

# *your* JOURNEY

January - March 2025

**A publication of the Eastern  
Connecticut Cancer Institute**

A Cancer Survivors Newsletter



## **Cancer Survivors Day 2024**

We had a great time at this past year's Cancer Survivors Day and we hope you did too! Save the date for 2025's event!

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## **Monthly Health Observances**

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month; February is American Heart Month; March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month.

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## **Cancer Registry**

Learn about Cancer Registries and meet the team responsible at ECHN!

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# **John A. DeQuattro: Lunch and Learn Programs**

Lunch and Learns are back by popular demand! Join us at our first Lunch and Learn with Mary Pesce, PTA on February 18, 2025!

See page 03 to learn more.

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# Cancer Survivors Day 2024

Our 20th Annual Survivors Day was held on Sunday, September 29. Our speaker, the warm and gregarious Mark Zinni, shared his own cancer testimony, and also led everyone in a rousing rendition of Happy Birthday to an attendee celebrating her 90th birthday that day!

Survivors Day 2025 will be held on Sunday, October 5, 2025. Save the date!

## Photos from our Cancer Survivors Day



# Support Groups are coming!

We will be initiating support groups again in March 2025!

The Mens' group will meet on the first Tuesday of the month, the Women's on the second Tuesday, and the Caregivers' on the third.

Please contact Ellen for more information, 860.646.1222 x 2957

## Lunch and Learn

Lunch and Learns are back by popular demand! This program is exactly as it's named: gather together and have lunch, meet new friends, and learn something new!

Our first Lunch and Learn for 2025 will be held on Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at noon. Our speaker is Mary Pesce, PTA, LSVT, CPT, CET who will discuss her program here at ECHN called Fit for the Journey (FFTJ).

FFTJ is an exercise program designed for people with cancer, no matter where they are on that journey. Mary will explain how her program works, and how gaining and maintaining fitness works to improve quality of life for everyone. And it's free!

As we go into the colder months where we're less active, learn about things you can do at home to help improve or maintain your stability and mobility.

Registration is open now! Please call or email Leslie at 860.646.1222 x 1406 or LJuliani@echn.org, or Karen at X1408, or kfiume@echn.org.





## Monthly Health Observances



### January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

The American Cancer Society estimates that approximately 14,000 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2023, and over 4,000 will die from it. Cervical cancer screening with PAP smears are a vital part of women's health care. The guidelines for testing vary depending on your personal history. If you do not have a health care provider, please go to [ECHN.org](http://ECHN.org) and click on Find a Provider. If you are uninsured or under insured, please contact the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program at 866.660.8837.

### February is American Heart Month

Your cardiovascular system is one of the most hard-working in your whole body, and it pays to treat it right with physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight. A heart-healthy diet includes lots of whole grains, lean proteins, and lots of fresh veggies.

### March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month

The National Institutes of Health estimates that in 2023, over 153,000 people were diagnosed with colon cancer, with 52,500 deaths, and 3,750 of those deaths in people under age 45. There are risk factors you can change, like diet and lifestyle, and some you can't, such as inherited factors or age. The thought of a screening colonoscopy can be intimidating, but really, the worst part is the preparation (hemorrhoid wipes are your friend). Colon cancer, like many cancers, is curable in its early stage. If you are over age 50, have a personal or family history of colon cancer, or a genetic predisposition, ask your health care provider for a referral for a screening. A "peak between the cheeks" can save your life!

If you do not have a health care provider, please go to [ECHN.org](http://ECHN.org) and click on Find a Provider.

## Cancer Registry

We see and hear about statistics all the time, on the news, in print, even in this newsletter (see Monthly Observances!). When it comes to statistics about different types of cancer, where does that information come from? It comes from the Cancer Registry!

Cancer registries are an integral part of every cancer program. The registry data specialists collect, store, and manage information on every patient who has a positive biopsy in their institutions. Those people are followed for the course of their lives.

Cancer registries are a critical part of worldwide cancer surveillance, as this data is used for research, as well as planning and evaluating cancer prevention interventions.

Kathy Walsh, CTR, has been the registry data specialist at ECHN since 1986. Not only is she responsible for the registry, but she is also the Cancer Program Specialist, who works tirelessly to ensure that our program is in compliance with the standards set by the Commission on Cancer from the American College of Surgeons, the body that provides our accreditation as a cancer program. Brianna Duffy, RHIT, joined Kathy's team in June 2023, and helps support our robust cancer program.

Both Kathy and Brie are integral parts of our cancer program team here at ECHN.





# Classes & Events

## **Freedom From Smoking: Smoking Cessation Class**

Starts Monday, January 6, 2025  
6 - 7:30 p.m.

Virtual Program

Contact [KFiume@echn.org](mailto:KFiume@echn.org) to register.

## **Lunch and Learn**

Featuring Mary Pesce, PTA  
Tuesday, February 18, 2025  
12 p.m.

Register by calling  
860.646.1222 ext. 1406 or ext. 1408

## **Fit for the Journey**

Tuesdays and Thursdays  
Contact Mary Pesce, PTA  
860.647.6485

## **Massage Therapy**

By Appointment.  
Contact Laurie Lavertu, LMT  
860.306.5822

## **Community Acupuncture**

Tuesdays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. (*Appointments preferred*)  
Contact Diana Zitserman, ND  
860.533.4646



## **Freedom From Smoking: Smoking Cessation Classes**

Learn how to overcome your nicotine addiction while working with a certified facilitator in a small group setting. This includes cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, and vaping.

This program is comprised of eight sessions over seven weeks and includes a participant workbook and other informative materials.

FFS starts Monday, January 6 on-line, from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm. The subsequent sessions are January 13, 20, 27 and 29, and February 3, 10 and 17.

The cost for this program is \$25, payable at the end of session 1. To register, contact Karen Fiume, RN at [kfiume@echn.org](mailto:kfiume@echn.org).

*Please note: this program is being offered virtually. Pre-registration is required.*

**Winter Salad**

The ultimate winter salad recipe! It's filled with winter greens, roasted squash, pomegranate seeds and a tangy vinaigrette. Serves 4 to 6. [www.lovenadlemons.com/winter-salad-recipes/](http://www.lovenadlemons.com/winter-salad-recipes/)

- 2 cups cubed Butternut squash
- 1/2 small radicchio, thinly sliced
- 1/2 medium red onion, cut into thin wedges
- 6 Brussels sprouts, thinly sliced
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- 3/4 cup candied or toasted pecans
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 pomegranate arils or dried cranberries
- 1/2 bunch curly kale (4-6 leaves), stemmed and torn
- 1/3 cup shaved Parmesan or Pecorino Cheese
- Apple Cider Vinegary dressing

- Preheat the oven to 425° and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the squash on one side of the baking sheet and the onion wedges on the other. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Toss to coat and spread evenly on baking sheet. Roast for 20-35 minutes, or until tender and golden brown around the edges. Remove the onions before the squash if needed. Pull apart the onion layers.
- Place the kale in a large bowl and drizzle with some of the dressing. Use your hands to massage the leaves until they become soft and wilted, and reduce in the bowl by about half. Add the radicchio, Brussels sprouts, roasted squash, onions, and remaining dressing. Toss well, then top with the pecans, pomegranate arils, and cheese. Gently toss. Season to taste and serve.

