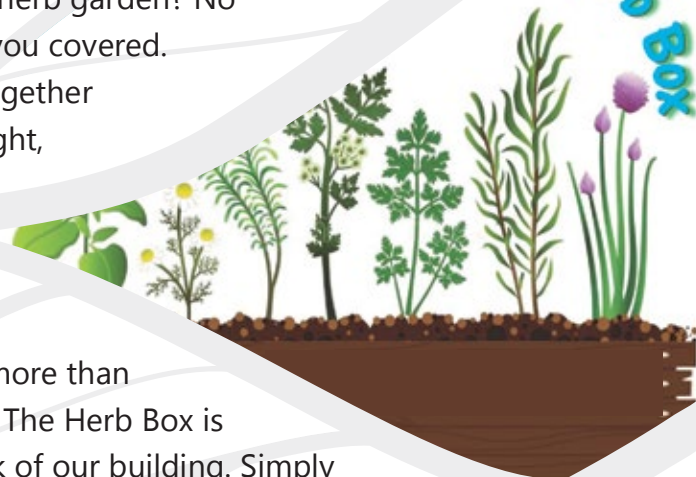
Contact Friends Together! You do not have to travel the cancer journey alone. When you walk through our door you open a world of hope and joy.

We have traveled a similar journey.

We understand. Let us help.

FOR DETAILS CONTACT talktous@friendstogethermi.org

Herb Box



You Can Trust Friends Together

"It turns out that trust is in fact earned in the smallest of moments. It is earned not through heroic deeds, or even highly visible actions, but through paying attention, listening, and gestures of genuine care and connection."

~Brene Brown

Often times I'm asked, "What happens in your group programs?" "Do I have to talk?" "What will people think if I join a group; does it mean something is wrong with me?"



I encourage folks to give us a try. When they walk through our doors or place a phone call, what they really are saying is, "We need help." "Who do we turn to for guidance and support?" "Can I place my trust in you?"

Brene Brown captures the Friends Together spirit by pointing out that trust is earned in these smallest of moments. Trust and relationships are formed by listening, paying attention to every word and need, and offering genuine gestures of care and connection.

Listening and paying close attention are the first steps in the process of joining us together on this journey. The next phase is learning more and assessing the situation. Once we have facts in hand and needs identified, the third step is to make a plan and then take action. From the moment of first contact, a road map for the journey evolves. One step at a time for a lifetime of care and connection. The final step is we are lifetime friends—the kind that lasts forever.

As we enjoy our summer months and the sun's warmth, I encourage you to think about the trusted friends met here and in our caring community. Our lives are filled with memories—let's make more memories together!

Warm regards,

**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.

Comfort Bags are freely offered to each person who receives a cancer diagnoses. Our bags contain goodies cancer survivors have found helpful during treatment.

Rogers City Support

Our Rogers City Cancer Support Group is back up and running! After a brief hiatus over the winter, the group is back and strong.

Now meeting **every Monday night at 6:00pm** they welcome all who are impacted by cancer.

Our facilitator, Melissa Schalk, has lots of knowledge to share and compassion to give people with cancer.

This group meets at the Presque Isle Library on the first, third, and fourth Monday. On the second Monday they meet at Kortman's Restaurant.

If you or someone you know is dealing with a cancer diagnosis, please give this group a try. What you'll find is a supportive, safe environment to share your journey and receive non-judgement support in return.

comfort bag donations

We are continually accepting donations of convenience items to put in our comfort bags. If you, or a group you belong to, are interested in adopting this project, please contact Lesslee at (989) 356-3231.



Tawas Support

Our Friends Together Tawas Cancer Support Group is up and running! We are all very excited to be able to offer this style of support to our Tawas area neighbors.

Our facilitator is Mary Morse, an involved Tawas community member who has a background in nonprofit organizations.

Currently this group meets at Barnacle Bills on Tuesday evenings at 5:30pm.

Meet Ms. Sweet Tea Pie (aka Lisa Rodriguez) Lisa chose Friends Together as her charity of choice for the Recent Oscoda Bravata's Pin-Up Girl Contest.



Cancer In 2022

During the first months of 2022, we were reminded that cancer doesn't pause for anyone, regardless of what is going on in the world. People still needed to talk, to be heard. The barriers to treatment seemed to grow. Yet, Friends Together found new and creative ways to help while observing current safety precautions. As we all continue forward, learning the new normal of the world, know that you can contact us. You are not alone.

A beautiful inconvenience

"Any story that starts will also end." Ann Patchett's newest book, *These Precious Days* is an incredibly honest and soul-searching reflection on "what it means to be seen." Within our daily lives we tell ourselves we see people. But do we? Are we really pausing long enough to fully take in the whole person? We are each more than our parts. No one is just a cancer survivor, only a widow, or simply a person of faith. The only way we will understand this with any credible depth is to be available to them, in whatever capacity they need. Stop keeping time. Stop referring to your devices. Stop making mental lists of whatever is next while keeping their company. Hear them. See them. Be with them.

Kate Bowler, another best-selling author, and Anne Patchett recently taped a podcast together. During their hour-long conversation they discussed the importance of bearing witness to another's life, beholding the gifts they had to share with the world. Imagine existing within the combined space of another, only to provide

whatever level of comfort was required. The mental acrobatics required to serve only the needs of the one in need are awe-inspiring. They didn't force casseroles or food plans on their friend, they didn't bombard their friend with tips or tricks of the trade in a quick effort to fix them, nor did they discount their experience by one-upmanship. They listened. The absolute beauty of such a gift is immeasurable.

According to Kristi Pikiewicz Ph.D, a practicing psychotherapist and blog contributor to Psychology Today, bearing witness refers to sharing our experiences with others, frequently during the communication to others of traumatic experiences. It is a valuable way to process an experience, to receive empathy and support, to lighten our emotional load via sharing it with the trusted witness, and to obtain catharsis.

Within our daily lives we each have the opportunity to be available to another; to be a witness. Are we taking advantage of this valuable gift? Do we drop what we are doing to really listen to a friend? Most likely we are so busy with our own harried lives that we miss many of the opportunities. After all, the cues are often subtle. I wonder; what would the world be like if we could be fully present for another in such a non-threatening way as to offer a non-judgmental ear to lighten their load, rather than add to their burden.

We all have the ability to sit and listen, to give our time; a valuable commodity in this busy world. Even more precious is when we can give of our time without weaving in our opinions.

We will all face life-impacting situations. It's inevitable. Start preparing now for that time when a friend tells you they've been diagnosed, lost a loved-one, or experienced a traumatic event. Can you be ready? Can you listen without judging? Can you be present without telling them how to remedy it? Can you keep the stories of another's journey to yourself in this moment and the moments to follow?

I encourage you to try. We will all likely say the wrong thing during these times. Our minds can't always behave and function as quickly and accurately as we would like. My hope is that we can know we've stumbled and can learn from it. Built into this thing called communication must be a healthy dose of self-forgiveness.

~ Lesslee Dort, Program Director & Patient Advocate

summer yoga

About every other five (5) weeks Friends Together offers Mindful Movement for Healing. This women-only slow stretch program was specifically designed for the woman who has gone through treatment for cancer.

Oftentimes, treatment can leave behind unplanned side effects. An example of this is the tightness that occurs after extended radiation. Overall strength or energy problems may surface due to the level of medication required to knock the cancer out of a body.

With gentle yoga, women have the opportunity to regain some of the lost flexibility and energy.

Our current series meets each Tuesday at noon, through July 5, 2022. The next series begins on Tuesday, September 5, 2022, at noon.

Join Desiree Nowaczyk for this series. You will be glad you did!

Desiree readies herself to lead a slow yoga class.



website resources

Have you visited our website lately? If not, you are in for a treat!

We have recently added new resources for all. Included in the new material is our interactive calendar. Now when you view a support group on our calendar, the Zoom link is attached to the event. No more searching for the links to groups if you choose to attend virtually. Also new is our resource page. This page currently has two informative videos; one on nutrition and cancer and one on cannabis and cancer. videos are



Nutrition Basics

for the person with cancer

Visit

www.friendstogethermi.org

to see our newest videos.

More being produced to post on the resource page. This page will also soon be home to links to other valuable website and resources for all, including the National Comprehensive Cancer Network .

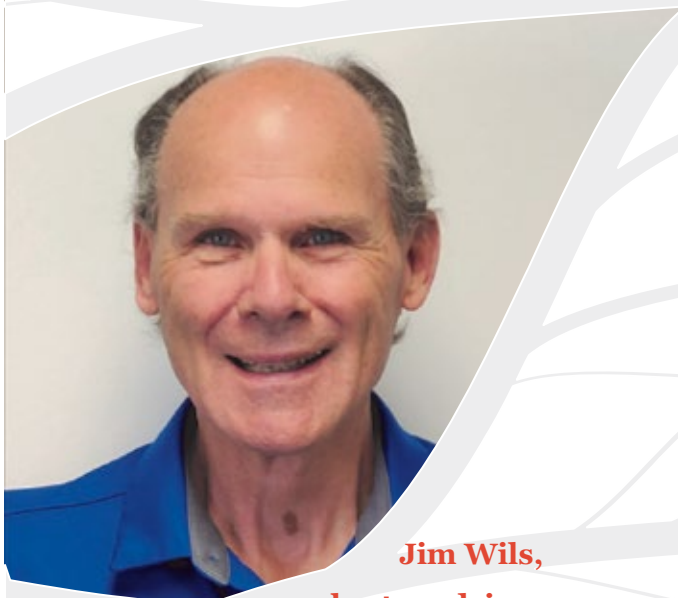
Do you have an idea for our website? Give us a call and let us know. Maybe we can add it to benefit all our friends.

Driver Spotlight - Jim Wils

Your support and generosity give others strength and hope. Please help in 2022. With your help we will do it again.

We must.

Cancer doesn't stop, so neither can we.



Jim Wils,
volunteer driver

Introducing Jim Wils volunteer driver for Friends Together for 16 years! After retiring from the State of Michigan, Jim learned that there was a need for volunteer drivers at Friends Together. Having compassion for those who have been affected by a cancer diagnosis, Jim said, "this was the perfect opportunity to help". Jim has driven thousands of miles in and out of town to help relieve the barrier that many patients face just getting to and from their critical care. Patients love Jim's upbeat attitude and Jim said, "I'm grateful that I can help make a difference". Jim volunteers with fundraiser set-up, clean-up, sells raffle tickets and so much more. Jim truly has a servant's heart and is an active member of Hunter's Harvest for Charity, Knights of Columbus and is an usher for All Saints in Alpena. Friends Together extends a heartfelt Thank You to Jim for all that he does for us and others.

Support is just a call away

Do you need help?

Are you finding that getting to and from your oncology appointments is difficult? Is the financial burden adding stress to your life? Are you alone and would like someone to drive you to appointments?

Our drivers live in Alpena, Presque Isle, Rogers City, and Ossineke. We are available to support you.

For more information, call (989) 356-3231.

Shelly Gibbs,
Transportation Coordinator

Covid-19 Van Precautions

- **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.**

Pig Roast

Yes, our Pig Roast will be held again this year! This ever-popular event will take place at The Depot on Fletcher Street on July 24, from 1pm-5pm, or until sold out.

We have heard many positive comments about our holding the Pig Roast as a drive-thru event. So we will do it as a drive-thru again.

Make plans to grab your pulled pork meal, and maybe some more for your friends. This delicious opportunity happens once a year.

family day

Family Day has turned into an Annual Event for Friends Together and those we serve. Held again this year at Dinosaur Gardens in Ossineke, this event is free to all families who have experienced a cancer diagnosis. Reservations are required and you need a free wrist band for entry. Mark your calendar and join us on August 28th from 11am - 2pm.



Events coming up

July

Pig Roast @ Depot - 24th

August

Family Day @ Dinosaur Gardens - 28th

September

Connie's Fall Festival - 17th



Congratulations

Rachel Hansen! Rachel's

name was drawn as the winner of

Friends Together's Memorial Day Raffle.

Gas Card Challenge

Thank you to all the generous individuals and businesses who donated to this year's Gas Card Challenge. You really outdid yourselves!

Each and every day we hear of another individual that cannot afford the fuel to get to treatment. Because of you, our neighbors have hope.

Weekly Support Groups

Please note: Support groups meet in-person at Friends Together and via Zoom, unless noted otherwise. Please visit our website, www.friendstogethermi.org, or call the office 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 June 7-July 5 and again September 6-October 4.

Tawas Friends

Men and women can meets on Tuesdays at Barnacle Bills in 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:



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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.

support groups

Take a look to the left, on page 8. That is a listing of all our recurring cancer support groups! We have eleven (11) groups that meet repeatedly. There is sure to be one that fits your need.

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.

golf scramble results

This year's Scramble was sold out weeks before the big day. Those who golfed had lots of laughs and some great shots! Golfers' skills were tested with a variety of fun games, including a new game on the course - Ball Frog!

First place honors went to Jay Rundell, Rick Sterling, Bucky Talbot, Gary Moyski and Randy Kamysiak, Jerry Tuma, Gary Pietch, Paul Thomas.

Stay tuned for the date for next year's scramble. You'll want to reserve your spot as soon as you too can have fun while helping our neighbors with cancer.

Thank you to all our volunteers, golfers, donors, and sponsors! You make all the difference.



Bruce Honeycutt and Mike Nowak are ready to play golf and support Friends Together

Please contact us or just stop in to talk. We are here during the week from 9:00am to 3:00pm. Plus, we have a variety of different ongoing support groups each week. One is sure to fit your needs. Want more information? Head over to our website: www.friendstogethermi.org.



Don & Dick Silver are ready to golf!

Hot Dog, They're Back!

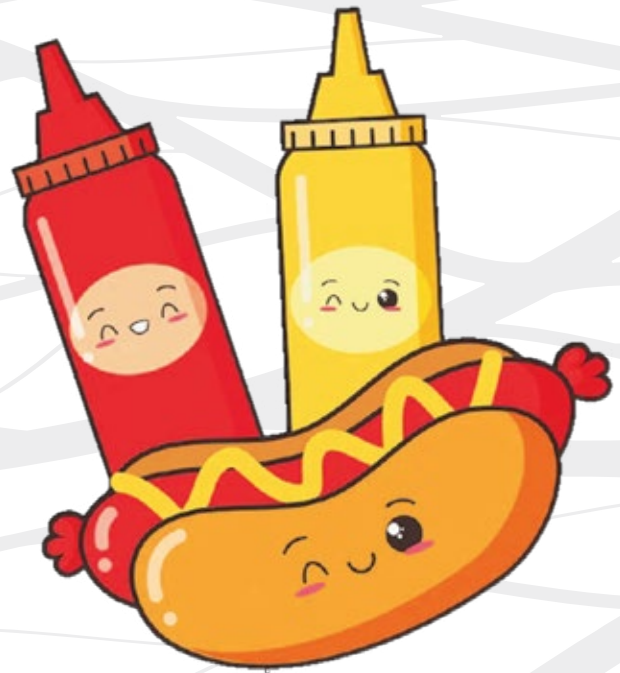
Doesn't a Plath's Hot Dog Sound Good Right Now?

You know it does....Yummm! Nothing says a beautiful summer day more than a fresh hot dog.

Rogers City is the place to be every Friday from June 17th through July 29th! Plan to have lunch between 11am and 1pm on Fridays in June & July at Ice Cream Lane in Rogers City. Free will donations will be accepted. All proceeds to benefit Friends Together.

Co-sponsored by:

Calcite Credit Union, Plath's Meats, Ice Cream Lane, & Pepsi.



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 3859 US 23 N. Alpena
www.thunderbaytransportation.com

Tuesday Night Together
 is a cancer support group for men, women, patients, and loved-ones. If a cancer diagnosis is affecting your life, this is the support group for you. Meets at Friends Together on Tuesdays at 6:00pm.

In Memory and In 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.

In Memory

Susan Weinkauf
 Dave Hillert
 Greg Flewelling
 Jennifer Flaig
 Randy Donakowski
 John Gloss
 John Seabase
 Laura Frary
 Rob Adamski
 Bill Manczak
 Jenny Meyer
 Lewis Pake

Chris Ruby
 Keith Thompson
 Virgil Rasche
 Jennifer Flaig
 Frank Bordeau
 Robert McMillan
 Henry J. Shorkey Jr.
 Ken Isley
 Shirley Biggs "Gigi"
 Margie Zann
 Paul Zann
 Marion Hawley

Patrick Orban
 Chris Ruby
 Theresa Klein
 Nancy Worsley
 Donna Kihn
 Tina Sager

In Honor

Brad Birmingham
 Jerry Kunath
 Betty Aube
 Tim and Sue Fitzpatrick



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BE YOU {tiful}

Be·You·tiful is a free, hands-on workshop offered for women during and after their cancer experience. Call for July program date.

Friends Together North

is a cancer support group for men and women. If you are in the Presque Isle area, this is the closest support group for you. Meets at Presque Isle Library on Mondays at 6:00pm.

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

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your life**

Stay Tuned for Fall Dates!

**Will be offered in
Alpena, Rogers City
& the Tawas area!**



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