Bountiful rewards in giving back

Surviving breast cancer gave Dawn a new outlook on life.

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Message from Cristy

Dear Friends,

I remember the day when my husband, Mark, called to inform me that he had prostate cancer. It was July 2009.

Mark was diligent about getting his prostate checked annually. His numbers were closely watched and, some years, a biopsy was done. Because the results always came back negative, we didn’t think much of it that year when another biopsy was ordered. Then there was the diagnosis. My daughter and I were in Kansas visiting my family when I heard the news. I felt terrible that Mark was alone when he received this life-changing diagnosis.

The unexpected results were difficult, made especially tough as I tried to provide support to him over the phone. I remember thinking I needed to be strong and positive for Mark. I reminded him that the cancer was caught early, and we were in this fight together. We did extensive research on prostate cancer to understand our options.

After successful surgery and treatment, I’m proud to say that Mark has been cancer free for more than three years. He is an advocate for yearly checkups, as so many men don’t do this.

I understand how a diagnosis of cancer is a profound game-changer for patients and their loved ones. And, I’m so supportive of all the donors who make Aurora Cancer Care exceptional – in particular, Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation.

In support of cancer patients throughout eastern Wisconsin, Aurora Health Care Foundation is proud of its strong relationship with the Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation. During our 23-year partnership, Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation has contributed more than $16 million to provide compassionate care and cutting-edge research to thousands of patients served through Aurora Health Care.

Together, we find better ways to care for individuals at 13 Vince Lombardi Cancer Clinic sites. We offer clinical trials, advanced technology and cancer support programs. We offer all of these important services close to home so patients remain close to family, friends and their support systems.

Thanks to Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation, advances are being made in the research of autologous stem cell transplant for diseases such as a multiple myeloma and non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, personalized medicine for early tumor detection or metastasis of breast cancer, as well as immunotherapy for patients with kidney cancer, malignant melanoma and other types of cancers that have metastasized.

On Saturday, June 8, I’ll be participating in the Lombardi Walk/Run at the Milwaukee County Zoo in honor of my husband, Mark, a cancer survivor. I invite you to participate with me. To join my team, “Aurora – Live Well,” please visit LombardiFoundation.org to register.

Our fight against cancer is a shared initiative and we simply cannot be the best without you. Join us in this fight by attending one or more of our events throughout the year. Please visit LombardiFoundation.org for more information or to get involved.

Always,

Cristy Garcia-Thomas
Executive Vice President, Aurora Health Care and President, Aurora Health Care Foundation
Bountiful rewards in giving back

Blessings surface in unexpected ways. Just ask Dawn Panfil, hair stylist and owner of Hair & Body Solutions Salon and Spa in New Berlin, Wis. Dawn is a breast cancer survivor or, as one physician describes her, a “super warrior.”

Dawn's journey began in 2008 following a mammogram. Since the age of 40, she was faithful in scheduling these annual screenings. When a biopsy was done after a suspicious mammogram, her worst fears came true. “My world changed forever when I heard the words, ‘It’s cancer,’” said Dawn.

Aurora Health Care is the leading breast cancer care provider in Wisconsin, serving women during each phase from diagnosis and treatment to recovery and navigating life after cancer. Because of that, it was a clear choice for Dawn to receive her care at Aurora.

She underwent two lumpectomies and months of aggressive chemotherapy. Six weeks into chemo, Dawn struggled to maintain a positive attitude.

“I’ve always been strong, optimistic and a risk-taker, but cancer brought me to my knees. Some weeks I struggled with sadness, depression, low or no energy and feelings of worthlessness,” said Dawn. “Cancer can demand so much mentally, physically and spiritually that on many days, there’s nothing left.”

Dawn spent 29 years as a hair stylist before her breast cancer diagnosis. For her, losing her hair as a result of chemo was one of the hardest things to endure.

“As women, our hair is a huge part of our identity. It was devastating to be bald, but I needed to turn lemons into lemonade,” said Dawn, whose successful business, Hair & Body Solutions, has a large clientele. “I knew there had to be a way to involve my business and initiate a way to help women.”

According to Julie Kepple, MD, breast surgeon at Aurora West Allis Medical Center, Dawn continues to be an inspiration. “Five years ago, I was looking for a way to raise awareness for breast health care,” she said. Dr. Kepple knew Dawn owned a hair salon and suggested selling pink hair extensions as a way to raise awareness and funds for survivorship programs.

“The two of us merged our ideas and Pink Possible was born,” confirmed Dawn, whose salon raised more than $12,000 last year.

Through the Pink Possible campaign, Aurora Health Care dedicates the month of October to promote breast cancer awareness in the community. All proceeds from these efforts benefit Aurora Breast Health Funds, which provides breast cancer education, prevention and survivorship activities.

In 2012, 10 salons in southeastern Wisconsin participated in this effort. Community partners, including Panera Bakery and Cafes, Aurora Pharmacies and The Chocolate Factory, among other businesses, also supported this cause. In total, $40,000 was raised last year through community fundraising.

Salon owner Dawn Panfil is proud of her team of 20 stylists who help raise awareness and funds through Pink Possible: “We’re not just raising money, we’re raising hope.”

Pink Possible has raised a steady amount of money in support of programs like Living Well Beyond Cancer, in which Dawn was a participant. Living Well Beyond Cancer helps survivors and their primary care physicians create a personalized plan to guide each patient’s return to optimal health by focusing on fitness, nutrition and emotional well-being. Services include Living Well (weight loss program), Movin’ and Groovin’ (conditioning program for bone loss), cancer support groups, smoking cessation and a sexual medicine clinic.

“Dawn is a true warrior. For some of these patients, it’s a fight to get them through cancer. And it’s a fight to raise awareness and make life better for somebody else,” said Dr. Kepple. “That’s what Dawn and her stylists are doing. The rewards from giving are bountiful – and in ways you may never expect.”

To learn more or to make a gift in support of Pink Possible, please visit Aurora.org/PinkPossible.

Help give back to your community

Individuals and organizations are invited to host a fundraising event to support Aurora Health Care. It’s easy to do: we provide a tool kit to help spark your fundraising creativity. A planning guide will help you create a timeline, plan a budget, organize and promote your event.

Through Aurora Health Care Foundation, our staff works with community groups to plan events such as golf outings or walks/runs. Our team will work directly with you to offer assistance as you plan your fundraiser or project.

For more information, please contact Jeannie Jackson at 877-460-8730 or jeannie.jackson@aurora.org.

For more information, visit: AuroraHealthCare.org
**Aurora West Allis Medical Center**

**Celebrating the dedicated hospital auxiliary**

The Aurora West Allis Medical Center Auxiliary is almost literally woven into the hospital’s DNA. Having come together before West Allis Memorial Hospital opened its doors in 1961 (Aurora Health Care merged with the facility in 1996), the Auxiliary and other local volunteers dedicated years to providing West Allis a hospital of its own.

Aurora West Allis President Rick Kellar believes that today’s Auxiliary shares the same commitment as their predecessors. “They feel like they can make a difference in the lives of our patients,” he said. “They get involved on an emotional, spiritual and physical level to help us do what we do.”

The Auxiliary is the most generous donor, contributing more than $2 million to the hospital during the past 38 years. Funds raised primarily through the Auxiliary-run gift store have helped support everything from renovating the hospital’s cafeteria to providing cutting-edge technology, such as a computer-assisted joint replacement system. The store also provided a generous contribution to the Living Well Beyond Cancer program.

In addition, Auxiliary members volunteer throughout the hospital every day, working the reception desk, transporting patients, serving as companions to patients and assisting them in the emergency department.

Pat Nelson joined the Auxiliary 29 years ago, after a year of retirement told her that it was time to give back to the community. But she admits that the relationships she enjoys while helping out are just as satisfying as the good work they do together.

“We have such great people working with us, and we’ve made such great friendships,” said Pat, who encouraged her husband LeRoy to join the Men’s Service Club when he retired 15 years ago.

To make a gift in support of Aurora West Allis Medical Center, please call 877-460-8730.

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**Aurora Medical Center in Grafton**

**Caregivers help “recruit” SimMan**

Thank you to the medical staff at Aurora Medical Center in Grafton who generously donated $30,000 toward the purchase of SimMan® Essential.

SimMan is a computerized human patient simulator that can talk, breathe, blink and bleed. A full-body adult simulator used for emergency-preparedness training, it allows for realistic, repetitive practice on skills to address serious medical conditions, such as airway obstruction, cardiac arrest, stroke, heart attack and others.

The Grafton medical staff presented a matching gift opportunity beyond their initial donation that raised another $20,000 throughout the community. Also, the medical staff at Aurora Medical Center in Washington County in Hartford donated $15,000 toward this project.

“Most of the emergency medical service personnel in our area are volunteers or paid-on-call. Since their call volume isn’t as high as in urban areas, SimMan provides additional educational opportunities to remain proficient in their skills,” said Steven Zils, MD, out-of-hospital medical director at Grafton. “SimMan is wireless and easily portable, which allows us to take the training to them.”

Grant funding from the National Emergency Medicine Association and support from caregivers helped purchase SimMan this spring. An additional $50,000 is needed to offset the expenses of accessory equipment and training materials.

To make a gift in support of EMS training offered through Aurora Medical Center in Grafton, please call 877-460-8730.
The healing gardens of Aurora Health Care

Bright and beautiful blooms, lush green plants and gently winding paths of the Aurora Health Care healing gardens allow our patients to recover in a calming venue.

In accord with our purpose to help people live well, Aurora provides patients, their families, visitors and caregivers with healing gardens at 10 Aurora locations. All of the Aurora gardens provide a soothing environment suitable for reflection, meditation, and restoring mental and emotional health.

The natural views promote healing as they foster positive feelings and reduce negative emotions. And each garden offers a respite to those individuals who may be overwhelmed by stress and anxiety caused by illness and associated medical treatments.

Please consider supporting the healing environment in the gardens throughout Aurora Health Care. Purchasing a commemorative brick to be installed in one of our gardens is a distinctive way to remember a loved one, honor a dear friend or celebrate one of life’s great moments.

For more information, please refer to the enclosed gift envelope or call 877-460-8730.

Rooftop respite commemorates 5 years

Since it opened in 2008, patients at Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center in Milwaukee are enveloped by nature high above the city. Located on the eighth floor of the patient tower, the Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation Healing Garden and the Agnes and Morland Hamilton Healing Conservatory provide a peaceful haven for patients during their hospital stays.

With more than 14,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space, this garden is designed to be an all-seasons sanctuary. The entire $4.9 million project was funded through support from generous donors.

Don Tendick Jr. served as the chairman of the committee that undertook the challenge of designing the garden and raising the funds necessary to complete the project.

“When you walk into the healing garden, you get a fresh feeling of living plants, a view of Lake Michigan and the downtown skyline. It takes your mind off of why you’re in the hospital,” said Don.

To commemorate the fifth anniversary of the rooftop garden, a weeklong celebration will include an open house on Saturday, July 27.

For more information or to make a gift in support of the healing environment at Aurora St. Luke’s, please refer to the enclosed gift envelope or call 877-460-8730.

Aurora Health Care healing garden locations

Enjoy peace and tranquility in the garden the next time you visit one of these Aurora Health Care locations:

- Aurora Behavioral Health Services – Kradwell School campus in Wauwatosa
- Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh
- Aurora Medical Center in Manitowoc County, Two Rivers
- Aurora Medical Center in Summit
- Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center
- Aurora Sinai Medical Center in Milwaukee
- Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center in Milwaukee
- Aurora St. Luke’s South Shore in Cudahy
- Aurora VNA Zilber Family Hospice in Wauwatosa
- Aurora West Allis Medical Center

New gardens will be completed at these locations in 2013:

- Aurora Medical Center in Grafton
- Aurora Medical Center in Washington County, Hartford

The Healing garden at Aurora Medical Center in Summit

The Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation Healing Garden and the Agnes and Morland Hamilton Healing Conservatory at Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center
Legacy of care continues at Aurora Sinai Medical Center
“Rooted in the Past, Growing Toward the Future”

We’re proud to host the 150th Anniversary Gala of Aurora Sinai Medical Center Saturday, Aug. 24, at The Pfister Hotel. Proceeds from this elegant black-tie event benefit Aurora Sinai’s Well Community programs.

Aurora Health Care’s commitment to the heart of Milwaukee stretches back to the city’s earliest days. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the oldest of the five hospitals that ultimately consolidated to form what we know of today as Aurora Sinai Medical Center. They were all developed out of the commitment of leading citizens to battle the most challenging diseases of their day and to serve the poor. They were the critical social change agents of their time.

Aurora’s new initiative – Well Community – responds to the increasing health and wellness gaps impacting far too many. Aurora Health Care provides the highest volume of uncompensated care of any local health care system. Each year, more than 280,000 people seek out Aurora Health Care’s Well Community programs that address multiple health and wellness needs by providing free and low-cost medical services, especially for those who have nowhere else to turn. Aurora Sinai is the hub of these services in the greater Milwaukee community.

As we grow toward the future, we see tremendous opportunities to impact the health and well-being of Milwaukee’s diverse and vital downtown community. Our vision is a well community. When we’re all healthy, the potential of our community is limitless and dreams come true.

To make a gift in support of Aurora Sinai’s Well Community programs, please call 877-460-8730.

Help tackle cancer with Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation

The 26th Annual Lombardi Walk/Run for Cancer will be held Saturday, June 8, at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Drawing thousands of walkers and runners, all proceeds benefit Vince Lombardi Cancer Clinic sites throughout Wisconsin.

The Lombardi Cancer Walk in Oshkosh will be held Saturday, June 22, on the campus of Aurora Medical Center. All funds raised will benefit the Vince Lombardi Cancer Clinic in Oshkosh.

The two events support the fighters, admire the survivors, honor the taken and give everyone hope to never, ever give up. Whether participating as a family or as part of a workplace team, these events raise awareness and funds for the fight against cancer. All funds raised in the community, stay in the community.

To register for the Lombardi Walk/Run for Cancer in Milwaukee, visit LombardiFoundation.org. Register early for a discount.

To register for the Lombardi Cancer Walk in Oshkosh, visit Aurora.org/OshkoshWalk.
Physician inspires new breed of triathletes through Team Phoenix

“It can be difficult for breast cancer patients to return to a regular exercise program after cancer treatment,” said Aurora Sinai Medical Center breast surgeon Judy Tjoe, MD. “We knew we could do more to support patients in this endeavor.”

While training for an Ironman competition, Dr. Tjoe noted many analogies between the triathlon events and breast cancer treatment. Inspired by her patients’ frequently expressed desire to regain fitness after surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, Dr. Tjoe created the Team Phoenix program.

Breast cancer survivors of all stages, ages and fitness levels train for a sprint distance triathlon as the impetus to regain an active lifestyle to achieve lifelong health and fitness goals. Treatment side effects are taken into consideration, including scarring and fibrosis caused by surgery and radiation, deconditioning due to chemotherapy and altered metabolism caused by early menopause.

Team Phoenix members train with other patients to complete an all-women sprint distance triathlon, composed of a half-mile open-water swim, 12-mile bike ride and 3.1-mile run. Team Phoenix members work with professional coaches and medical volunteers during a 14-week training program that physically and mentally prepares them to finish the triathlon. Nutrition and core strength training are emphasized. The program is tailored to a patient’s individual abilities and can be modified for patients experiencing cancer treatment side effects. To date, 37 women who completed the training program also completed the triathlon, and most participants continue to exercise regularly to this day.

Fellow breast cancer survivors enhance their survivorship through prescribed workouts, training together and motivating each other to get to the finish line. As teammates, they support one another as they achieve new and exciting milestones together, transforming themselves and their bodies from patients to athletes.

Since its successful inception in 2011, Team Phoenix is now linked with Aurora research to better understand mechanisms of how exercise improves survival after breast cancer. In 2012, Team Phoenix athletes participated in studying the effects of moderate exercise on aerobic capacity, strength and psychological well-being after breast cancer treatment. In 2013, the effect of exercise on estrogen levels and inflammatory cytokines, thought to affect cancer recurrence, also will be studied.

Thanks to generous gifts from individual donors, Aurora Health Care Foundation’s Pink Possible activities, Team Phoenix fundraising events, and local and national sponsors from the triathlon community, the program is looking forward to a third successful year.

To make a gift in support of 2013 Team Phoenix as they train for the Athleta Iron Girl Women’s Triathlon in Pleasant Prairie, Wis., please call 877-460-8730.

Leave a legacy

Before traveling this summer, many people may review their wills or trusts. It’s especially true when a trip involves air transportation or overseas travel. Before you pack your bags, take the time to review your plan. For help with such a review, please call Stephen Davis, director of gift planning, at 414-219-4751 or visit AuroraLegacy.org for more information.
**Calendar of events**

- **June 7-8** V Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation – Lombardi Golf Classic | To register online, please visit LombardiFoundation.org.
- **June 8** Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation – Lombardi Run/Walk | To register online, please visit LombardiFoundation.org.
- **June 22** Lombardi Cancer Walk on the campus of Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh | To register online, please visit Aurora.org/OshkoshWalk.
- **July 26** Aurora Lakeland Medical Center – McGMO Golf Outing | For more information, please call Michelle Weber at 262-741-2382.
- **July 29** Aurora Visiting Nurse Association of Wisconsin – Golf Outing | For more information, please call Judi Strout at 414-615-5935.
- **Aug. 24** Aurora Sinai Medical Center – 150th Anniversary Gala | To provide sponsorship or learn more, please contact Elaine Maly at 414-219-7827.

If interested in attending an event or to learn about sponsorship, donation or volunteer opportunities, please call Aurora Health Care Foundation at 877-460-8730.

**Event Profile**

Inaugural golf outing to support Aurora Visiting Nurse Association of Wisconsin

On Monday, July 29, the gently rolling landscape of Chenequa Country Club will be the perfect backdrop for a day to partake in the Aurora Visiting Nurse Association Charity Golf Classic. Friends and golf enthusiasts, please mark your calendars for this unique opportunity to play on a beautiful private course in the heart of Lake Country. Participants will enjoy a traditional golf outing with lunch on the deck, a driving range, golf, cocktails, dinner and a special program.

As Wisconsin’s oldest and largest home health care provider, Aurora VNA delivers compassionate care enabling people to remain independent in their homes and communities. Proceeds from this event will support the continued care of our most vulnerable patients, including families with premature infants, infirm elderly and terminally ill patients.

To register for the golf outing or make a gift in support of Aurora VNA, please call Judi Strout at 414-615-5935.