

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

Wilmington Resident Provides “Heaps of Hope” to Cancer Patients

Wilmington, MA – Holly Walton of Wilmington was stunned when she was diagnosed with breast cancer in January 2008. Over the next nine months, she endured two surgeries, 16 weeks of chemotherapy and seven weeks of radiation at Winchester Hospital, the Breast Care Center in Woburn, Radiation Center in Winchester and Oncology Center in Stoneham. She also attended Winchester Hospital’s support group for patients newly diagnosed with cancer.

“I was so impressed by the care and support I received at Winchester Hospital,” said Walton, a staff accountant at Matrix Financial, LLC in Wellesley. “They took care of everything – even scheduling my tests and appointments – so the only thing I had to do was show up.”

Like so many others, Walton said that living with cancer has been a life-changing experience. She is grateful for the compassionate, expert care she received from caregivers at Winchester Hospital — especially from oncology/Breast Care Center social worker Melinda Taranto-Garnis, who assists patients in navigating the treatment process — as well as the support she received from family, friends and co-workers.

“I really cannot thank them enough for everything they did for me,” Walton said. “Their help was instrumental in my recovery.”

To address the need of those less fortunate, Walton founded Heaps of Hope, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to easing the burden on women affected by cancer. Medical professionals throughout Winchester and Woburn can refer clients who receive gift certificates for food and vouchers for transportation to medical providers and other medical expenses. In



Courtesy photo

Wilmington resident Holly Walton, founder of Heaps of Hope, Inc., presents gift cards to Melinda Taranto-Garnis, oncology/Breast Care Center social worker at Winchester Hospital, for distribution to breast cancer patients. Walton, a breast cancer survivor who was treated at Winchester Hospital, founded the non-profit organization as a way to ease the financial burden on other women affected by cancer.

addition, the organization provides reference material such as the inspirational book, “There’s No Place like Hope,” by Vickie Girard.

“Heaps of Hope is a wonderful resource because there is so much need out there,” said Taranto-Garnis, describing how the organization recently helped a patient with lapsed health insurance afford the medication she was prescribed prior to being discharged from Winchester Hospital. “Holly deserves a lot of credit for turning her experience with cancer into an opportunity to help others.”

Walton said her goal is to provide inspiration as well as financial support through Heaps of Hope to patients and their families at every stage of their cancer journey.

“It takes a village to get you well, and not all women receive the great support I did,” she said. “Heaps of Hope is not my day job, but rather my life job as a grateful and thankful breast cancer survivor.”

For more information or to make a donation to Heaps of Hope, call Holly Walton at 781-943-4100, extension 312 or e-mail her at Holly@HeapsOfHope.org.

About Heaps of Hope, Inc.

Heaps of Hope, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that provides patient and family support to women affected by cancer.

About Winchester Hospital

Winchester Hospital is the first community hospital in Massachusetts to earn Magnet recognition, the American Nurses Association’s highest honor for nursing excellence. As the northwest suburban Boston area’s leading provider of comprehensive health care services, the 229-bed facility provides care in general, bariatric and vascular surgery, orthopedics, pediatrics, cardiology, pulmonary medicine, oncology, gastroenterology, rehabilitation, radiation oncology, pain management, obstetrics/gynecology and a Level IIB Special Care Nursery. Winchester Hospital has clinical affiliations with several nationally recognized hospitals in the region, including Children’s Hospital Boston, Tufts Medical Center and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. To learn more, visit www.winchesterhospital.org.