

TRI-CITIES  
**Cancer  
Center**  
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www.tccancer.org  
7350 W. Deschutes Ave.  
Kennewick, WA 99336

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Pictured left:  
Rebecca with  
Chelsea at Rio  
Pictured right:  
Chelsea at the  
Pasco Farmers  
Market

# COPING WITH CHANGE: Lessons From an Athlete

By: Carl Berkowitz, TCCC Volunteer

The similarities in strategies used to recover from cancer or a severe accident become apparent within a few minutes of talking with 22 year old Chelsea McClammer and her mother, Tri-Cities Cancer Center Oncology Nurse Supervisor Rebecca Bowie. Chelsea was in an automobile accident 16 years ago that left her paralyzed from the waist down. Today this mother-daughter pair can share many lessons on how to cope with life changing events.

Rebecca speaks with pride about Chelsea’s tenacity and hard work, and how they have produced amazing results. Chelsea was the youngest member of the U.S Paralympics in 2008 and recently came back from the 2016 Rio Paralympics with two silver medals and a bronze. Her competitive spirit has taken her to other track events not only in South America, but throughout North America, Oceania, Europe, and China. She’s now in her final semester at the University of Illinois Champagne-Urbana, the first school in North America to have full campus access for disabled students and a school that has produced hundreds of Paralympic medalists.

While it was Chelsea’s nature to be tenacious and to work hard, she in turn is quick to credit Rebecca for helping her adjust to the unexpected challenge that life threw at her. “Mom never let me have time to mope. As soon as I was able, she enrolled me in art classes, piano and flute lessons, baton twirling and even beauty pageants. I didn’t have time to feel sorry for myself.”

Reflecting on the events of 16 years ago, Rebecca recalled other advice she shared with Chelsea and still shares today with her patients. “What we told Chelsea and what we would tell our patients is to work towards recovery, one day at a time. Their job is to work with us in fighting their cancer just like it was Chelsea’s job to get back to living a full life, one day and even one moment at a time.”

**There needn't be any feeling of guilt when asking for or receiving assistance. We don't want people to feel like they're a burden. All her family and friends wanted to help Chelsea. And, in the same way, all of us at the Cancer Center want to help our patients."**

Pictured right:  
At the Olympic village in Rio



Rebecca encourages Chelsea and her patients to keep searching for solutions to challenges brought about by their situations. Cancer survivors often need to develop new dietary habits or find ways to carry out acts that once were second nature. Chelsea continues to face issues even years after her accident. "Just finding a gym where I could work out when visiting family in the Tri-Cities was a challenge. Not all fitness facilities have enough space between their equipment to let wheel-chair users maneuver." But she kept looking and is now doing her winter workouts at The Tri-City Court Club. "I even found coaches, like tennis pro Patti Kirch, who helped me develop skills I never could have on my own."

Feeling like she had become a burden to her family brought about a feeling of guilt for Chelsea in her early days, is something Rebecca occasionally sees in newly diagnosed cancer patients. But she notes that "There needn't be any feeling of guilt when asking for or receiving assistance. We don't want people to feel like they're a burden. All her family and friends wanted to help Chelsea. And, in the same way, all of us at the Cancer Center want to help our patients."

Today Chelsea and Rebecca both work with others who are going through difficult times, Rebecca at the Cancer Center and Chelsea through informal coffee shop meetings with other adolescents and young adults. Chelsea's long term professional goal is to become an injury rehabilitation counselor so she can continue to share the medical knowledge and her personal experiences with others. "I see how my mother helps others and know that this is a great way to keep your problems in perspective."

Learn more about Chelsea's accomplishments at <http://www.teamusa.org/para-track-and-field/athletes/Chelsea-McClammer>

## SERVICES BY APPOINTMENT

TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT, CALL (509) 737-3420

### LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER®

This program is a non-medical, brand-neutral public service. Group workshops teach beauty techniques to female cancer patients to help them combat the appearance-related side effects of cancer treatment.

### HAIR & WIG STYLING

Franki Anderson from Franki & Co. will assist patients who have lost their hair from cancer treatment with selecting a complimentary wig and provide personalized wig styling. ***You will look great when you walk out!***

**Please note: These services are for patients currently undergoing cancer treatment.**

COLON  
CANCER  
ALLIANCE



**Wear Blue and Unite For a Future Free of Colon Cancer.**

Dress in Blue Day is Friday, March 3. Register **TODAY** for our free Colorectal Cancer Pre-Screening event on March 18th at [BeHealthyGetScreened.com](http://BeHealthyGetScreened.com)!





# TEAM SUPPORT: Athena's Story

By: Carl Berkowitz, TCCC Volunteer

Pictured left: Athena with her children

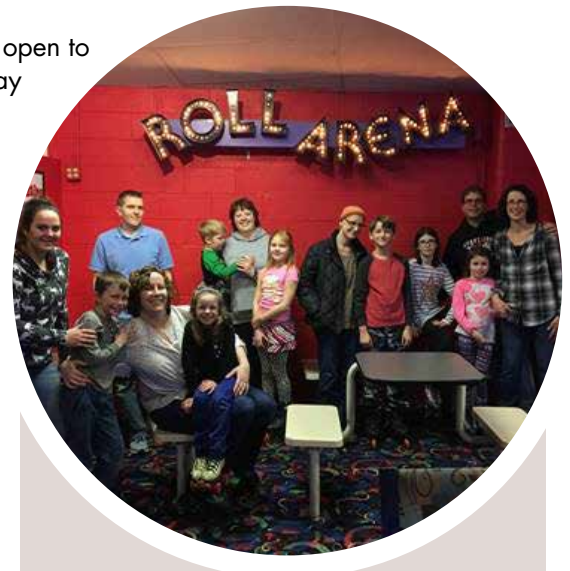
As a scientist at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Athena Schepmoes of Kennewick worked on several research teams using state-of-the-art mass spectrometers to identify proteins that could serve as early markers for prostate, breast and ovarian cancers. But it was the simple low-tech self-examination in September 2015 that linked a persistent soreness in her breast to a small lump and subsequent diagnosis of breast cancer. And this led to the formation of another team, her cancer support team!

A whirlwind of activities followed the detection of the lump, including a mammogram, ultrasound and biopsy. Her cancer treatment team came together quickly as Dr. John Droesch, her breast surgeon with Kadlec Clinic, partnered with his colleagues from the Tri-Cities Cancer Center's Breast Oncology Program to arrange all aspects of her treatment. With Dr. Eric Gamboa of Kadlec Clinic Hematology & Oncology administering chemotherapy and Dr. Sue Mandell of the Tri-Cities Cancer Center delivering radiation therapy, her treatments started in less than three weeks. With her short-term disability from PNNL came cordial instructions from management to 'get healthy again.' It was a whirlwind but, as Athena noted, "...every day was one step forward on the treatment and one day closer to my goal of simply getting back to being myself again."

The day of her diagnosis was also the day another element of her support team came together. During a meeting with Dr. Droesch, Athena received information about the Tri-Cities Cancer Center support group, Warrior Sisterhood. She attended her first Sisterhood meeting that night because, "I didn't know how I would feel later." At this meeting members were making a paper chain with encouraging messages on the links to give to another "sister" who had been hospitalized. It wasn't much later that Sisterhood members supported Athena when she was losing her hair. They helped her organize a head-shaving party where husbands or brothers could shave their heads in solidarity.

Athena is now an active member of the Warrior Sisterhood Executive Board. "We're open to any woman with cancer or a cancer-related diagnosis, whether they join us on the day of their diagnosis like I did or completed their therapy long ago. We have a wide range of ages, support meetings, educational meetings and many fund-raising and social activities that are just plain fun, including painting classes and stand-up paddle boarding. All are welcome."

Another part of her cancer-fighting team was the Tri-Cities Cancer Center's Kids Konnection, an educational and support program for children ages 7 – 14 who have a parent or other significant adult in their lives who has been diagnosed with cancer. Daughters Kennedy, age 5 at the time of Athena's diagnosis, and Madison, then age 7, looked forward to the weekly meetings that provided a safe environment to talk about their feelings, and know it was OK to feel angry, sad or scared. Kids Konnection offers a tour of areas normally off-limits to children, including the chemo infusion suite and radiation treatment rooms. There, they had the opportunity to talk with staff and learn more about what was happening to their mom. "My kids had a much better idea of what I was doing when I went in for treatment. It really helped them to be able to talk with other kids whose lives had been impacted by cancer and learn about cancer at a level they could understand."



Pictured above:  
Athena at the Roll Arena with friends

**Athena's multifaceted support team at work, at the Cancer Center, Kadlec and at her children's school was critical in her recovery, both mentally and physically.**



Pictured right: Athena with family

Other members of Athena's cancer support team were teachers and counselors at school. The staff of Bethlehem Lutheran School worked with Athena to determine how they could best help her children. "Basically, the teachers would take their lead from my daughters. They offered reassurance and often prayed with my daughters. As a parent, it's very comforting to know there's this other set of adults available to help children get through difficult times."

Athena's multifaceted support team at work, at the Cancer Center, Kadlec and at her children's school was critical in her recovery, both mentally and physically. Now, with much of the treatment behind her, she's back to being a full-time scientist, raising three busy kids with her husband Luke, and helping others facing a cancer diagnosis through participation in the Warrior Sisterhood.

With all these activities, she finds herself once again living a busy, full and healthy life.

## **SUPPORT GROUPS** By: Margaret Ley, Chaplain, TCCC

When I was young I played on a neighborhood softball team. I played second base and my older brother, nicknamed Rhino Grunt, played left field. I'll never forget the great moment in 'league history,' when it was top of the last inning, we were up by one, one runner at first and one out. The batter hit a grounder to left field and Rhino Grunt scooped the ball, looked for an open glove at second and whipped that ball so hard in my direction that the ball actually flattened in flight and smoke started curling out from the seams. After he released the ball he realized the person behind the glove was me, his little sister and we both knew the ball he just released from his grip was beyond what I could catch.

Time and distance made a weird time warp. He seemed to be in my face mouthing the words..."catch it." Then all I could see was a ball moving toward me in slow motion. I anticipated pain in my hand and moving up my arm if I caught it - or the shattering of my face if I didn't. I stood strong, kept my mitt open and held on as the ball burrowed into my glove. In a flash the short stop grabbed the ball from me, and threw it to first - game over. The celebration afterwards eclipsed my throbbing hand.

People often experience a diagnosis of cancer like a ball screaming at them at break neck speed. Many decisions following a diagnosis have to be made, in most instances, in a relatively short time span. There is seldom time to think about feelings such as shock, denial, anger, bargaining, and other emotions associated with the loss of 'a sense of wellness.' Energy is channeled to starting the best treatment and reprioritizing goals. Time seems to warp out of place but eventually the psychosocial/spiritual impact on a cancer patient does catch up often when the treatment is over and that is when it is good to have support.

Once treatment is over, the work of healing truly begins and oddly that is often the time that the circles of support start to disappear. For the cancer patient, the game is anything but over, but it feels like the crowd has started to leave the stadium. Recently I met with someone who finished his treatment and he reported being angry - but didn't know why. He expected that being finished with treatment would be a relief... Actually, it was only the start of the next inning.

Ongoing support for patients is a necessity. The challenges of reconditioning a body after treatment, adjusting mentally to a new normal, and nurturing a soul are as vital to health following treatment as the procedures during treatment. That's when support groups can be so very helpful.

Support groups offer the time and place for people to talk about what happened with others who know the game. Support groups provide avenues for sharing a wealth of experience with others who are open and receptive to hearing. Here is where new goals take shape and appreciation for the 'minor league' achievements is supported.



# OUR COMMUNITY CARES!

Visit the Tri-Cities Cancer Center Foundation office or call (509) 737-3413 for more information about these events.

*Generously Sponsored By*



Join us for the  
**Tri-Cities Cancer Center Foundation's**  
**17th Annual Fundraising Breakfast**  
March 16th, 7:30 a.m.  
Three Rivers Convention Center  
Kennewick

This is a "can't miss" event for our community as we share exciting breakthroughs in cancer care in our region at this year's breakfast!

RSVP's for this event are required, please call (509) 737-3373 to reserve a seat.



# May 6th



Generously sponsored by



# Run *for* Ribbons

TRI-CITIES CANCER CENTER



\$25 Adults / \$15 Youth  
10k, 5k and 1mile Run - Walk  
Howard Amon Park in Richland

Check In 8:30 am | Run - Walk Begins 10:00 am

8:30am - 11:00am:  
RibbonFest Cancer Awareness Health Fair

Register online: [www.runforribbons.org](http://www.runforribbons.org)  
Register by phone: 509.737.3413



# SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

Founded in 1994 as the radiation oncology service of Kadlec Regional Medical Center, Lourdes Health Network and Trios Health, the Tri-Cities Cancer Center has grown to be the community's leader in cancer prevention, early detection, world-class treatment and survivorship.

Our mission is to provide the best cancer care for patients by working with key specialists, our owner hospitals, volunteers and our community. We are the regional provider of comprehensive cancer solutions. We are your Tri-Cities Cancer Center.

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## FEATURED MARCH EVENTS

RSVP for presentations by calling **(509) 737-3427** or visit [tccancer.org](http://tccancer.org). Presentations offered at no cost unless otherwise stated.

### Quit Tobacco

**Facilitator:** Gretchen Saunders, RN, BSN, CTTS

**Date:** Wednesday, March 22nd, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

This program will help you identify triggers, come up with ways to beat them, and discuss the use of stress reduction and nicotine replacement therapy. First time participants will be offered the choice of nicotine replacement patches or nicotine gum. This class is led by a certified tobacco treatment specialist!

**Please call (509) 737-3427 to RSVP. May register up until the day of the class.**

### Art Expressions

**Facilitator:** Brigette Phillips

**Date:** Wednesday, March 22nd, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Sometimes a cancer patient wants to relax and forget about the medical world. We hope our new Art Expressions class can do that and more. This monthly meeting provides an opportunity for cancer patients to make something special with the help of an art coach. Each month participants will leave with a completed project of varying modalities. **Please call 737-3427 to RSVP by March 20th at noon. The class fee is \$5 to cover materials. Registration is required.**

### Mindfulness Meditation for Health and Wellness

**Facilitator:** Chris Murray

**Date:** Thursday, March 23rd, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Many oncologists and oncology patients have found meditation helpful in reducing stress that often comes with their diagnosis and treatment. This meditation support group will provide an opportunity for cancer patients, survivors and caregivers to practice mindfulness meditation in a supportive environment. Each session will include a quick review of mindfulness meditation and an opportunity to ask questions, as well as the chance to practice meditation in a group setting. The sessions will be led by members of Insight Meditation of the Mid-Columbia. **Please call (509) 737-3427 for more information, reservations are not necessary.**

### Presentation: Essential Information on Kidney Cancer

**Speakers:** Dr. Juno Choe, Tri-Cities Cancer Center, Dr. Thomas Brinton, Kadlec Clinic and Dr. Eric Gamboa, Kadlec Clinic

**Date:** Thursday, March 30th, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

The number of people diagnosed with kidney cancer has doubled in the past 10 years but the number of people dying from it has not! We invite you to learn more about this cancer that will affect 1 out of every 63 persons in the US. There are great treatment options available right here in the Tri-Cities! Lunch provided with reservation. **Please call 737-3427 to RSVP by Tuesday, March 28th. Lunch will be provided with RSVP.**



# MARCH 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY		
<b>EVENT INFORMATION KEY</b> All classes offered free of charge at the Tri-Cities Cancer Center unless otherwise noted. WC - Wellness Center      FS - Fireside Room RR - Reservations Required      LIB - Library RC - Resource Center      ACR - Admin Conference Room VCR - Volunteer Conference Room			<b>1</b> <b>OVARIAN CANCER TOGETHER SUPPORT GROUP</b> <small>FS</small> <b>1:00PM - 2:30PM</b>	<b>2</b> <b>CANCER SUPPORT GROUP</b> <small>FS</small> <b>10:00AM - 11:30AM</b>	<b>3</b> <b>BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP</b> <small>FS</small> <b>9:00AM - 11:00AM</b> <b>DRESS IN BLUE DAY ALL DAY</b> (See Page 3)	<b>4</b>		
<b>5</b> <b>LARYNGECTOMY SUPPORT GROUP</b> <small>WC</small> <b>1:15PM - 3:00PM</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>ASK A DIETICIAN</b> <small>FS</small> <b>9:00PM - 10:00AM</b>	<b>8</b> <b>WARRIOR SISTERHOOD</b> CALL 737-3432 FOR LOCATION <b>5:30PM - 7:00PM</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>		
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> <b>WOMEN'S GUILD MONTHLY MEETING</b> <small>WC</small> <b>10:00AM - 11:30AM</b>	<b>14</b> <b>MEN'S CLUB MONTHLY MEETING</b> <small>WC</small> <b>7:30AM - 8:30AM</b> <b>GENTLE YOGA</b> <small>WC</small> <b>10:00AM - 11:00AM</b>	<b>15</b> <b>LOOK GOOD... FEEL BETTER®</b> <small>VCR</small> (PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED) <b>10:00AM - NOON</b>	<b>16</b> <b>17TH ANNUAL TCCC FOUNDATION FUNDRAISING BREAKFAST</b> CALL 737-3413 FOR DETAILS <b>Program begins at 7:30AM</b> <b>CANCER SUPPORT GROUP</b> <small>FS</small> <b>10:00AM - 11:30AM</b>	<b>17</b> <b>BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP</b> <small>FS</small> <b>9:00AM - 11:00AM</b>	<b>18</b>		
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>ASK A PHARMACIST</b> <small>FS &amp; RR</small> <b>4:00PM - 5:00PM</b>	<b>22</b> <b>QUIT TOBACCO</b> <small>VCR &amp; RR</small> <b>3:00PM - 4:30PM</b> <b>ART EXPRESSIONS</b> <small>WC - \$5 FEE</small> <b>3:00PM - 4:30PM</b>	<b>23</b> <b>MINDFULNESS MEDITATION FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS</b> <small>WC</small> <b>12:00PM - 1:00PM</b> <b>LYMPHOMA-LEUKEMIA-MULTI-MYELOMA SUPPORT GROUP</b> <small>VCR</small> <b>4:00PM - 5:00PM</b> <b>PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP</b> <small>FS</small> <b>5:30PM - 7:00PM</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>		
Be sure to keep updated on future events and presentations by visiting our online calendar at <a href="http://TCCancer.org">TCCancer.org</a> .								
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Would you like a tour of the Tri-Cities Cancer Center? Call (509) 737-3413 to reserve a time.	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> <b>PRESENTATION: ESSENTIALS ON KIDNEY CANCER</b> <small>WC &amp; RR</small> <b>12:00PM - 1:00PM</b>	<b>31</b>	Reservations can be made by calling (509) 737-3427 or visiting online at <a href="http://TCCancer.org">TCCancer.org</a>		