

NEWS from



Monmouth & Ocean County Brain Tumor Support Group, Inc.

2nd Anniversary Celebrated November 5

More than 45 members of our group attended the monthly meeting on Saturday, November 5, 2005 to observe our second anniversary. Especially with voting machines sharing limited space in the library meeting room, it was almost “standing room only” by the time the program began. Two guest speakers from the NJ Neuroscience Institute at JFK Medical Center in Edison discussed advances in brain tumor treatments. Both Dr. Joseph Landolfi and Dr. Thomas Steineke not only answered questions from the group, but they stayed afterward to speak with individuals about their specific concerns. We thank each of them for an informative presentation! Another highlight of this special meeting was the delicious refreshments brought by several members plus a beautiful anniversary cake. Co-facilitators Wendy Berk, Bruce Blount and Nancy Conn-Levin were joined by Stan Shrodo from the Central NJ Brain Tumor Support Group to celebrate the beginning of our third year.

Here are some other photos of group members enjoying the anniversary celebration. As we begin our third year, it's wonderful to see all of these smiling faces!



Stan, Nancy and Bruce prepare to cut the cake



Reminder about "Quality of Life "

Several months ago, our support group began an innovative program offering small individual grants to improve quality of life among our members. Each member received an application form in the mail. Participation in this new program is voluntary and all information submitted will be kept confidential by the board members who review the completed applications. While financial need is not a specific requirement of the QOL program, we hope that families who do not need assistance will allow others to receive the limited benefits we can presently offer. Among the grants awarded so far have been gift certificates for dinner out and babysitting, a new computer, "his and hers" massage therapy at home, and a mother-daughter day of relaxation. A copy of the application form is included with this newsletter. If you would like to submit an application for the QOL program, please mail it to P.O. Box 634, Oakhurst, NJ 07755. You can also nominate another group member for this program, especially if you are aware of a specific gift that would benefit one of our families. As we develop new fundraising projects, a greater number of QOL grants will be distributed.

Spring Walk-a-Thon Planned

At the September board meeting, initial plans were discussed for a Walk-a-Thon to be held in Manasquan during the Spring of 2006. If you would like to be on the planning committee for this event, email Nancy [Mngioma634@aol.com] or call Bruce at 609-758-0806. We welcome the participation not only of individuals, but school groups, scouting troops or others who wish to be involved. We hope this major event will not only raise funds to expand our Quality of Life program, but also help raise awareness about brain tumor issues and the role our group has in providing free information, support and encouragement to anyone affected by any type of brain tumor.

We may not be able to change someone's prognosis, but we can certainly have an impact on their quality of life while they are here.

Meet The Board of Trustees!

We are very fortunate to have an outstanding Board of Trustees leading our support group. The photo below was taken at our first board meeting in February 2005.



[L to R] Front row: Stan Shrodo, Cheryl Accoo, Nancy Conn-Levin, Ilene Lewis, Edward Moran. Back row: David Lewis, Douglas Duritza, Bill Vogel, Charles Hutchinson (on behalf of John Jackson). [missing from photo: Bruce Blount]

Bill Vogel serves as our Board Chair, with Cheryl Accoo as Board Secretary, and Doug Duritza as Treasurer. Since our initial board meeting, attorney John Jackson has stepped down but colleague Mark Kitrick has taken his place. Wendy Berk has also recently joined the board.

All of the board members volunteer their time and professional expertise to help guide our support group. Included among our board members are an accountant, an attorney, a banker, a business executive, and a clinical social worker. Seven of our board members have personal or family experience coping with a brain tumor, which enhances their dedication to our cause.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR 2006

Upcoming meeting dates for the New Year will be as follows: **Saturdays**, January 7, February 4, March 4, April 1, May 6, June 3, September 9, October 7, November 4 and December 2. All of these Saturday meetings will begin at 3:00 p.m., except for the New Year's Lunch on January 7, which begins at 2:00 p.m. Our summer **Thursday** meetings will be July 6 [3rd annual Summer Supper at 6:00 p.m.] and August 3 [regular meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m.].