

# YOUR PARTNER IN HEALTH



## Fund Provides Powerful Weapon in Cancer Fight

Area patients are benefitting from advanced and comprehensive oncology services, including chemotherapy and radiation therapy with the opening of the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute at McLaren Port Huron. With these advancements in treatment, it's important to remember the most important factor – *the patient*.

Treatment works best when the patient can participate in the healing process. When financial burdens affect a patient's focus, the process is compromised. That's why we're so pleased to tell you about a tremendous effort by a local family to help cancer patients focus on the fight. For 11 years, the Kearns family has raised over \$200,000 to help cancer patients in our community. One annual fundraiser is the *Little Black Dress* event, which will be held this year on *March 3*.

This kind of community generosity helps us all contribute to a cancer patient's healing and fulfill the Karmanos pledge: Better Treatments. Better Outcomes. More Moments.

*Jennifer Montgomery, MSA, RN, FACHE, President and CEO*

*A diagnosis of cancer is the beginning of a fight – something that takes not only advanced medicine, but also the strength of patients and their families to win.*

Too often, financial struggles such as loss of income, transportation costs, etc. can impact treatment. Experts call this “*financial toxicity*” and the accompanying stress is a significant and real deterrent to cancer survival.

However, through the efforts a local family, help is available.

The Betty Kearns Little Black Dress Event was established the year after Betty Kearns lost her battle with breast cancer in 2006. The family, looking for a way to honor their beloved matriarch, established the fundraiser as a reminder of Betty and her husband Ted's love of dancing, with Betty in her little black dress. Those funds supported breast cancer programs in Port Huron.

*In July 2016, the Betty Kearns Cancer Fund was established through the McLaren Port Huron Foundation* to help ease some of the financial struggles of patients receiving treatment for any type of cancer at McLaren Port Huron's Karmanos Cancer Institute. The family works with the hospital's oncology staff to identify those needing help.

McLaren Port Huron Foundation Director Lynn Griffor recalls the fund helping a family who, through loss of income due to cancer, was facing foreclosure.

“The patient was more worried about his wife and family losing their house than he was about surviving,” says Lynn. “The fund helped this family keep everything together during his treatment.”

The fund also has a grateful oncology staff behind it as it gives them another tool in the treatment process.

“I've seen oncology staff in tears because they are so grateful they can provide this kind of resource to impact lives,” added Lynn.

Betty Kearns' granddaughter, Debbie Reynolds, says her soft-spoken grandmother would be humbled, and a little embarrassed at the thought of the fund in her name. Lifelong residents, Betty and her husband Ted, raised nine children in Port Huron.

Although Betty was a modest woman, Debbie says she would be proud the fund is helping the community that she loved so much.



*Carolyn  
Kearns  
Bonacci*

*Debbie  
Bonacci  
Reynolds*



## Betty Kearns Little Black Dress Event Friday, March 3, 6 – 10 p.m.

- ✧ Blue Water Convention Center  
500 Thomas Edison Pkwy, Port Huron
- ✧ Cost: \$40 per person
- ✧ Tickets available at:
  - The Gift Shop at McLaren Port Huron
  - Freighters Eatery & Taproom, 800 Harker St., Port Huron

**Call (810) 987-2168 for more information.**

**McLaren**  
PORT HURON