



BEYOND PINK

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Breast Cancer - The True Purpose of Breast Cancer Awareness Month

A message from Allison Burton-Chase, Executive Director

Over the last few months, as our team has been gearing up for all the activities that we are both hosting and participating in during the month of October, one thing keeps coming to mind for me: how do we truly honor the purpose of this month?

Like some of you reading this, Breast Cancer Awareness month has a different meaning for me this year than it has in the past. While there are more, I can pinpoint two primary reasons. The first is probably obvious-I now work at To Life! and breast cancer support and education is what we do. But the second is that I lost a 39-year old friend this year to breast cancer-a mother of kids who were 7 and 4 at the time of her death. For both of those reasons, reflecting on what awareness really means feels important.

As I have been coming back to this, the thing that stands out for me is why we want people to understand this diagnosis and its impact. We can all read the stats: 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed in their lifetime (1 in 725 for men), there is a notable rise in cases in younger individuals, and mortality is higher among BIPOC individuals despite lower diagnosis rates. But, behind the stats, these are all people; their lives and the lives of the people in their various personal and professional circles are all impacted. When you take a minute to stop and think about what that means, the reality is that almost everyone is connected to this diagnosis in some way. That is a powerful realization. At a time when so many forces feel like they are trying to drive wedges between us, we are reminded that experiences with illnesses like breast cancer are something we all have in common. The fear of the unknown, the joy of finding a community for support, and the emotions-both positive and negative-that come with each individual illness trajectory. Almost none of us escape these experiences in our lifetimes.

So, yes, we will hold fundraisers-you know we cannot do any of this work without generous donors, sponsors, and volunteers-and be part of many community events, but this month is truly about being aware of the magnitude of the impact that breast cancer has on everyone around us. You can never fully know what seeing a pink ribbon might bring to mind for someone, so make sure to give people a little extra grace. One thing I will carry with me is that behind the social events and community activities is an illness with an extraordinary impact that, for better or worse, connects us all.

The Best Group I Never Wanted to Join - Shared by Jayne Marzello

I joined the Newly Diagnosed & in Treatment support group about two weeks after my stage III triple-negative breast cancer diagnosis. I was 40 and terrified. For me, the time between diagnosis and starting treatment was the worst—daily appointments, nonstop calls, telling people over and over, and trying to do life-saving research. I was in shock and had to lean on others because my brain just wasn't working the way it normally did. Every morning I woke up and realized it wasn't a nightmare—it was my life.

I logged into the virtual group with no expectations. No one on that first call had started chemo, and everyone was significantly older. I thought, "I don't belong here. This can't help."

Eighteen months later, I'm cancer-free, and this group was my lifeline. They got me through six months of chemo, my surgery, and 20 rounds of radiation. We shared it all - the side effects, trauma, dumb things people who hadn't been through cancer said to me, the fears, and the good stuff, too. Nothing felt—and still feels—better for me than being with survivors and thrivers.

I still attend and look forward to it every month. I see these women at local events. They encourage me to try new things (dragon boating!), and we share information about free retreats and other local resources. I'm honored to be part of this community—and grateful for the wisdom these women share. I plan to continue to be a part of this community so I can help others the way these women helped me.

What You Can Do To Bring Breast Cancer Awareness in Your Community

- Wear pink with a purpose and share the reason behind it. It's not just fashion, it's advocacy.
 - Post facts and resources on your social media.
 - Encourage screenings - remind friends and loved ones to schedule their mammogram and do self-exams.
 - Participate in a walk, run or community fundraiser.
 - Educate Yourself & Others - learn about risks, risk reduction practices and genetic testing.
-

SUPPORT GROUPS

(All support groups meet virtually unless otherwise noted.)

Positively Living - Tuesday, October 7 at 6:30 pm

MetaThrivers - Wednesday, October 15 at 6:30 pm

Saratoga Body Positivity - Thursday, October 16 at 5:30 pm

Amsterdam at NYOH Cancer Center - IN PERSON - Tuesday, October 21 at 4:30 pm

Saratoga Hospital - Tuesday, October 21 at 5:30 pm

NEW GROUP St. Mary's Hospital Amsterdam - IN PERSON Wednesday, Oct. 22 - 4:30 pm

Newly Diagnosed and In Treatment - **IN PERSON AND CRAFT** - Thursday, Oct. 23 at 6:00 pm

Young Survival Coalition - Active on Facebook and with meet ups (YSC)

Bilingual Support - one-on-one support and peer mentoring

Peer-To-Peer Mentoring - tap into the To Life! survivor network

[SUPPORT GROUP DETAILS](#)



PROGRAMS

October 1 - Beginner Crochet Club @ Hope Club, Latham, 5:00pm

October 2- Breast Health Webinar, Virtual, 6:00pm

October 8- Fall Walk, Wilton Preserve, 4:00pm

October 14-Movie and Popcorn Event @ NYOH, 4:30pm

October 14- Breast Health Webinar, Virtual, 8:00pm

October 18- Fall Walk, Wilton Preserve, 8:30am

October 22- Breast Health Webinar, Virtual, 12:00pm

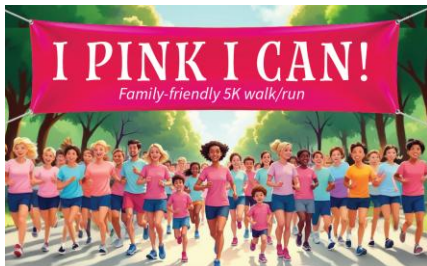
October 22-Movie and Popcorn Event @ St. Mary's Breast Health Center, 4:30pm

October 23- Macrame Craft Night with Newly Diagnosed and in Treatment Support Group, Hope Club, Latham, 6:00pm

All programs are free of charge to survivors, thrivers, their caregivers and family members.

If you have questions about any of our programs or would like to register, please reach out to Tasha at TashaMarie@tolife.org or call 518-439-5975.

PROGRAM DETAILS



OCTOBER 11 - PITNEY MEADOWS COMMUNITY FARM

Only a Few Spots Left for Our 5K Run/Walk! 🏃‍♀️ 🏃‍♂️

The countdown is ON! There are just a *few spots left!* ⌚

If you've been thinking about signing up, now's the time to lace up and register before we're full! 🚲 🏹

Not running? No problem! Come cheer from the sidelines and soak in the incredible energy! 🎧 ♀ We've got festivities for everyone—music, food, family fun, and a whole lot of community spirit. 🎵 🍔 🧑‍🤝‍🧑

REGISTER



FUNDRAISER - OCTOBER 11 from 4:30 - 10pm STELLA PASTA BAR, SCHENECTADY

Our good friends at Stella Pasta Bar, Seven Points Brewery, and the Van Dyck Music Club are hosting the Jam Against Cancer 2025, their first benefit show at Stella's new home at the Van Dyck - an evening of live music, community, and fundraising for the Relay for Life of Schenectady County & To Life! in honor of Lisa Marie, and all the lives she made brighter.

100%* of tickets sales & raffle fundraising plus a percentage of our food & drinks specials will be split equally between our local charities Relay for Life of Schenectady County & To Life!

TICKETS

The Pink Ball

October 24, 2025, Glen Sanders Mansion, Scotia

🦋 Join Us for an Unforgettable Night 🦋

This special evening will honor **two incredible individuals** whose impact and dedication have truly made a difference in our community:

🌟 **Arsyl De Jesus, MD - The Game Changer Award**

🌟 **Francesca LoPorto-Brandow - The Trailblazer Award**

Come celebrate their inspiring work and help support a great cause!

💎 **And that's not all...** 3 David Yurman Pieces of Jewelry Donated by Frank Adams ,
In-Home Private Dinner by Ric Orlando and a house that sleeps 10 in Newport, Rhode Island.

DETAILS AND TICKETS



Women & Investing Webinar

October 22nd @ 4:30 pm

Investing in Strength
Your Health. Your Wealth. Your Power

Please join us for a free Webinar to hear **Deb Collins*** from **Voya Financial Advisors** & **Debra Verni** from **RLGC Law Group** discuss the financial & estate planning needs of women during different life stages.

Allison Burton-Chase, PhD from **To Life!** will discuss the Breast Cancer Education and Support services they provide to women & those affected by breast cancer.

Register for Webinar:

Use QR code to the right or register below:

<https://voyafa.zoom.us/meeting/register/GEYiRKZBQyeAc2K2WcyX9A>

Meet our team by visiting our website:

<https://empirestatewfm.com>



Scan me!



Breast Cancer Support
and Education

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Neither Voya Financial Advisors nor its representatives offer tax or legal advice. Please consult with your tax advisors regarding your individual situation. Neither Debra Verni, RLGC Law Group, Allison Burton-Chase, PhD nor To Life! are affiliated with Voya Financial Advisors. CONTACT: 518.584.1395



October is recognized nationally as both Breast Cancer and Domestic Violence Awareness Month - a time to honor survivors, raise awareness, and support those affected by these critical issues.

Comedy for a Cause is a special evening of stand-up, storytelling, and solidarity — all to support our life-changing mission work in preventing domestic violence and empowering survivors.

Join us for a night of comedy that brings awareness to serious issues in a meaningful, uplifting way. This event raises vital funds to support YWCA NENY's domestic violence programs, shelter services, and outreach efforts across our community.

Featuring performances from **Dee Watson**, **Erin Harkes** and **Jaye McBride**! Hosted by **Jen McMullen**!

TICKETS



BRAvo!

A Fitting Event

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 12:00-3:00

Do you know what your TRUE bra size is?
Do you often feel uncomfortable and blame the bra?
Do you understand 'Sister Sizing'?
Are you certain you are wearing the right sized bra?

Join **To Life!** at **5th Corner Goods in Stuyvesant Plaza** for a **FREE** event that will leave you feeling lifted and fabulous! Our expert fitters will be onsite to assist you with your perfect fit!



Sip, Shop &
SNACK

Bring A Friend!

The Flutter Express



Transportation with Purpose

The Flutter Express offers a round-trip travel service every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from the Capital Region to key medical destinations in NYC and Boston via a comfortable 56-passenger motor coach. Complimentary snacks, water and comfort kits. They make getting there safe, simple, and stress-free, empowering travelers to prioritize their health without the stress of travel. **20% off tickets for To Life! clients!**

[DETAILS AND TICKETS](#)

MEET CRISTINE REYNOLDS



Volunteer Spotlight

How did you get connected to To Life!?

I was connected with To Life! when I was diagnosed with breast cancer in early 2017. The support, friendship and love I received meant as much to me as the medical team and treatment did in helping me get through the worst. I feel To Life! saved my life. Knowing I wasn't alone and could share all the feelings with no judgement was amazing. I started volunteering as soon as I felt ready to give back.

What motivates you to give back and volunteer?

What motivates me is knowing I can help someone who is struggling the way I did. Being there to offer support or just to listen to someone tell their story helps me and I hope them as well. The amazing people that work and volunteer for To Life! that I have met along the way are also a huge motivator. Everyone is so kind and generous-makes me want to do more.

What is your favorite part of volunteering?

My favorite part is the people. Everyone is so kind and working towards the same goal. It is also so exciting to see how much To Life! has grown over the years and reaching more people. The events are so fun too.

What advice would you give someone considering volunteering for the first time?

The advice I would give is just do it. If you are thinking about it you won't be disappointed. We all have gifts to share and the more people who help will mean the more people who will benefit from To Life!.

What do you like to do in your spare time? I am a recent empty nester so I am trying new things. I love to play pickleball and just recently started trying golf. I love spending time with my family.

TEE-OFF FORE TATA'S

ANNUAL CHARITY
GOLF TOURNAMENT



Thank you!

THANK YOU TO SANDY FOSTER AND THE VILLAGE PIZZERIA & RISTORANTE TEAM FOR HOSTING TEE-OFF FORE TATA'S

We extend a heartfelt thank you to Sandy and her team for hosting another successful fundraiser and donating a portion of the proceeds to us in support of our mission of serving the local breast cancer community.

Thank you to everyone who joined in the fun!



Breast Cancer Support and Education

Visit Us - tolife.org

Main Office:
410 Kenwood Avenue
Delmar, NY 12054

110 Spring Street
Saratoga, NY 12866

1700 Riverfront Center
Amsterdam, NY 12010

Dedicated Onsite
Support Albany Medical
Center Breast Health
Center

Contact Us

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