



# 2014 Annual Report

## *Your Personal Resource for Breast Cancer Education and Support*

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### *The Year in Review*

Reflecting back on 2014, we are struck by the profound advances in medicine. New drugs and treatments, adjuvant therapy, personalized medicine, advanced diagnostic tools and surgical techniques - the list goes on. A diagnosis today will most likely have improved treatment options and survivorship than the same diagnosis just a few years ago. We greet these advances with joy and optimism. But we cannot ignore some troubling statistics. It is anticipated that more than 232,000 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed this year and more than 39,000 individuals with breast cancer will not survive their disease.

The mission of our organization is to focus on supporting each and every individual coming through the door. We cannot sing enough praise for the staff and volunteers of *To Life!* - they are the ones who get it done. Each day brings one amazing encounter after another. All visitors to our offices in Delmar and Saratoga Springs are made to feel welcomed. Whether you call on the phone, come to the office for a support group, visit a boutique, take advantage of our healing touch and massage therapies, or reach out via our website, *To Life!* staff will be there for you.

Chronicled in this publication is evidence of a community that supports our efforts. Read further for special insight into a few special people. It is our privilege to be part of this wonderful circle of friends. Our board member Rita refers to the "club", reflecting the common bond felt amongst those who share a breast cancer diagnosis and collectively fight back. We are all in this together!

Eileen Howe Bird  
Executive Director

Mara Ginsberg  
President and Founder



Melanie Murphy



Helen Warner



Ann Rose

### *Peggy's Story*

Peggy was the inspiring face of *To Life!*'s 2014 Annual Appeal. She and her adoring husband Gary attended the Pink Ball in 2013. During the presentation of our community award, this stunning woman in an elegant flowing chiffon gown came forward and gently tugged at my arm for attention. She introduced herself simply as "Peggy," saying "You know, I am a breast cancer survivor and I really want to tell these people just what *To Life!* has meant to me".



You see, Peggy has been fighting breast cancer for more than seven years. There are good days and bad days and treatment complications have taken their toll on her health. On this particular night, Peggy recalled how isolated and alone she felt when she was first diagnosed and started treatment. Yes, she has a loving husband and close family. But she was the only one with cancer. Peggy recalls "Having driven by the office many times, I never dreamed I would be the one walking through the doors of *To Life!*. For a moment, it felt like the end, but it really was just the beginning." Peggy's message for others:

*"To Life! is a great asset. Don't go it alone; they were and are there for me, and they can help you too."*

### *To Life! Boutique Services*

At our boutiques located in Delmar and Saratoga Springs, *To Life!* served 450 clients last year. A growing clientele in the boutiques are women who continue, following treatment, to utilize our services to update their wigs and undergarments. Our fitters continuously seek out new products to freshen the available offerings.

*To Life!* is a Medicare certified facility, our most recent audit receiving praise from the reviewer. *To Life!* participates directly with CDPHP, MVP, and Empire Blue Cross insurance plans. Fitting services are available by appointment free of charge.

## Educational Programs

To Life! has earned a reputation for hosting high quality educational programming. It is our delight and pleasure to have a host of wonderful program advisors, gifted speakers, and engaged board members who help us pull together the formidable slate of events hosted throughout the year. Many of these programs are co-sponsored with medical provider partners and fellow community organizations. These cooperative endeavors help us all achieve more with limited resources. **Total attendance for 10 programs in 2014 was over 894!**

### February 6: The future of Cancer Care: How the Affordable Care Act will impact delivery of care and treatment for Cancer Patients and Survivors

Healthcare in our region is constantly evolving and improving. Medical practices and alliances, changes in how we pay for healthcare, and advances in medical technology will all affect your health care in the future. Speakers: Michael Kolodziej, MD and Eileen Wood, RPh MBA. Sponsored by To Life!

### May 21: A Thrivers Guide to Wellness: Movement

Interactive demonstrations for cardiovascular health, strengthening, flexibility and restorative movement. This program is funded by the Nancy B. Clemente Cancer Fund.

### June 10: Cooking for Life!

To Life! Presents an evening in the Kitchen with Eric Sharer, Oncology Nutritionist, Stram Center

### June 19: How a Comprehensive Cancer Risk Assessment Program supports Patient Care in Primary Care and Ob/Gyn Practices

Guest speakers; Jennifer A. Reich, MD, Internal Medicine, Middletown, NY. Panel discussion following presentations. Panelists: Jennifer Reich, MD, Charlene Schulz, MS, Mara Ginsberg, Esq., Trudy Kelly, LPN, and Robert Kelty, MD. This program is a collaborative effort with the To Life!, Myriad and TruJoy.

### August 6: Beat the Odds

Educational forum on breast cancer. Featured presenters include: Arvind Mahatme, MD, Jenny Romero, MD, and Karen Carey.

### August 22: Summer Fest 2014

Health fair, screening services, music, family entertainment, food in the form of a downtown Amsterdam block party. This event organized by Centro Civico, To Life!, Cancer Services and other community organizations.

### October 23: The Metastatic Breast Cancer Conversation

Featured a National Panel discussion organized by Susan G. Komen: Shirley Mertz, Marc Hurlbert, PhD., Judy Salerno, MD. Afternoon – local panel discussion including; Debra Nozik, Mara Ginsberg with Martha McCormick as moderator. Hosted by Susan G. Komen NE New York.

### November 8: Thankful Living—Exploring Complementary Therapies

Celebrate cancer survivorship, techniques that can improve quality of life. Hilton Garden Inn, Troy. Hosted by the Capital Region Cancer Care Consortium.

### December 9: Fourth Annual Women's Health Conference: Informed, Engaged Treatment and Empowered Survivorship

This full-day, comprehensive conference (including lunch) was held at the Carondelet Hospitality Center, Latham, NY.

## Small Group Workshops

To Life! is committed to empowering women to improve their overall health and well-being. A cornerstone of our workshop series continues to be our Breast Health Workshops. In 2014 To Life! launched a new program, Caring Touch During Cancer. This program gives women the tools and resources to better manage the long term effects that may result from cancer treatment. *To Life!* workshops are presented free of charge throughout the community with the goal of providing awareness of breast health, general women's health and early detection.

*"I appreciate an interactive approach to learning, it gets harder as we get older"*

## Fashion Show

The second annual Fashion Show was an awesome experience for 20 cancer survivors/thrivers. Partners For this event organizers

included Crossgates Mall Management, Erin Moore, Macys, Ania Hair Salon, volunteers Catherine Zampier, Isabella Currier, Christina Haupt, Dana Race, Rick Bird and students from "Dance Crazy"(not shown), along with Mara Ginsberg, Eileen Bird from To Life!



## Glamour Shoot

"There is simply nothing like being pampered", reported one delighted attendee. *To Life!*'s staff teamed up with noted area photographer Joe Angermeir to bring out the best in each guest. Each guest was helped to create fun, glamorous new look for the camera—the photos were amazing.



## Meet our Honorees—Special Tributes in 2014

The “Extra Mile” award and the “You’re an Angel” Award were presented at the 16th Annual Gala: “Honoring the Women in our Lives”

### The “Extra Mile” Award

**Dr. Maria Arsyl De Jesus** is a radiation oncologist at New York Oncology Hematology’s Amsterdam Cancer Center. As her own patients and colleagues attest – if there is an *Extra Mile* she can travel to meet a patient’s needs, Dr. De Jesus always takes it – often in a pair of three-inch stilettos! To the many breast cancer patients who seek her out for



*Arsyl De Jesus, MD*

treatment, Dr. De Jesus is much more than a trusted physician – she is a powerful force in their cancer journey. She continues to live her father’s lesson: *treat every patient as if they were family*. With her infectious smile and wicked sense of humor, Dr. De Jesus is an inspiration – by always going the

### The “You’re an Angel” Award

**Diane Keasbey** has been a friend of To Life! for many years. Early work with oncology patients, followed by work experience in related medical areas prepared Diane for her current position as the Community Outreach Nurse with St. Peter’s Hospital Cancer Care Center. Outreach nursing is a multifaceted role that includes patient and community education, prevention, screening, fundraising, navigation, and survivorship. Diane is passionate about connecting with patients, survivors, caregivers, family members and community members to ensure they have the education and tools they need to manage their own care or assist others. Diane is our *Angel*.



*Diane Keasbey, RN, OCN*

### Community Advocate Award

Presented to Saratoga Hospital, with special recognition to Angelo Calbone, President. The festive Pink Ball was the backdrop for a celebration of the ongoing Saratoga Hospital/To Life! partnership. Each month a

group of survivors/thrivers meet at the hospital, providing friendship, support, knowledge and hugs for all.



*Saratoga Hospital staff and friends attend The Pink Ball, on October 17, 2014.*



*Members of the Saratoga Support Group attend The Pink Ball, on October 17, 2014.*

## *The Heart and Soul of the Pink Ball*

To Life! hosted the 10th Annual Pink Ball on October 17, 2014. Event Co-Chairs, Rita Cox and Barbara McDowell worked tirelessly to make the evening a wonderful success on every level. Rita gave the keynote address, reprinted below...

*"You have cancer.*

*Those three words are guaranteed to instantly change your life forever.*

*There's no escaping that fact. No matter how desperately you wish it to be a dream. No matter how long or short your journey, you will always remember those words, where you were when you heard them and who had the heartbreaking responsibility of saying them to you.*

*Trust me when I say, no doctor appointment will EVER be the same again and you'll always have the scars to remind you of those three words, on the off chance that you just might manage to forget them. You know those forms you fill out where it asks you to check boxes next to your various "ailments"? Imagine the extra attention you get when you have to check off the cancer box!*

*But that's not always so bad. We're lucky to have some tremendous doctors and nurses in this community. I love them dearly - especially the ones here tonight! And I'm proud of what my scars mean.*

*If you're here tonight, you may very well understand what I'm talking about. Whether it was a friend or family member, or even you, you know someone who will never be the same again.*

*Being told you have cancer is scary – tremendously so. Imagine driving a car that is suddenly hurtling out of control on a dark, windy downhill road with no brakes – and no steering wheel.*

*But one of the blessings of a breast cancer diagnosis is that just as quickly as it happens, you find yourself with a life time membership in a pretty special club. You may never have wanted to join, but once you're there, it's a life-long safety net that comes from a place of understanding that can only truly be shared by fellow club members.*

*We're here tonight to celebrate the tremendous good that comes out of this club.*

*Mara founded To Life! for the sole purpose of helping ease that fear for those of us who would follow. Of making that safety net bigger and stronger - enough to catch everyone who would follow.*

*The support group you heard about earlier is really a club meeting – when we come together to take care of each other, reinforcing the safety net.*

*The people you met earlier – the hospital staff who make it part of their mission to understand our journeys so that they can do a better job helping those they'll treat the next day.*

*Tonight is about these people who didn't let the fear define them, it's about those who embraced the change and let it empower them so that they can provide for those who come tomorrow and the next day.*

*Catching them isn't an option, it's a requirement."*





## Thank You! Friends of To Life! Step Forward in a Big Way

Throughout the year, businesses and individuals contributed in every imaginable way: automobile sales, quilting weekends, golf outings, road races, shopping events, hair styling, indoors and outdoors activities and more. Our thanks to all the businesses listed on this page for your creativity, tireless energy and financial support.



Emily Stento (center) with Bethlehem High School field hockey teammates.



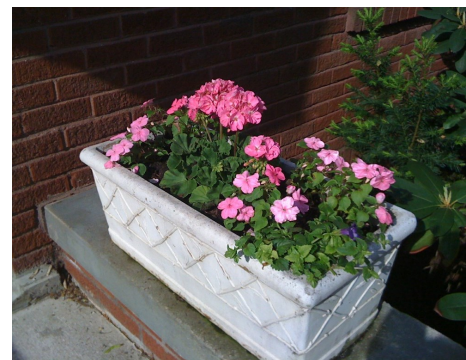
### Painting the Town Pink

Students from Bethlehem Central High School took the initiative to support Breast Cancer Awareness month. Led by Emily Stento with fellow Girl Scout troop members and field hockey teammates, the group distributed pink pumpkins and ribbons to 40 area businesses, helping create breast cancer awareness during the month of October. Emily received special commendation from Bethlehem High School for her efforts.

**Destination Kia** presents a check to *To Life!* following a successful sales promotion during October.



**Macy's Community** volunteers spent the day on fall clean-up in early November. The *To Life!* property looked great.



Bethlehem Garden Club keeps the entrance to *To Life!* fresh and alive with flowers.

## 2014 Friends Fundraisers:

- ◆ Academy of the Holy Names
- ◆ Albany Yacht Club
- ◆ Burnt Hills Booster Club
- ◆ Bumble Beads
- ◆ Cabi Fashions/Vicki Niles
- ◆ Columbia Greene Community College
- ◆ Crossgates Mall
- ◆ Day Dreams Salon
- ◆ Destination Kia
- ◆ DZ Restaurants, Inc.
- ◆ Hot Spot Yoga
- ◆ Guilderland Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Guilderland Public Library
- ◆ Freihofer's Community Walk  
Pat Kenyon  
Rosemary Brown
- ◆ Macy's Shop for a Cause
- ◆ MVP Employees
- ◆ Log Cabin Fabrics
- ◆ "Quilters Get Away", Bethlehem
- ◆ NYS Bar Association
- ◆ Normanside Country Club
- ◆ Organized Lady
- ◆ Helderberg Ridge Runner  
Snowmobile Club
- ◆ Reform Pilates Club
- ◆ Saratoga Springs HS Field Hockey Teams
- ◆ SweetFrog Enterprises, Inc.
- ◆ State Farm Insurance
- ◆ Town of Bethlehem
- ◆ The Pink Paddock
- ◆ Joanne Tarantino and the Staff from  
Classical Concepts

## Corporate Sponsors

1st Niagara  
Adirondack Trust  
Albany Medical Center  
Bella Napoli  
Community Care Physicians  
Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region  
Ellis Medicine  
Fingerpaint Marketing  
Genentech  
Genomic Health  
Golub Family Foundation  
Hinman Straub  
Mazzone Hospitality  
MVP  
Nigro Companies  
Nixon Peabody  
NY HPA Council  
NYOH  
PJ Green  
Saratoga Gaming and Raceway  
Saratoga Hospital  
Security Supply  
St Peter's Hospital  
Stewart's Foundation  
Times Union  
Turbine Services  
Wilson, Elser, Moscovitz, Edelman & Dicker

## Volunteers

We could never accomplish all that we do without the continued support of many dedicated volunteers and contributors. Volunteers work independently and side by side with staff members; answering phones, assisting at health fairs, facilitating programs, and mentoring others on their journey.

The gift of your time talent and precious resources provide just the right assistance when needed.

Special thanks to the volunteer committees who organize and run the Gala and the Pink Ball. These events provide an opportunity to celebrate the efforts of community members who have directly impacted the lives of breast cancer patients. .

### 2014 Fundraising Events:

- **16th Annual Gala** - May 6th  
*Honoring the Women in Our Lives*  
Franklin Plaza, Troy
- **10th Annual Pink Ball** - October 17th  
Hall of Springs, Saratoga Springs

### 2014 Grants

- Susan G. Komen NENY
- NYS Department of Health
- Soroptimists of Saratoga County

## Mission

To educate our community about breast cancer detection, treatments and related health matters and to provide support services for breast cancer patients, caregivers, family and friends.

## Counties Served



### Board of Directors

#### President:

Mara B. Ginsberg, Esq.

#### Vice-President

Lisa Anne Proskin

#### Treasurer:

Sorelle Brauth

#### Directors:

Catherine Black

Rita Cox

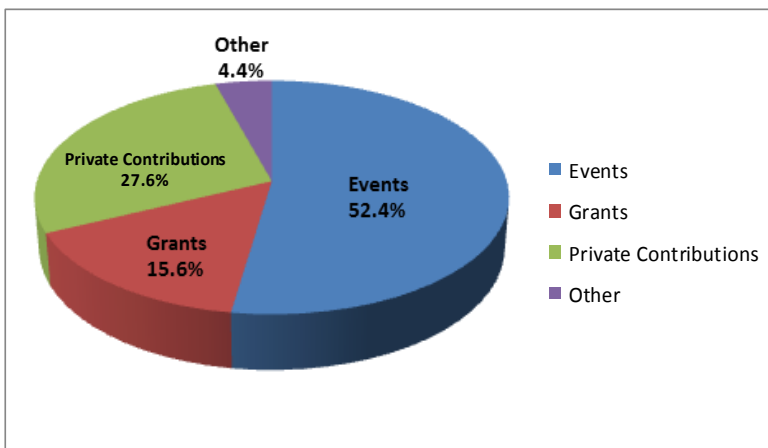
Kevin Dubner

Leslie Moran

Cynthia Shenker

Jennifer Whalen

## To Life! Program Revenue Sources



### 2014 To Life! Staff

Eileen Howe Bird  
*Executive Director*

Susan Burnett  
*Bookkeeper*

Martha McCormick  
*Director of Education*

Victoria Morrell  
*Executive Assistant*

Melanie Murphy  
*Boutique Associate, Saratoga*

Ann Rose  
*Boutique Associate, Delmar*

Helen Warner  
*Boutique Coordinator*

**Attorney General Registration:** *To Life!* is a IRC (501)(c)(3) tax exempt organization. Pursuant to New York State Executive Law Article 7-A, a copy of this report is filed with the New York State Attorney General's Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.



www.tolife.org