

Hockey 4 Hope helps cancer patients one goal at a time

Valerie Zehl, vzehl@pressconnects.com | @PSBValerieZehl 11:54 a.m. EST November 28, 2014

Proceeds of sports event administered through Geller Oncology Fund



(Photo: PROVIDED PHOTO/Richard Micha)

The clock is ticking on the Hockey 4 Hope website, counting down the days, hours, minutes and seconds until March 28, when 38 players from as far away as California, Florida, South Carolina and New Jersey will take to the ice at the SUNY Broome Ice Center and play their hearts out.

They won't do it just for love of the fast-paced game. They'll also raise money for cash-strapped local cancer patients.

Brian Laing of Binghamton dreamed up the idea after he watched a beloved aunt struggle to deal not only with breast cancer, but all the bills associated with it.

If he could raise money to help others in the same situation, he thought, he would be doing justice to Aunt Connie's memory.

Laing, 37, is vice president of the family-owned tractor-trailer repair business Laing Industries and owner/president of ServPro of Chemung and Schuylar counties. He grew up in Chenango Bridge and played hockey for Chenango Valley High School and the Binghamton Junior C Rangers, in the Southern Tier Hockey Association and Eastern Junior Hockey League and during college at SUNY Oswego, where he graduated in 2001.

So for him, hockey seemed like a natural fit for his fundraising goal, and "Hockey 4 Hope" and its nonprofit, "Constance Foundation," seemed like the perfect names for his new initiative.

They played the first game in 2010.

"It was a rinky-dink assembly of weekend warrior hockey players with no organization whatsoever," Laing said. "We raised \$4,000 and had 30 people in the crowd."

From that seat-of-the-pants beginning, they've enlisted corporate sponsors, including Trump National Golf and Gong Show Hockey Gear.

"I had a friend with cancer, so I wanted to get involved," said Tom Forbes of Richford. "I liked it so much I've skated in every one."

He has already plunked down the \$150 for registration — now closed — for the spring event, which will show off the hockey skills of 37 men and one woman. As noted on the event's website, hockey4hope.com, Laing is currently rounding up corporate support and game-day volunteers.

Supporting local need

Hockey 4 Hope raised \$25,000 last year, with almost 800 people attending the event.

The group has funneled \$50,000 to the Lourdes Foundation, which passes the money along to be administered through The Geller Oncology Fund, said Lisa Schappert of the Lourdes Foundation. Established in 2000 by Dr. Marilyn Geller to honor the passing of her husband, Dr. Sandy Geller, it provides financial assistance to local cancer patients who demonstrate extraordinary need.

A social worker may refer patients to the fund if they can't afford transportation to and from their medical appointments, prescriptions, food, utility bills or other such expenses.

For example, sometimes breast cancer patients need compression sleeves but their insurance won't cover it, Schlappert said.

From Nov. 1, 2013, of last year through Oct. 31, the Geller Oncology Fund distributed \$10,832.42 to address such needs.

That's very satisfying to Laing. Now he and wife Meghan, a nurse practitioner at UHS who works by his side to organize the annual events, are looking to organize golf fundraisers, too, and hope to see the idea spread beyond Broome County to other cities.

"Basically, I knew if my aunt struggled financially, then there were other people like my aunt who also struggled financially during their sickness, or still do," he said.

He set out to help those individuals, and he's doing it in a very big way.

Read or Share this story: <http://press.sn/1rAgwYR>

<p>Hey, Sandra Bullock Lied lifecoolbeauty.com/sandra-secret Her Fans Are In Shock. Her Huge Secret Is Finally Exposed!</p>
<p>See In-Home Care Pricing elderly.careinhomes.com Get top In-Home care pricing online See your options by city Today!</p>
<p>3 Thyroid Cancer Symptoms healthyreply.com/ThyroidCancerSigns Do You Have These (3) Scary Thyroid Cancer Symptoms? See Now!</p>
<p>Pink Ribbon Store pinkribbonstore.com Great Breast Cancer Survivor gifts. Every order helps fund mammograms!</p>
<p>Search Obituaries Free ancestry.com/Obituaries 1) Search anyone's name. 2) View their obituary now.</p>
<p>What is your house worth? findhomesvalue.com Find your home's value instantly. Free service. Get estimates now.</p>
<p>Free Online Television televisionfanatic.com Turn Your Computer into a TV! Watch Full TV Episodes w Free App</p>

MORE STORIES



Nasty weather forecast for first 2015 weekend

(/story/news/public-safety/2015/01/02/nasty-weather-forecast/21205599/)

(/story/news/public-safety/2015/01/02/nasty-weather-forecast/21205599/)
 Jan. 2, 2015, 6:36 p.m.



Mario Cuomo honored with Capitol tributes

(/story/news/local/new-york/2015/01/02/mario-cuomo-flags-half-staff/21190839/)

(/story/news/local/new-york/2015/01/02/mario-cuomo-flags-half-staff/21190839/)

Jan. 2, 2015, 4:58 p.m.



Death notices for January 3
[\(/story/news/2014/07/01/death-notices-binghamton/11898677/\)](/story/news/2014/07/01/death-notices-binghamton/11898677/)

Jan. 2, 2015, 6:23 p.m.

[\(/story/news/2014/07/01/death-](/story/news/2014/07/01/death-notices-binghamton/11898677/)

[notices-](/story/news/2014/07/01/death-notices-binghamton/11898677/)

[binghamton/11898677/\)](/story/news/2014/07/01/death-notices-binghamton/11898677/)

Prostate Cancer Stages



symptomfind.com/ProstateCancer

Know The Early Stages Of Prostate Cancer. Expert Advice & Info Here.