A publication of the IMF recognizing our supporters

A Family Affair

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Meet family members who went the extra mile for their loved ones

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- … and more!
Dear IMF Supporter,

Welcome to our latest edition of Making Miracles! It’s a joy and a privilege to create this magazine that celebrates all you do in support of the IMF. Your enthusiasm, talents, time, and energy drive our myeloma community.

In 2016, there were more than 50 member-led events that raised funds and awareness for our cause: Rare wines sampled. Marathon finish lines crossed. Laughs shared. Birthdays celebrated. Facial hair grown.

There are things we aspire to do once in a lifetime, and there are things we do every day. Both have great meaning. Please consider extending that meaning to your IMF community.

You can create a fundraiser by building your own boat and traveling in unchartered waters, but you can also create a fundraiser by eating ice cream. Think big, think little, think ordinary, think crazy. All we ask is, as you think about what this year may have in store, please take the time to think about how those activities and milestones, large and small, can also create support and awareness for the IMF community.

Call or email me anytime. I’ll help you think it through and make it happen!

With warmest regards and deep appreciation,

Suzanne Battaglia
Director, Member Events
(800) 452-2873
SBattaglia@myeloma.org
Creating His Own Adventure

IN SUPPORT OF THE CAUSE

Last August, John Taussig combined his passion and expertise for water excursions with his love for his family and his determination to do his part for the myeloma community. During one of his rare moments on dry land, Making Miracles caught up with John to learn about his Paddle to Battle Myeloma.

Making Miracles: First, I’d like to give our readers the big picture. For your Paddle to Battle Myeloma, you built your own kayak, planned a route that took you from Washington State to Alaska through British Columbia’s Inside Passage, and executed it on your own…all in the name of raising money for myeloma research.

John Taussig: Yes! It took five weeks to do those 800 miles.

That’s an adventurous undertaking, to say the least! Okay, let’s back up a moment. You started your trip in August 2016, just over a year after your mother was diagnosed with myeloma.

She was diagnosed in Spring 2015, after it was discovered that she had a mass growing in the frontal portion of her skull. It was my sister, a nurse, who found the mass while giving my mom a head scratch – a favorite pastime at the Taussig house. It wasn’t two weeks later and my mom had a craniotomy and radiation. The myeloma diagnosis came next, along with a stem cell transplant and chemo. Soon after, my uncle – her brother – was also diagnosed with myeloma.

That must have had a tremendous impact upon your whole family.

Absolutely. And it left me looking for a way to support the cause. Both my dad and brother went to a few IMF meetings and returned very upbeat and full of interest. I thought about how I could participate. My parents have always been active in fundraising walks and activities, so I thought about the fact that I could “create my own adventure” for the cause. That really inspired me to do something.

“So for this fundraiser, I went with my interests and professional experience, but used the opportunity to learn and do new things.”

The idea of “creating your own adventure” for a fundraiser is fantastic. Though your regular daily life also seems pretty adventurous. You’re Executive Director of Backcountry Medical Guides, which specializes in group wilderness and maritime medicine courses. You also work as a paramedic on a medevac helicopter. And you’re a Captain and sailor.

Yes. So for this fundraiser, I went with my interests and professional experience, but used the opportunity to learn and do new things.
by Debbie Beatty

It was November 2013. My brother Matt was 36. He had been a healthy, energetic husband and father, to three young children, but now he was being hospitalized with his fifth case of pneumonia. Doctors were suspicious of these numerous infections, and the result was a diagnosis none of us were prepared to hear: multiple myeloma.

I’m the eldest of four siblings, and I’m also a registered nurse, so my mind quickly shifted to the role of “caretaker.” I promised my brother I would be there for him, always. My brother is also nurturing and strong, and he did not feel sorry for himself. He began a blog titled “The Unexpected Opponent” and began his fight.

Three months after Matt’s diagnosis, we attended a fundraiser hosted by an IMF support group, which was our introduction to the IMF and its great work. I knew that night that while my first priority was to help my brother, in the longer term I wanted to help the larger community by throwing my own IMF fundraiser.

In early 2016, with Matt’s stem cell transplant behind him, I was ready. I knew there were many ways to hold an IMF fundraiser, large and small. My vision was to throw a big, fun, special event. Because my husband and I also have three children, we know that parents don’t often have a chance to socialize. So we thought a night of dinner and dancing would fit that bill.

I contacted the IMF’s Suzanne Battaglia in February with plans to hold my event in October, because the kind of night I wanted to create would involve some detailed planning. With my phone call to Suzanne, planning for a Mission for Matt had officially begun!

Of course, we needed a place to throw this party. My husband is an active member of our local Knights of Columbus chapter, and he asked if they would be willing to let us rent their event room at a discounted rate. They enthusiastically agreed. In turn, they asked their caterer to help, and our food for the evening was also generously discounted. We were off to a great start!

Music was next. Matt and I were raised by a mom who is one of those people who “knows everyone everywhere she goes.”
I tapped into her resources and contacted a DJ company that ultimately donated their time to provide our music and serve as our “Master of Ceremonies.” They even threw in a photo booth to add to the festivities!

“The more we asked, the more we found generous people who were happy to give.”

Being active in my community and its schools, I was no stranger to soliciting local businesses, so I decided to use those skills and relationships as a way to also include raffles and auction prizes for the evening. Even with my experience, it still felt like it would be the most difficult of all of the tasks, so I also enlisted my husband, siblings, and in-laws. As we wrote to companies and walked into local businesses, I was thrilled to find that my expectations were wrong. The more we asked, the more we found generous people who were happy to give. We met supporters who already knew others with myeloma. They gave to us with the joy of knowing they were part of the fight. We met others who had never heard of myeloma, and we were honored to spread awareness too.

As the planning of a Mission for Matt continued to take shape, an incredible number of extended family and friends willingly offered their time and support to help organize the event. What began as my large, long-term vision was becoming a successful team venture and accomplishment.

When October 1st arrived, 215 people joined us for everything I had envisioned – but also so much more. I felt so proud. Proud of my family, who came together selflessly to help organize the event. Proud of myself for having the courage to initiate and follow through, and that by doing so I was also honoring my promise to my brother to always be there for him. And, of course, proud of my brother, who had battled so hard and continues to battle. In the end, I also had the wonderful surprise of learning that we had doubled what I had predicted and hoped that we would raise for the IMF. It was a great night.

So, looking back, what did I take away from this fundraising experience? First and foremost, start with what you know, and what is familiar to you. Use the people in your life as your resources. They’re happy to be of service, and never forget that it brings satisfaction and joy to others when they can help be a part of something greater than themselves. Also never underestimate the power of the human spirit. We all have a need to love and be loved. Events like our Mission for Matt – and allowing others to participate in them – fulfills that great desire.
Forrest Shaw sees his career in stand-up comedy as the perfect way to vent his frustrations with the world while also sharing his own faults and failures.

He didn't always have this outlet. In 2005, when his mother was diagnosed with myeloma, he was a marine biologist. It wasn't until Forrest made his career switch to comedy that a way to give back revealed itself to him.

For his Comedy for Myeloma at the Hollywood Improv, Forrest drew upon the relationships he has built. He often performs at the Hollywood Improv Comedy Club, so he felt comfortable approaching them as the venue. He also felt comfortable asking fellow comedians to perform with him. “Jim Jeffries, Brad Williams, Orlando Leyba, and Lisa Corrao are all my friends,” Forrest says. “Most working comics know each other, so I just asked.”

Social media was the primary way Forrest got the word out, enlisting the venue and the other performers to also share it on their platforms. A special assist came from comic Camilla Cleese, Forrest’s friend and the daughter of the legendary John Cleese. Both father and daughter happily promoted the event for Forrest.

On August 23rd, a sold-out audience of 200 – including Forrest’s mother, who made the trip from Florida – packed the Improv, with ticket proceeds going to the IMF. When Forrest took the stage, he realized it wasn’t going to feel like a regular show. “It was emotional for me,” Forrest says. “I wanted to say a few words about the event, and the disease, and the IMF. I got through it okay, but I could feel my voice was shaky. It hits close to home.”

But as a comedian, Forrest doesn't mind hitting close to home. He’s planning another fundraising night for this summer.
The North Texas Myeloma Support Group is keenly aware of the education, support, and advocacy the IMF provides, but when it came to their first fundraiser as a group, they decided to raise funds specifically for IMF research.

While brainstorming what could make a fun night for the group members and their friends, they began discussing a comedy club fundraiser they knew had taken place in New York City. Group enthusiasm for their own version in Texas quickly grew.

Member Rich Bails reached out to The Comedy Improv Club in Addison. A group event coordinator there assisted the group in discount ticket pricing for a block of tickets to the club’s September 30th show, which the support group billed as *A Night at the Improv*. “The club went out of their way to accommodate us,” Rich says.

The support group then decided on their own “resale price,” through which they would receive donations in support of IMF research. In addition to those ticket sales, they used the event as an occasion for family, friends, and local businesses to donate to their cause even if they couldn’t come. Members themselves donated too, including several who pledged “matching funds” to the total amount raised.

“We’ve been affiliated with the IMF for more than 20 years,” group member John Lively says. “This is something we really wanted to do.”

Editor’s Note: Are you interested in trying something new or celebrating a milestone with your family, friends, or co-workers? Are you looking for fun things to do in your community? The IMF can help you turn it into a fundraiser! Call Suzanne Battaglia at 800-452-CURE or email SBattaglia@myeloma.org to get started.

A $20 admission ticket included all-you-can-eat food and drinks, donated by San Diego restaurants. And if you won a competition, you earned raffle tickets for gift cards donated by local businesses. “I learned that our community is incredibly generous,” says Alex.

“I moved out to San Diego in 2013 and didn’t know a soul,” he continues. “At best, I was hoping about a dozen of my friends would be able to make it.” But on April 24th, there were 50 people vying in the *Myeloma Olympics*, with an additional 100 people donating. “I was blown away,” Alex says.

He is also quick to credit his girlfriend, Ally, for her encouragement and attention to detail, as well as his sister and his best friend, who both flew out to support the cause. Then there are his parents, who arrived at his doorstep the morning of the event as a last-minute surprise.

“It was one of the greatest experiences, and I can’t wait to try it again.”

“It’s hard to put into words the feeling that day gave me,” Alex says. “I was nervous it would be a bust, that I wouldn’t raise money, that no one would show up. In the end, knowing we raised so much money to fight myeloma was a great feeling, but it was even more satisfying seeing everyone rally around such an important cause. It was one of the greatest experiences, and I can’t wait to try it again.”
When Susan Green was diagnosed with myeloma in 2015, her sons felt compelled to do something to support their mother and the myeloma community, so they grew their facial hair out during the month of November and raised funds for the IMF along the way. Here, Jonathan Green shares with us a photographic journey of his *Movember* campaign.

The Origin Story: “This photo is from 2015, when my brother, Travis, and I started *Movember*. We had learned of our mother’s diagnosis five months earlier, and like most sons we don’t like anybody picking on our momma. We took this picture to put a scare into myeloma. I’m trying to look crazy and Travis is trying to look mean. My mom just laughed and said we looked like we belonged on a sitcom. Well, at least we gave her some much-needed humor during a tough time.”

November 9, 2016: “This is about a week into the 2016 campaign. I actually procrastinated in planning. Fortunately the folks at the IMF make it so easy that I was able to get ramped up in days. Many donations came from clients and colleagues, so I made it a point to take photos of myself in professional settings to post on LinkedIn. I really didn’t intend to solicit clients. I just wanted to inform them so that they would understand why my appearance would look unkempt. So I was overwhelmed at the outpouring of kindness, prayers from all religions, and financial generosity of my clients.”

November 19, 2016: “Nothing like a cute kid to get people to open up their pocketbooks for a charitable cause, right? This is my daughter. She loves her ‘Ma,’ just like her brother and cousins. I was typically marketing my campaign through a variety of social media. But of course, there’s nothing better than face-to-face interactions. Any time someone would see me, they’d ask about the beard. And more often than not, the conversation led to a donation without me even having to ask for it.”

November 30, 2016: “By now the beard was really itchy. My wife absolutely hates facial hair. There were no more kisses for me at this point. But the donations were still rolling in, so I was sticking with it.”

December 1, 2016: “The day after *Movember* 2016 came to an end. This handlebar mustache is so ridiculous that it literally only lasted two minutes, and my dad is the only human being who saw it live. But I posted it on social media as a last hurrah. It was an honor to once again stop shaving for my mom, and for this important cause. And I’m so grateful for everyone’s generosity.”
IMF Member Fundraisers are vital to the success of all of our programs, including the IMF Brian D. Novis Research Grants, which support researchers around the world working to innovate myeloma treatment while seeking the cure. Five fundraisers in 2016 made these essential grants possible.

**Coach Rob’s Benefit Bash & Golf Tournament**
Djordje Atanackovic, MD  
Huntsman Cancer Institute/University of Utah – Salt Lake City, UT  
“Anti-CD229 Chimeric Antigen Receptor T Cells for the Treatment of Multiple Myeloma.”

**Miracles for Myeloma 5K**
Karin Vanderkerken, PhD  
Vrije Universiteit Brussel – Brussels, Belgium  
“Targeting residual, dormant cancer cells in myeloma: a new approach.”

**Miles for Myeloma 5K**
Neelam Bhardwaj, PhD  
Huntsman Cancer Institute/University of Utah – Salt Lake City, UT  
“Generation and validation of a monoclonal antibody against VISTA for the immunomodulatory therapy of multiple myeloma.”

**Bridge Blasts Myeloma Ladies Game Day**
Geoffrey M. Matthews, PhD  
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute – Boston, MA  
“Treating myeloma through inducing degradation of BET bromodomain proteins.” [2nd year funding]

**Laughs 4 Life**
Alessandra Romano, MD, PhD  
Ospedale San Raffaele – Milano, Italy  
“Exploiting IDO1-GCN2-p62 axis in MM microenvironment to trigger myeloid derived suppressors cells in multiple myeloma.”
IMF members are thoughtful and creative people. How do we know? Just take a look at this impressive list of events you organized last year! So even though this year is well underway, it’s never too late to celebrate and be inspired by the 2016 fundraisers that supported myeloma patients, their families, and important research worldwide.

Let’s start with some the laughs. In 2016, Laura Mooney created *A Night of Comedy*, Forrest Shaw organized *Comedy for Myeloma at the Hollywood Improv*, Kent Oliver brought us *Laughs 4 Life*, and the North Texas Myeloma Support Group oversaw *A Night at the Improv*.

Laughs are fun, but so is ice cream! Ruth Schimmel surely knows that, having now organized the *4th Annual A Day at Dairy Queen*. We also support trading frozen treats for adult beverages, such as at Claire Maguire’s *Happy Hour*, Nancy Raible’s *4th Annual A Visit to Virginia’s Wine Country*, and Gary McAdam’s ongoing *Grand Tour of Scotland-Whisky Tasting*.

With *Corks for the Cure*, Steve Weinstein organized both a wine tasting night and a recycling event. Justin McWethy’s *2nd Annual March Against Myeloma* was also environmentally inclined, combining river cleanup with family games.

Mikey Tuohy also created family fun, with his *Wiff Out Myeloma* wiffle ball tournament. Wiffle ball was also a highlight of Alex Murer’s *Myeloma Olympics*.

An even smaller ball always gets a lot of attention. The golf tournaments of 2016 included Bob Zins’ *17th Annual JC Golf Tournament*, Coach Rob’s *11th Annual Benefit Bash & Golf Tournament* hosted by Rob Bradford, the 9th Annual Carolyn Czerkies Memorial Golf Outing organized by the Czerkies Family, Gail and Andrew Bertram’s *7th Annual Wayne Hamby Golf Tournament*, Sharon and Scott Kowalczyk’s *3rd Annual ChekFest Golf Tournament*, Robert Cole’s *3rd Annual Margaret R. Cole Memorial Golf Tournament*, the *2016 Kubik Memorial Golf Tournament* organized by Darla Kubik and Dwight Royall, and Maurice Pierre’s *Support Sheldon Golf Tournament*.

Runners and walkers also always represent. In 2016, Shawna Wanemacher Camilleri established the *Multiple Myeloma 5K Boca Raton*, and friends Courtney Buffington, Julie Christianson, Tamara Clark, Bethany McIntosh took on *Running NOLA for Carrie*. Niall Brady organized the *2nd Annual Team Brady Mudder’s Day Fun Run*, Theresa Tucker and Sheila Burton spearheaded their *2nd Annual Walk in the Park*, and Ava Feinberg and Cece Feinberg oversaw the *2nd Annual Race to Beat Myeloma*. Sheree Pask and Ron Pask teamed up with Gina Klemm for the *4th Annual Miracles for Myeloma 5K*. The team of Ellen Grammel, Teresa Meier, and Chris Meier ran us through their *5th Annual Cincinnati*...
Flying Pig Half Marathon, and the Philadelphia Multiple Myeloma Networking Group organized its 8th Annual Miles for Myeloma 5K Run/Walk.

On two wheels, Andy Sninsky supported us with his ongoing Bicycle Mojave and Beyond, as did Rachel Smith with her 2nd Annual Ride Against Myeloma. Trading land for water, John Taussig brought us Paddle to Battle Myeloma (see page 3) and Doug Farrell organized his 4th Annual Captain Turner Ocean Swim.

What do swimming, biking, and running have in common? Lauren Marx, that’s who! She did it all with her Racing for a Cure triathlon fundraiser. Team SYNERGY also displayed impressive athletic commitment with their 2nd Annual Strengthen for a Cure.

An anonymous IMFer continues to merge athletics with dance and music through the 2nd Annual Mambo for Myeloma. Charlie Eddins’ 2nd Annual Heritage Singers fundraiser focused on the music, as did Rhea Morgan’s Everybody’s Favorite Festival, an outdoor concert event. Other artistic expressions of support included Lu Woodward’s Honeybeaders Bracelets, Kathy Kupka’s Cancer Is Ruff book of photography, and Carol and Benson Klein’s ongoing Trooper Benson fundraiser, showcasing the comic strip artwork of Bill Rechin and Don Wilder.

Proving that simple approaches can greatly help our cause, friends created a fundraising campaign In Honor of Audrey Russell. Jerry Walton and the Southeastern Virginia Multiple Myeloma Support Group did the same with their Myeloma Awareness Month Online Fundraiser. Holly and Richard Carson celebrated their 16th Wedding Anniversary by renewing their vows and requesting donations to the IMF in lieu of gifts. Ronnie Maynard held a Virtual Birthday Party.

Poker can happen virtually too, but Jack Aiello continued to gather folks live for his 12th Annual Texas Hold ‘Em Benefit Bash. So did Carol Klein and Anne Girod with their 7th Annual Bridge Blasts Myeloma Ladies Game Day.

Julianne Stafford also played games at her 3rd Annual Red House Carnival. Debbie Morelli and the Central NJ Multiple Myeloma Support Group spread the fun with their Celebration of Life. Debbie Beatty’s Mission for Matt added dinner and dancing to the mix (see page 4), as did the Myeloma Cancer Support Group of Flager County, Florida’s own Dinner Dance.

Ken Fabian and the Central Florida Myeloma Support Group kept things casual with their 2nd Annual Gratitude Dinner in Honor of Ken Musick. So did the company Nuveen’s Casual Jeans Day. Karen Foster treated us to a Guys and Gears Car Show, and Jonathan Green did a very guy-like thing too – growing his beard out in his 2nd Annual Movember Against Myeloma (see page 8).

Growing your hair, walking in the park, playing games, sharing food, drinks, and laughter with friends – all of these and more are “everyday ways” you can make a difference. Or if you’re looking to do something out of your ordinary, our 2016 events provided plenty of inspiration there too! Whatever the scope, we’re here to help you make your mark. Please contact Suzanne Battaglia at 800-452-2873 or SBattaglia@myeloma.org to get started!
Like kayaking.

Right. I had nearly zero kayak experience, besides the occasional zip around the lake on a sit-on-top model. But it was the most practical boat choice for the route I wanted to take – which was new to me too. I needed a boat that I could both sail and paddle, with zero input from a motor.

“The point is, the opportunity is there for both myeloma awareness and fundraising, as well a personal growth, so my recommendation is to set the dates and go for it.”

You had to be very clever with your kayak in order for it to be suitable for your journey.

I needed it to be light enough to bring home on a plane, and luckily I found a 30-year-old one on Craigslist that was made of canvas over a detachable wooden frame that broke down into smaller bags. Amazingly, it used to belong to the same person I bought my liveaboard sailboat from, so I felt good about that. And it did make it on the plane ride home, albeit quite heavy and saturated. But in order for the kayak to work for this trip, I needed to build extra components for it. For example, I made the outriggers from old surfboards I cut, glued, and glassed, and for the mounts I used a child camping cot and cutting boards.

Choosing this particular route took a lot of extra considerations. Share with us a little bit about why you chose to kayak through British Columbia’s Inside Passage.

I’ve dreamed of going through this region for years, and while I have been to the San Juan Islands and Vancouver Island a few times, I wanted to go much, much deeper into experiencing the islands. Every trip on a small sailing boat had a turnaround time for dinner, school, darkness, whatever. This would be the first time that I didn’t need to turn around and go home.

You touched on this a bit before – that your parents’ experience with walking fundraisers gave you a model – but how did you formalize your fundraising plan, and get the word out?

First, I created a dedicated page for my fundraiser on the IMF’s website. I also had a Facebook campaign and ran a blog on our Backcountry Medical Guides website. I started posting to both of these about a month before I took off, sharing why the cause mattered to me, as well as the details of building my boat, planning the route, and challenges and experiences I was anticipating along the way. I kept posting once I was on the water, whenever I could. My mother and father sent out email blasts, and shared pictures on Instagram. Each time any of us posted or emailed, we linked to the IMF fundraiser site, and voilà – I was fundraising for the first time.

You mention challenges you were anticipating, and you definitely confronted some! One of which is that when you had sunny, blue-skies weather, it was actually harder to make forward progress.

The beautiful sun I had for three weeks of the trip severely slowed my progress. While sunny and gorgeous out, it meant that winds were blowing against my direction of travel – up to 35 knots at times – for weeks. There was almost no way that I could complete the trip under those northwest winds. Once the rain started falling, the wind switched to blowing from the south and assisted me. Suddenly I was making some real

(Continues on next page)
progress, doing nearly 100 miles in the last two days. Ultimately, I travelled everyday except for a weather hold lasting four days, and another day near Alaska that had winds up to 50 knots. All in all, I got pretty lucky with inclement weather, although I, and everything I owned, was cold and soaked for the last few weeks.

And we haven’t even yet gotten to the orcas.

That’s right. There was one day when there wasn’t another soul in sight. And in the midst of it, I was completely surrounded by a dozen orcas, in the pouring rain, in the scariest seas of the trip. I was keeping my elbows inside the kayak as to try not to touch them, while also trying to keep control of the boat. It was a surreal moment. Another time, amidst rain and rainbows and a falling sun, a giant humpback breached near me, completely unannounced. I was several miles from shore in any direction, the nearest village at least 15 miles away. That was an intense experience too. Overall, it just was an experience of so much breathtaking, natural beauty.

This trip was solitary in many ways, but you did encounter people too. Tell us a bit about those experiences.

There was such generosity of so many people I met along the way, helping me fix problems with the boat and “taking me in,” whether it was sleeping in their house, on their boat, or on the dock. People in these miniature fishing villages were loading me up with smoked and canned salmon all the time and encouraging me to keep going.

That’s beautiful, both the generosity and the encouragement. Obviously Paddle to Battle Myeloma was big endeavor. What advice do you have for someone else who is looking to do something big, or different, or out-of-the-box?

I’m one to commit now and figure the details out later. And for this trip, once I had set dates, it was very easy to plan – because I knew that I couldn’t plan. Each day was different and every minute of it unexpected. I started the trip with a “list of suitable campsites.” Partway through the trip, when I hadn’t even looked at it once, I ended up burning it to start a fire in the rain.

There’s wonderful advice in that visual metaphor. The point is, the opportunity is there for both myeloma awareness and fundraising, as well a personal growth, so my recommendation is to set the dates and go for it.

The same advice can easily apply to those who are looking to do something less rigorous.

Yes. Every single bit helps. And it’s amazing to discover who might be inspired by your cause.

Are you thinking about doing another adventurous fundraiser?

Oh yeah. It was one of the most gratifying experiences of my life. I think about the next one every day.
Last year, members of the IMF’s monthly giving club, The Hope Society, collectively raised $67,791. This relatively small but inspired group of donors has a significant impact on the families that depend on the IMF for up-to-date information, compassionate support, and cutting-edge research.

Here are a few examples of what $67,791 covers in an average year at the IMF:

- The postage costs of 21,939 InfoPacks sent to newly-diagnosed myeloma patients.
- Two months of costs to maintain 24-hour access to the information available on our website, myeloma.org.
- Three months of staffing the IMF’s toll-free InfoLine, providing the myeloma community with important information and updates.

With 31,300 new patients expected to receive a myeloma diagnosis in 2017, there is still a lot more we can do. Members of The Hope Society play an integral role in the success of every single one of our core programs and services. As someone who supports our mission, we invite you to join this dedicated group of individuals with an ongoing commitment to our cause.

Regardless of whether you host an event, give monthly, or make a direct contribution on an individual basis, your continued support in 2017 helps us achieve great milestones together as we work to improve lives and find a cure for myeloma patients and their families.

For more information on joining The Hope Society, please visit hope.myeloma.org, or contact Sharon Chow at 800-452-CURE.

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**International Myeloma Foundation**

**Hope Society**

Cultivating the future by planting the seeds to sustain the IMF

We created the Hope Society in 2009 to make it easier for our most committed supporters to spread their annual giving throughout the year. This year, members of the Hope Society will have donated over $55,000 in support of IMF’s core programs and services!

**Become a Member**

**Benefits of Membership**

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<td>» Recognition on Annual Report</td>
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<td>Supporter—$250+ Annual (minimum $20 per month)</td>
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For any questions, please email Sharon Chow at schow@myeloma.org
When Victor Sidhu was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in 2011, he and his wife, Nancy, turned to the IMF for help. “He signed up as a member because he was the patient,” she says, “but I was the one who read everything carefully.” During the three years that Victor struggled with his disease, he and Nancy availed themselves of every service the IMF could provide along their journey.

In 2012, they attended the Los Angeles Patient & Family Seminar. “It was a revelation,” says Nancy, “because it allowed us to meet all kinds of other people who had this disease, and their spouses.”

Victor passed away after developing amyloidosis in 2014. Still, Nancy remains committed to supporting the efforts of the organization every year. When asked why she continues to support the IMF with a significant annual gift, Nancy points to the support the IMF provided to her and Victor in their time of need. “We both benefited from your programs,” she said.

But, more importantly, she looks to the future. “I just want to beat this darned disease,” she says, acknowledging the incredible advances made in recent years. “We’re making real progress, and we’re just beginning to make it on amyloidosis, so I think supporting this is important.”

Last year, Nancy discovered a new way to help the IMF. “I’m retired,” she explained. “Putting on running races is not a thing that I do, so monetary contributions are the best way for me to support the IMF.” After consulting with her tax preparer, she discovered that by making her contributions through distributions from her IRA account meant she could give even more.

“Anybody with an IRA that’s over 70.5 years old is required to take out an annual minimum distribution. By deducting these contributions from my income taxes, I am able to meet this requirement each year, effectively supporting the IMF without paying additional taxes on the withdrawal.”

For Nancy, it’s a win-win. “Frankly, the more I can give, the better,” she says. And, for Nancy, that means knowing she’s helping families like hers stay in this fight for years to come.

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**Upcoming Member Events in 2017**

**July 16, 2017**
**Red House Carnival** – Somerville, MA  
**Contact:** Julianne Stafford – jstaff07@gmail.com

**July 28, 2017**
**4th Annual ChekFest Golf Tournament** – Grand Rapids, MI  
**Contact:** Scott Kowalczyk – chek5@att.net

**August 1, 2017**
**Laughs 4 Life** – Hattiesburg, MI  
**Contact:** Kent Oliver – kentpoliver@gmail.com

**August 13, 2017**
**Capt. Turner’s Ocean Swim** – Longport, NJ  
**Contact:** Doug Farrell – kateol@aol.com

**September 16, 2017**
**A Visit to Virginia’s Wine Country Tour** – Midlothian, VA  
**Contact:** Nancy Raibel – nancyandclaude@verizon.net

**September 23, 2017**
**Miracles for Myeloma 5K** – Clark, NJ  
**Contact:** Ron & Sheree Pask – rpask@comcast.net

**October 14, 2017**
**Coach Rob’s Golf Tournament** – Apopka, FL  
**Contact:** Todd Birmingham – birm4@aol.com
## Honor Roll

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- Celgene Corporation
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- Karyopharm Therapeutics
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- Millennium: The Takeda Oncology Company
- Willette Charitable Foundation

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Debbie S. Cohen
Rita and Joe Cohen
Peter Cole
Jason Coller
Connecticut Multiple Myeloma Fighters
Jim Corradetti
Melissa Corrigan
John Daly
Bill Damachke
Terrence D’Arcy
Richard Davies
Since 2007, the International Myeloma Foundation has hosted the Annual Comedy Celebration, a night of comedy and music benefiting the Peter Boyle Research Fund and the IMF’s Black Swan Research Initiative. Held at the historic Wilshire Ebell Theatre and Club in Los Angeles, the event is hosted by actor/comedian Ray Romano, and has featured some of the greatest acts in comedy in music: from Dana Carvey, Jimmy Kimmel, and Martin Short to Joe Walsh, David Crosby, and the Blues Brothers.

The Annual Comedy Celebration is so much more than your standard fundraising gala. The event features a pre-show cocktail party and silent auction, a hilarious two-hour show, and a VIP post-show champagne and dessert reception featuring a live band and dancing. It’s no wonder that the event sells out nearly every year, and has raised over $7 million in support of IMF research initiatives!

This year, the 11th Annual Comedy Celebration will be held on Saturday, November 4th. For the first time this year, our silent auction will feature live online bidding – so even those not in attendance can participate!

For info on tickets, sponsorship, or to donate an item or service for the silent auction, please contact us at events@myeloma.org.
Improving Lives Finding the Cure

IMF Products

- Awareness Bracelet (10-pack for $10)
- Ribbon of Hope Holiday Ornament ($10)
- Ribbon of Hope Lapel Pin ($5)
- IMF Cap ($15)
- IMF T-Shirt ($15)
- IMF Polo Shirt ($20)

Your contribution for these items will help us provide critical education, research and support, raise awareness and show support for myeloma patients worldwide, and help us in our mission to improve the quality of life of myeloma patients while working toward prevention and a cure.

The theme of the IMF’s myeloma awareness bracelet is Improving Lives Finding the Cure. Wear one in honor, celebration, or in memory of a loved one. When people ask you about it, you’ll have a perfect opportunity to spread the word about myeloma.

All merchandise can be viewed and/or ordered on our website myeloma.org