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## OUR MISSION

We are a volunteer community of individuals affected by cancer dedicated to assisting people diagnosed with cancer and their caregivers, so that no one goes through cancer alone.

Our services include our helpline, a variety of support groups, one-on-one support, referrals, education, information and training. We also recognize supporters in the community at our Hope & Healing Honors events.

The CSN Newsletter is a quarterly publication of Cancer Support Now.  
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Call our Helpline at **505 255 0405**  
or toll free **855 955 3500** for information.  
All CSN Support Services are free.

# Hope and Healing Honors 2018

Thank you to the sponsors and volunteers who made 2018's Hope and Healing Honors a tremendous Success!

More than 100 cancer survivors and their loved ones came to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in December to honor the physicians, nurses, other healthcare providers, businesses and volunteers who make a difference in our community.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Anjie Cureton and Brittany Karnezis

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## MY NEW STAGE IV LIFE

*Gavriela de Boer, Editor*

In my last column, I shared my frustration over the interminable waiting for a diagnosis after five emotionally tumultuous weeks of being seen, poked, prodded scanned, and biopsied. The verdict came in November:

Stage IV metastatic Merkel Cell Carcinoma. Not Pancreatic Neuroendocrine Cancer, which I had three years earlier, but a recurrence of the first cancer I had seven-and-a-half years ago. The one they had told me was considered cured after five years of no recurrence. Suddenly, my UNMCC doctors were more concerned with “quality of life” issues than with finding effective treatments.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tricia Monaghan, JD, Legal Advisor

Eleanor Schick, Helpline

Patricia Torn, Facilitator Training/Workshops Cancer Thriving and Surviving

Runtang Wang, Webmaster

## CANCER PEER-SUPPORT AFFIRMATION

I OFFER MY PRESENCE, a presence that listens without judgment, a presence that is comfortable with silence, tears and laughter, a presence that offers encouragement.

SUPPORT IS JUST THAT -- being there, listening attentively, accepting moments of silence, tears and laughter, encouraging without judgment.

WHAT IS THE GIFT I HAVE TO OFFER as a support person? I have a personal experience of cancer -- I understand and I am not afraid to be there to listen.

Years ago, I decided if Merkel Cell reappeared, I would travel to Seattle, WA, where world-renowned MCC experts have assembled the largest database of MCC patients and tumor tissue known to humankind. Great decision. The MCC team at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance gave me hope, despite my dire situation. They immediately ruled out surgery, radiation and chemotherapy, saying that immunotherapy is the best bet for shrinking the tumors. Fifty percent of people do well on the treatment; in some, the tumors shrink, and in some, the tumors actually disappear. So if I fall into that lucky 50 percent, I'll be the happiest woman alive. I'm not going to think about the other 50 percent for now.

My oncologist in NM, who specializes in neuroendocrine cancers, agreed with the plan the Seattle folks suggested: infusions of Avelumab, the only FDA-approved immunotherapy drug for MCC. I am now in the eighth week of treatment. I usually get a headache and feel a bit achy and tired after the infusion, but it's tolerable. We won't know if it's working for another month and a half. In the meantime, I am living my stage IV life. Working on staying positive. I look ok, I feel ok, and I'm grateful.

See you at the Conference.

A handwritten signature in cursive ink that reads "Gavriela".

**FREE CANCER SUPPORT NOW SERVICES**  
**For Information, call our helpline: 505 255 0405**

**SOUTHWEST SISTERS**

*Breast and Gynecological Cancer Support  
Second and fourth Wednesdays 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm  
Lovelace Women's Hospital  
Sue Whipple & C.J. Kreider*

**RIO RANCHO AREA BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP**

*All women breast cancer survivors  
First and third Tuesdays noon - 1:30 pm  
Barbara Michael and Donna Storey*

**UNM/CSN FRIENDS AND FAMILY WRITING TOGETHER**

*Journaling Support Group for Grief or Anticipatory Grief  
For caregivers/loved ones of someone with any type of cancer  
Every Thursday, 4:00 - 5:30 pm at UNM Cancer Center  
Eleanor Schick and Anjie Cureton*

**PUEBLO OF ISLETA CANCER COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

*Second Tuesday of the month, 10:30 am - Noon  
Isleta Pueblo Health Clinic  
Stephanie Barela*

**WOMEN'S NORTH VALLEY GROUP**

*All cancers, survivors and caregivers  
Every other Thursday, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm  
Montano, West of Fourth Street  
Michele Brandwein and Geri Stayman*

**OVARIAN OPEN ARMS**

*Third Saturday of the month, 10:30 am  
Lovelace Women's Hospital 4701 Montgomery Boulevard NE  
Conference room "A" on the first floor.  
Margaret Goga, Debbie Reynolds, and Pamela Engel*

**TAOS GROUP**

*Survivors (all cancers) and/or caregivers, men and women  
Tuesdays, 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm  
413 Sipapu Street, Taos  
Christine Sherwood and Susan Haugen*

**SANTA FE WOMEN'S GROUP, SURVIVING SISTERS**

*For all diagnoses for women; Second and fourth Tuesday, 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm  
2098 Calle Ensenada, Santa Fe  
Ms. Fred, Emily Haozous & Elizabeth Harris*

**U27 (UNDER 27 YEARS OLD)**

*Third Wednesday of the month  
Meeting Place TBD  
Kimberley Craft*

**UNM/CSN SURVIVORS WRITING TOGETHER**

*Journaling Support Group  
Survivors, all diagnoses  
Every Monday, 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm  
UNM Cancer Center  
Anjie Cureton and Eleanor Schick*

**UNM /CSN EDUCATION AND SUPPORT GROUP**

*Survivors &/or Caregivers, all diagnoses  
First and third Monday, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm  
University and Copper  
Anjie Cureton and Adele Frances*

**THYROID SUPPORT GROUP**

*Coming Soon*

**ONE-ON-ONE CANCER CAREGIVER SESSION**

*One time, 90-minute Session:  
Resources & Support for Cancer Caregivers  
Scheduled individually to accommodate the needs of the caregiver; Call Patricia at 505 307 3414*

**ONE-ON-ONE SMOKING CESSATION**

*Scheduled individually.  
Call Patricia at 505 307 3414*

**ONE-ON-ONE PEER CANCER SUPPORT OR PEER MATCHING**

*Call our Helpline: 505 255 0405*

**CANCER NAVIGATION**

*Assists with non-medical needs of survivors or their loved ones, Call our Helpline: 505-255-0405*

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

**PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT ASSOCIATION OF NEW MEXICO (PCSANM)**

*First and third Saturday of the month*  
*Bear Canyon Senior Center, 4645 Pitt St. NE*  
*Jerry Cross: 505 228 6768 or jeraldcross@comcast.net*

**GCAP CIRCLES OF HOPE**

*Gynecological Cancer Awareness Project*  
*Second Saturday, 9:30 am fellowship/light breakfast,*  
*10:00 - 11:00 am groups: breast cancer, gynecological cancers, and caregivers.*  
*Contact: Amy Gundlach cleversenoras@gmail.com or*  
*Pat Belletto pbelleto@msn.com or*  
*505 610 9300*

**NMCC SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

*Head and Neck Cancer Support Group for Men*  
*Second & fourth Mondays, call: 505 796 3513*  
*CLIMB Program for children when scheduled*  
*Call 505 857 8460; Gift Closet: Every Wednesday*  
*2:00 - 5:00 pm; Call 505 857 8460*

**LOVELACE BREAST CARE CENTER**

*Young Breast Cancer Survivors Support Group*  
*Third Tuesday of the month, call 505 727 6900*  
*Yoga for Breast Cancer Survivors*  
*Tuesdays and Fridays, Call 505 727 6933*

**LYMPHEDEMA SUPPORT GROUP**

*Second Monday at 6:00 pm*  
*Call Julia Archibeque-Guerra at 505 252 0024 or*  
*Jackie Hertel at 505 265 2339 for location*

**CANCER SERVICES OF NEW MEXICO**

*Legal, Insurance, & Paperwork Assistance Program*  
*(LIPA) 505 999 9764*

**FORCE (FACING OUR RISK OF CANCER EMPOWERED)**

*Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered*  
*Support for those with genetic mutations*  
*Third Sunday of the month, Women's Hospital,*  
*Auditorium B2:00 - 4:00 pm*  
*Contact Lou Wilburn at lswilburn05@aol.com*

**Blood Cancer Support Group**

*Second Thursday of the month, 7:00 - 8:30 pm*  
*Kaseman Hospital*  
*Call Jamie McDonald: 505 291 2006*

### In Memoriam

### Cheri Green

Cheri is survived by her loving husband, Shane, and cherised family members.

