

Kids Kamp

# Summer Lovin'



WeIness News

## Tickets on Sale Now!

# Garden in The City Gala



Last year, Wellness House hosted over 420 guests at Revel Fulton Market in Chicago for its annual black-tie ball, and raised over \$500,000 for programs supporting those who are living with cancer. **This year's event, the Garden in the City Gala, will be held Saturday, October 14 at the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel.** This garden inspired gala will provide an opportunity to support those living with cancer through a wine auction, live auction and paddle raise. Gala chairs, Molly & Jerry Hughes and Elizabeth & David Risinger along with Wine Chairs Laurel & William Haarlow and Rebecca & Phil Mavon began planning this very special event over a year ago. Don't miss this very meaningful evening!

Tickets are on sale now at [www.wellnesshouse.org](http://www.wellnesshouse.org)



2017 Gala Chairs, Elizabeth & David Risinger and Molly & Jerry Hughes

## Dear Friends,

We talk a lot about the individual cancer journey here at Wellness House. We provide objective, evidence based information and classes so participants can do what's right for them as they navigate cancer. When I read about Choonie and Sue's journeys in the Navigating Cancer article in this newsletter, it struck me that they were both looking for tools and direction. It was as though they needed a compass.

When my daughter and son in law were married, we chose to give them a compass as part of their wedding gift. The compass was a symbol of values and principles that guide them through life — a reminder of their true north. It's through our true north that we make decisions.

That's the beauty of the survivorship series presented at Loyola. Wellness House and Loyola Medicine joined together to provide the best possible information for cancer survivors so they can be reminded of their true north as they make individual choices for their lives. What's right for one person might not be right for the next. Choonie felt medical treatment addressed a fixed point in time and the Beyond Cancer Survivorship Series helped her address her future. She's using the tools learned through the survivorship series to map out her future and do what's best for her cancer journey. At Wellness House, our experts, specialists and programs focus on the individual needs of people through every step of cancer.

We're so thankful to receive support from generous donors who help provide no cost support for people like Choonie and Sue at our growing partner locations. Your generosity places a compass in the back pocket of each and every participant as they navigate life with cancer and beyond.

**Jeannie Cella**  
President and CEO

**John Paro**  
Board Chair

## The Annual Lifetime Trustee Dinner

A very special evening during which we honor friends who have made an extraordinary impact on Wellness House by giving of their time, talent and treasure.

Close to 150 people attended the 2017 Lifetime Trustee dinner at the Hyatt Lodge in Oak Brook. Guests were invited to mingle at an outdoor reception before enjoying a sit-down dinner and presentation. The evening began with the presentation of the annual Heart of the House award to **The Courtyard Merchandisers, Nancy Keenan, Sheila Botti and Kathy Ryan. Their work has played a significant role in allowing us to fulfill our mission.** We stand strong because of their incredible persistence and long-time dedication. Since the opening of The Courtyard in 1991, Nancy, Sheila and Kathy have contributed their many talents and countless hours of time cultivating a thriving consignment shop which has been profitable since day one. They've created a unique and robust volunteer culture where lifelong friendships develop and a spirit of giving inspires all who work with them. It's only through their steadfast and unwavering leadership that The Courtyard is as successful as it is today with a dedicated group of over 70 volunteers and more than 4 million dollars contributed to Wellness House. This amazing trio has remained wholeheartedly committed year after year, with Wellness House benefiting from their unparalleled hard work and longevity.



The Courtyard Merchandisers, Kathy Ryan, Sheila Botti and Nancy Keenan

The evening closed with the presentation of the Lifetime Trustee award to **Suzanne and Jim Hallene. Each year, Wellness House honors philanthropic leaders who, in addition to making financial contributions, provide leadership, sharing time and talent as well.**

Jim and Suzanne became involved over 15 years ago through participation in fundraisers such as Madness for Wellness, Wellness Cup, the annual Walk for Wellness House and Ball. When Jim was asked to join the board in 2008, he responded, "It would be a privilege to serve on the Wellness House Board and I will do it in honor of my father who died of cancer". After joining the board, Jim wasted no time deepening his engagement and served on the Strategic Planning Committee that created the 2008-2011 plan. He then served on the Governance Committee, the Executive Committee and served as Chair of the Board for fiscal years 2013 and 2014. Jim currently remains on the board as the immediate past chair and serves as a member of the Wellness House Foundation Board. **Our participants and our mission are what drive Jim and Suzanne Hallene, as they continue to go above and beyond in support of the growing number of people affected by cancer.**



John Paro  
Chairman of the Board  
Wellness House



Jeannie Cella, Jim &  
Suzanne Hallene

## Walk for Wellness House 2017

### Breaks a Record!

The 2017 Walk for Wellness House turned out to be a record-breaking event. On May 7, 2017, over 3,000 cancer survivors, families, friends and volunteers gathered together for our annual walk. More than \$650,000 was raised to support Wellness House programs. Over 614 people rallied around Brooks Tonn, a local nine-year-old boy who is bravely battling cancer. Two teams (Brooks Strong and The Lane School is Brooks Strong) raised over \$75,000 in Brooks' honor. "We are walking for Brooks Tonn. A strong kid who is beating the odds and won't let cancer bring him down. An inspiration to young and old wrapped up in a 9 year old boy." said Sarah Chase, Team Brooks Strong.

The annual Walk for Wellness House is held each year to make it possible to offer no cost psychosocial support to people affected by cancer around the Chicago area. The proceeds of this inspirational walk provide 20% of the yearly budget.

The Inland Real Estate Group of Companies once again showed their spirit of dedication and support to those living with cancer serving as the event's presenting sponsors and raising over \$100,000 for Wellness House.

**Top teams: Team Inland \$109,351, Brooks Strong \$42,867, RPAI \$35,890, The Crownroyals Team \$5,724, The Lane School is Brooks Strong \$33,745**



Bob Baum of Inland and  
Jeannie Cella

**Save the Date:  
Sunday, May 6th  
2018 Walk for  
Wellness House**

Beyond Cancer Survivorship Series:

# Navigating Cancer After Treatment

Sue Mackovitch, Choonie Cladek



“What I’ve learned from this program helps me make positive changes that I never would have made before. I treasure every day and try to open up to new experiences. I’ve signed up for a trip to Africa and postponing nothing. This life is a journey and every day is special”

**Choonie Cladek**

Choonie Cladek was diagnosed with endometrial cancer in February 2017 and within a matter of a few short weeks, surgery was completed and followed by radiation treatments. It was a whirlwind and happened within the blink of an eye. The initial shock of malignancy had gripped her during the initial diagnosis and she was wondering what came next as she navigated life after treatment. As Choonie was leaving one of her last radiation treatments at Loyola in May, she found information on a table about a survivorship educational series called Beyond Cancer. She was relieved to read about the five-week program for cancer survivors. The prospect of getting answers to her questions and concerns was comforting to her so she decided to sign up. “After all that had happened, I felt a certain openness and readiness for change. I wanted to constructively move into the next phase of my life and do things that would help me minimize recurrence. I knew I wanted to make positive changes and needed direction to do that” said Choonie.

The Beyond Cancer survivorship series and partnership between Loyola Medicine and Wellness House began when Dr. Patricia Robinson with the Loyola Survivorship Clinic recognized the need for information and support during

the critical time after treatment. Dr. Robinson approached Wellness House to see about combining expertise. The staff at Wellness House saw this as a great opportunity to support cancer patients after treatment, a time when they often feel alone and unsupported. They began the process of pulling together staff to make it happen. “This program is a true partnership between Wellness House and Loyola. The expert staff from each organization have co-created content and co-presented. The program consists of five modules that bring together complementary knowledge, staffing and resources. **This partnership resulted in a unique model of medical and psychosocial knowledge, built upon the strengths of both locations,**” said Lisa Kolavennu, Senior Director of Programs at Wellness House. The five-week series includes: Introduction to Survivorship; Nutrition; Social, Emotional and Practical Aspect of Survivorship; Exercise and Movement; and Medical Concerns After Treatment. This was exactly what Choonie felt she needed. After processing the emotional and physical aspects of treatment, she realized she needed direction on the survivorship path. For Choonie and other cancer survivors, information and support is a meaningful part of recovery and often difficult to find after treatment. Recurrence is a concern to Choonie, and the

information she received about surveillance, future testing and having a cancer plan empowered her in all areas of her life. “There’s really no place to get all this information with this focus on how to live your life after cancer. Nobody that looks at your life holistically,” said Choonie.

Sue Mackovitch also attended the Beyond Cancer survivorship series and was looking for direction and information after treatment for an aggressive form of thyroid, windpipe and voice box cancer. **“I had a lot of unanswered questions and wanted to get a better understanding of my cancer. It was important to me to learn about exercise and nutrition specific to people with cancer,”** said Sue. While attending the Beyond Cancer program at Loyola, she also began attending the Thyroid Cancer Networking Group at the Wellness House Hinsdale location. Sue also signed up for a nutritional consultation with Registered Dietitian, Angela Dennison. “I felt I wasn’t going it alone after treatment” said Sue.

Studies have shown that when treatment ends, there is often a peak in stress. There are key times when stress seems to be at its highest — upon diagnosis, initiation of treatment and end of treatment. It’s a time when cancer patients no longer have their care team watching closely to what’s happening with their cancer or monitoring side effects after treatment. Once treatment is over, and patients are no longer receiving chemo or radiation, fear of recurrence and the stress that goes with it can be a major source of concern. Dr. Steven Cole, Professor of Medicine and Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences in the UCLA School of Medicine studies the pathways by which social environments influence gene expression in cancer patients. Cole’s research mapped the pathways by which social factors such as exercise, diet, support and stress level affect cancer progression and metastasis after cancer. His research revealed that there is an increased five-year survival rate of cancer for people with increased social support. The largest increased survival was shown when people with the most challenging cancers received whole-person care.

Choonie feels that medical treatment for her cancer addressed a fixed moment in time but the Beyond Cancer series addressed her future. **“You have survived, have this beautiful life, and there are things you can do to minimize the chances of recurrence,”** said Choonie. The Beyond Cancer Survivorship series gave Choonie and Sue the information they were seeking at that critical fork in the road between treatment and recovery. The tools they learned in the survivorship series serve as a compass to help guide the way as they navigate their individual cancer survivorship journey.



Daniel Frank, MD  
DuPage Medical Group



## Hot Topics:

# Breast Cancer Annual Symposium 2017

Wellness House presented Hot Topics in Breast cancer on June 24, 2017 to over 100 participants. This free symposium brought together top oncologists, surgeons and healthcare professionals in the Chicagoland area to present the latest updates in the treatment of breast cancer. A morning presentation and panel discussion was presented to all 100 women attending and included: Updates in Medical Oncology with Daniel Frank, MD, DuPage Medical Group; Updates in Surgical Oncology with Swati Kulkarni, MD, Northwestern University; Updates in Radiation Oncology, with Sonal Mayekar, MD, Rush University Medical Center; and Less is More — How and Why we are Doing Less Surgery for Breast Cancer with Nora Jaskowiak, MD, University of Chicago.

After lunch, participants were given the opportunity to choose break-out sessions specific to their individual interests. Break-out sessions included Heredity Breast Cancers with Rebecca Johnson, DuPage Medical Group; Updates in Metastatic Breast Cancer with Renee Jacobs, MD, Amita Health Care Institute; and Recurrence Reduction: Strategic Use of Nutrients and Botanicals with Michelle Smekens, Cancer Treatment Centers of America. All sessions were followed by a Q & A, in which participants could ask specific questions about treatment options relevant to their own situation.

As a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer, she is faced with an enormous array of options for treatment. Educational programs provide benefits as she navigates the journey from diagnosis to treatment and beyond. The benefits of educational programs in cancer care have been measured by scientific research. Evidence now exists for several specific benefits related to participating in educational programs, including decreases in fatigue, confusion, depression, and mood disturbance, and increases in vigor and active coping responses. “Information is critical for patients to understand their cancer, to ease their anxiety, and make an informed decision about their treatment.” said Dr. Daniel Frank with the DuPage Medical Group. As more and more treatment options become available, informed decisions can sometimes mean avoiding surgery and preserving breast tissue with a same or better outcome. According to Dr. Swati Kulkarni, “Many women believe that if they have more surgery, the outcome will be better, and that’s not always the case. Sometimes less is more”. Wellness House is dedicated to providing Information and education programs by top healthcare professionals all year long to people living with cancer.

Left, Jeri Lau  
Oncology Exercise Specialist  
Right, Jady Chipman  
Oncology Exercise Specialist



Meet Our Experts:

**Fitness Assessments & Goal Setting:**

# The First Step to Healing

“I encourage everyone to have an assessment and set goals. I tell them it’s important to see where they are now because they are never going to be here again – that they will keep improving. It’s a way for them to see how far they’ve come.”

**Jeri Lau**  
Oncology Exercise Specialist

In their roles as oncology exercise specialists, Jeri and Jady design and implement effective exercise programs and classes for participants. Jeri joined the Wellness House team in 2005 and is certified by the American College of Sports Medicine/American Cancer Society as a Cancer Exercise Trainer and by the Cancer Exercise Training Institute as a Cancer Exercise Specialist. Jady joined the Wellness House team in 2016, after completing a semester-long internship at Wellness House. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise Science from Illinois State University, is a licensed Group Exercise Instructor through the American College of Sports Medicine, and is an active member within that organization.

#### Where does a participant begin?

A fitness assessment with goal setting is an important starting point for Wellness House exercise programs. Research has shown that exercise can help participants gain strength and reduce side effects. It plays an important role in achieving a better outcome no matter where a participant is along the cancer continuum.

Assessments provide a base line level of fitness and perspective as participant’s progress. Each assessment tests the five health related components of fitness: cardio respiratory endurance, muscle strength, balance, flexibility and body composition. Cancer and its treatments can complicate these five health components so working with someone who is certified and knows how cancer treatment affects the body is important,” said Jady. Chemotherapy and radiation can sometimes affect the heart itself, peripheral neuropathy in feet can affect balance, muscle wasting or osteoporosis can occur if on hormone treatments. Finding a base line is essential in knowing what types of exercise would be helpful depending on how the participant is affected by cancer treatment. An assessment then becomes a roadmap for what modifications can be made in class for unique situations.

Participants are encouraged to develop their own goals so they become the driver. Wellness House exercise oncologists provide the guidance and support to help them reach their goals and fully live life with cancer and beyond.



Kids Kamp:

# Summer

If you close your eyes for a moment and think about your first experience at camp, chances are you'll remember a flurry of fun filled, kid lovin' activities.

# Lovin'

Every July, Wellness House buzzes with the excitement and energy of Kids Kamp, and while there might be a few tears at drop off, the days are full and kids are being kids. Carly Jokich, Oncology Child and Family Specialist, joined Wellness House in April 2017. One of her earliest memories of summer camp in third grade was crying during drop off. She remembers that well and if there is a child at Kids Kamp who is slower to warm up, she's able to relate to the difficulty of separation. Carly spent the last six years at Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago as a Certified Child Life Specialist. She worked in the outpatient clinic with children and their families and then moved to the neonatal intensive care unit. 'It was extremely rewarding and an honor for me to be a part of a family's journey even during the most challenging times,' said Carly. Her experiences at Lurie helped her know how to support every member of the family and facilitate programs such as Kids Kamp that nourish and speak to the heart.

Over 30 kids attended Kids Kamp this year — half participate in the Wellness House Family Matters program and the other half learned of the program from social workers or others in the community. Kids Kamp provides an opportunity for kids to

experience traditional summer activities from backyard Olympics to scavenger hunts. Special performances such as a bubble show, laser comedy show, and magician capped off most days. The goal is for kids to just be kids and have fun. "It also provides them an opportunity to connect with other kids who have experienced cancer themselves or in their family", said Carly. Like all programs at Wellness House, Kids Kamp is provided at no cost. Many kids are at Wellness House for the first time. Some attend year after year and anticipate it all year long. You'll even find a few who come back to be camp counselors. Although cancer isn't the focus, kids do talk about it. Kids can be heard talking to each other, asking 'does it hurt, how does it feel, do you have to get a lot of shots?' They are having these simple conversations in a safe place. Carly notes, "It's interesting that while we aren't focusing on counseling or therapeutic interventions, the elements of fun and togetherness make camp a healing experience." A few parents could be heard leaving Kids Kamp on day four saying "our kids seemed more carefree this week". That's the goal for Wellness House Kids Kamp. Put together fun and love and you get magic!

**Wellness House** | Main Location  
The Kay & Mike Birck Home of Hope  
131 North County Line Road  
Hinsdale, Illinois 60521

We would be happy to review your current gifting strategy to make sure you are maximizing the personal and tax advantages allowed.

David Blaydes and his team may be reached at [info@rpiplan.com](mailto:info@rpiplan.com) or 630.778.8100.

[www.rpiplan.com](http://www.rpiplan.com)

Learn more about us at [wellnesshouse.org](http://wellnesshouse.org)

## Trends in Giving:

According to Giving USA 2016, Americans gave an estimated \$373.25 billion to charity in 2015, the highest total in more than 60 years. Americans give to charity for three main reasons: To support a cause or organization, reduce taxes or leave a legacy.

When gifting, some people elect to support through cash donations. Others, however, understand that supporting an organization may generate tax benefits. Here's a quick review of a few charitable choices:

**Direct gifts** are gifts made directly to a charity. Typically these type of gifts fall under "itemized deductions" for your tax return and therefore can only be deducted to the extent they exceed 2% of your Adjusted Gross Income.

**Required minimum distributions** (RMD's) must be withdrawn from your qualified retirement accounts, such as IRA's and 401(K)'s at age 70 ½. However, the IRS will allow you to have your RMD's paid directly to a charity in which case you avoid the taxation. Unlike direct gifts, they are not subject to the 2% of AGI rule.

**Charitable gift** annuities are not related to annuities offered by insurance companies. The donor gives money, normally appreciated securities, or real estate, and in return, the charity agrees to pay the donor a fixed income for life. Upon the death of the donor, the assets pass to the charity. This allows donors to receive consistent income and potentially reduce taxes.

**Gifts in trust** enable donors to contribute to a charity and leave assets to beneficiaries. With a charitable remainder trust, the donor can receive lifetime income from the trust, which then passes to the charity when the donor dies.

*Remember, the information in this article is not intended as tax or legal advice. And it may not be used for the purpose of avoiding any federal tax penalties. Please consult legal or tax professionals for specific information regarding your individual situation.*

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You'll treasure the experience.

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