
Braintree woman's legacy for cancer patients

By Paul E. Kandarian

July 3, 2011

BRAINTREE WOMAN'S LEGACY: Carol Nichols of Braintree was more than just a patient of Dr. Satinder Dhillon, an oncologist and hematologist at the Norfolk Center for Cancer Care and Hematology in Brockton. She was also a good friend, said Nichols's brother, William Nichols of Holbrook.

"They were very close; they'd do things like cookouts together and, in fact, I gave Dr. Dhillon a photo of her and Carol at one, both of them laughing hysterically about something," he said. "It's hanging in her office now, so every time she looks up, she sees Carol."

Carol Nichols fought a five-year battle with breast cancer, finally succumbing on Dec. 20, 2009 - her 55th birthday. Before she died, the administrative assistant who traveled the world in her job, wanted to do something for Dhillon.

"We'd talked about it a lot," William Nichols said. "She [Carol] never married, never had kids, and she wanted to take care of her niece and nephew in New Jersey, and do something for Dr. Dhillon."

She did, in a big way: On June 7, her family gave a check of more than \$20,000 to the Brockton center. The gesture caught Dhillon by surprise, she said. The money will be used to renovate the clinic's chemotherapy infusion area by adding a living room and creating a homey atmosphere for patients' comfort, where they can relax, socialize, and "just have a few laughs," she said.

Dhillon said she was struck by Nichols's calm demeanor as she faced treatment, and the inevitable outcome, fighting to the end, and making Dhillon realize "we are born to celebrate life both in sickness and in health."

Another surprise, Nichols said, was a ring from his wife, Ellen.

"After we'd given out most of my sister's jewelry, the rest was left to me, and I just kind of pushed it into a corner," he said. "One day my wife hands me a box and there's this ring in it she had made from my sister's diamond earrings and some gold, that a friend who owns Caruso Jewelers in Braintree made up. It was a complete shock to me.

"Now, I always have my sister with me," he said. "I have her on my hand, and I kiss her every day."

YOUTHS TRAVEL TO APPALACHIA: William Roddy of Hingham, Daniel Curtis of Milton, Jake Ransford of Canton, and Michael Goulding of Scituate, all juniors at Boston College High School, were among 14 students and three faculty members from the school who went to Wheeling, W. Va., this spring as part of the Clifford M. Lewis, S.J. Appalachian Institute at Wheeling Jesuit University. The group spent the week sleeping on the gym floor and said they experienced a way of life in Wheeling that is unlike home. The students cleared fields to create organic farm beds, renovated dilapidated homes in the city, assisted the elderly and disabled, and tutored local children in after-school programs.

The group met with Father James Fleming, vice president of Wheeling Jesuit University, who talked about ongoing issues in the area concerning land rights, natural gas extraction, and coal mining. The students said they learned about the politics of the coal and steel industry and the union movement in West Virginia and how it affects Wheeling.

FREE TENNIS IN WAREHAM: Starting July 11, free tennis lessons are being offered to children ages 9-13 at the Wareham Boys and Girls Club, by Wareham resident Joanne Byron, a professional instructor who introduced the program at the club last year. Byron's fellow volunteer instructors are local residents who have taught with her at

the Ron Burton Training Village Camp in Hubbardston. The club's program will run Monday and Wednesday afternoons over six weeks, and includes basic training leading to game play and ending in a mini-tournament, Byron said.

The program was well received last year, said Wareham Boys and Girls Club unit director Barbara Sullivan, adding "the kids were enthusiastic and highly motivated throughout the program."

Racquets and other prizes for the tournament are donated by Prince Sports; Lakeville Tennis Club and Eastern Bank are donating balls; and several members of the Sippican Tennis Club in Marion are volunteering to teach, Byron said.

For information, call Byron at 508-295-1157 or Sullivan at 508-295-5400.

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