

◀RELAY FOR LIFE▶

FRIDAY, MAY 30th **INDOORS AT RWC,**
in ESTHERVILLE
Armory Gymnasium



MEAL • TEAMS • AUCTION
ENTERTAINMENT • CEREMONIES

A publication of the ★ESTHERVILLE NEWS

SCHEDULE • • • • •

COMMUNITY MEAL

5:00-7:00 PM

To-go containers available

\$12

PULLED PORK
SANDWICH, HOT DOG
OR MAIDRITES, CHIPS &
COLESLAW, WATER

OPENING CEREMONY

5:30 PM

Survivors encouraged to join
for free t-shirt & pin

LIVE AUCTION

6:30 PM

All are welcome!

LUMINARY CEREMONY

8:00 PM

Will start to put indoor luminaries up at 5:00pm




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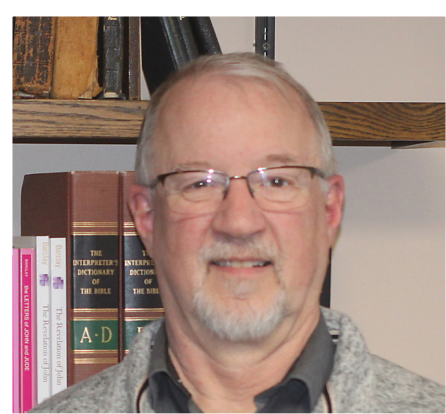


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THANK YOU 2025 HONORARY SURVIVORS

DOUG BURTON



BARB CHRISTENSEN



Donations support
survivors and pave
the way for future
survivors to flourish.

FULL SCHEDULE

5:00 PM BEGIN OPENING

- L'ecole la Danse dancers performing
- Food tent open from 5-7
- Food: Pulled pork sandwich, hot dogs, or maidrites, chips and coleslaw, water - \$12
- 362 Nutrition Tea Bombs 5-9
- Survivor registration 5-7
- Put up Luminaries

5:30 PM OPENING CEREMONY

- Raising of the American Flag- Girl Scout Troop
- National Anthem- Brizeida Alvarado, vocalist
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Introduction of 2025 Honorary Survivors
- Doug Burton as emcee
- Cancer Survivor's Lap - Brizeida Alvarado, vocalist

6:00 PM MANY VOICES CHOIR

6:30 PM AUCTION

7:30 PM AJ EDWARDS

- 362 Training Center Ju-jitsu demonstration

8:00 PM LUMINARY CEREMONY

- First luminary lit by Honorary Cancer Survivors
- Lorie Irwin, vocalist

8:15 PM RAFFLE ENDS

- Raffle sales end
- Raffle winners announced
- Announcement of final amount raised

9:00 PM CLOSING CEREMONY

- Everyone welcome for one final lap
- Luminaries taken down



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TEAMS

ALL TEAMS

Relay for Life Auction

6:30 pm

TEAM WA-TAN-YE

Cake Walk

At Center Court during Relay

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Golf Tournament/Auction

July 19th, 2025

To Register Call Amanda Morris 712-260-1876

TEAM GALLOPING GRANDMAS

Bake Sale

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Relay Supper 5-7pm

Pulled pork, hot dogs or maidrites, chips & coleslaw, and water

TEAM WILD BUNCH

Homemade Pies

Full pies or by the slice - 5 PM until gone

TEAM OLD LUHRS

\$1,000 Raffle Tickets

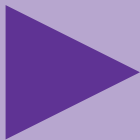
1 for \$5.00 | 5 for \$20.00

TEAM NEW HOPE

Relay for Life Golf Tournament

May 31 • Hillcrest Golf Course • 9am Shot Gun

Call 712-209-1343 to sign up



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Pastor
Doug
Burton

RETIRED PASTOR SHARES JOURNEY AS PROSTATE CANCER PATIENT

BY AMY H. PETERSON
APETERSON@ESTHERVILLENEWS.NET

Pastor Doug Burton has been a familiar face in Estherville for over four decades. The Estherville News profiled Burton late last year when he announced his retirement, and shared a bit about his church family at the now-closed First Christian Church in the May 1 edition. Burton, who recently moved from Estherville to central Iowa to be closer to family, is one of two honorary survivors for Emmet County Relay for Life in 2025. Burton has served as master of ceremonies for the event over the years and now will experience the event as a survivor.

Burton walked with others through the valleys in their lives, and found himself on the other side when he underwent surgery for prostate cancer.

THE JOURNEY

It's not always easy for men to speak up about their health, and especially not in a more personal area.

"It's a common procedure. It has good results, a lot of success. Yet when it happens to you, it's very personal," Burton said.

Burton's connection with prostate cancer began in 1999 when his father was diagnosed. Burton's father had radical prostate surgery and lived for

years afterward. Burton, aware of his family history of prostate cancer, underwent the annual blood panels covered by his insurance company that included PSA testing, a critical indicator for prostate cancer in men. PSA stands for prostate-specific antigen, a protein produced by the prostate gland. The chance of a man having prostate cancer goes up with the number of nanograms per milliliter (ng/mL) found in the blood, but there's no set number for whether the person does or does not have prostate cancer from the PSA test.

Burton started paying attention when his numbers started to go up. His general practitioner referred him to a urologist, who continued monitoring Burton's PSA levels.

After Burton's PSA levels remained elevated, further testing was recommended via an MRI. The imaging revealed three cancerous spots on Burton's prostate; these were confirmed by a biopsy. Burton and his wife, Beth, faced important decisions about treatment.

These are the four options the Burtons were given, and Burton said they did not want the last three: radical prostate surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, or "wait and see." The Burtons opted for surgery.

"We said, 'no, let's get this done before we end up with anything worse,'" Burton said.

Their timely decision proved to be a wise one. A post-surgery biopsy revealed the cancer had nearly spread beyond Burton's prostate before it was removed. Burton considers himself cancer free today.

MESSAGE TO MEN

Now cancer-free with consistently low PSA numbers, Burton delivers a vital message for men: "We need to pay attention to our numbers so that we can act in a timely manner – so that we can be there for our families."

Burton emphasized this point when discussing his upcoming role as Honorary Survivor for Relay for Life.

"Because I acted judiciously, I'm looking at being as old as I want to be – of seeing grandkids and great-grandkids grow," Burton said.

The timing of that statement couldn't have been more appropriate. Burton and his wife, Beth, welcomed their first great grandchild just two weeks before Burton spoke with the Estherville News.

[heading] The valley of the shadow

As a pastor who's counseled many through difficult times, Burton's experience brought a unique perspective to his faith.

"I think that we always have some doubt. I mean, it might be miniscule, it might be great. I have always had a philosophy, though, that my God takes care of me," Burton said.

When asked what he would title the chapter of his life's book about his journey with prostate cancer, Burton chose, "Traveling Through the Valley of the Shadow," a reference to Psalm 23 in the Bible.

"Our stereotypical attitude toward cancer is that it's the huge threat – terminal and deadly. Even with the treatable cancers, and there are so many now that if you're paying attention and you get after it early, it's minimal – you are still traveling in the valley of the shadow," Burton said.

Here's the thing about valleys, though, Burton said. "You may go into a valley, but every valley ends and you come out. We have our highs and lows, but they end."

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Throughout his cancer journey, Burton found strength in the support of his wife, Beth, their children and grandchildren, and their church family.

"My prayer warriors – there were lots of folks praying for us," Burton said. The positive energy and level of support was important, even for someone like Burton who was accustomed to providing spiritual guidance to others.

Support also came from an unexpected source – Caitlin Clark, the University of Iowa basketball star who was leading the Hawkeyes into March Madness.

Burton's enforced two-week rest and recovery following surgery coincided with the 2024 NCAA basketball tournament, giving him something to enjoy during his downtime. He and Beth became fans of women's basketball star Clark while watching the tournament as a distraction.

With cancer now behind him, Burton shares his story to encourage others to be proactive about their health – a message he will deliver at the Relay for Life.

For Burton, the experience reaffirmed his faith.

"It reaffirms that God is there for us, blessing us and watching over us," Burton said.



Barb
Christensen

A VILLAGE OF SUPPORT

RINGSTED BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR CONSIDERS HERSELF FORTUNATE TO HAVE HER HEALTH AND HER COMMUNITY

BY AMY H. PETERSON

APETERSON@ESTHERVILLENEWS.NET

Barb Christensen of Ringsted said she doesn't know everyone in Ringsted the way she once did, but the closeness of the community meant that when she was diagnosed with breast cancer, she was surrounded with support. Christensen is a familiar face in Estherville, too, having worked at the front desk at Bank Plus for 25 years.

Christensen was selected as one of two Honorary Survivors for 2025 Relay for Life, and her

story demonstrates the critical importance of early detection and the remarkable strength found in community support.

"It's like a village," Christensen told the Estherville News over a lunch at Estherville VFW. "It takes a village to raise a child. There's a village of support. The small community where the people know each other, care about each other, and they're there to support each other," Christensen said.

Christensen had always practiced self-examination to ensure she didn't

feel any lumps. However, cancer can remain undetected as it hides and grows inside human tissue.

Christensen's cancer journey began in December 2016 with a routine annual mammogram – something she had faithfully undergone for approximately 30 years.

After being called back for a second look, the radiologist suggested a biopsy.

"I knew when the radiologist came back and said she thought I needed a biopsy, I knew that wasn't good," Christensen said. She'd experienced

callbacks for second mammograms three or four times previously, but no one had ever mentioned a biopsy.

Two days before Christmas, Christensen received the biopsy results confirming breast cancer. It was the size of a pencil eraser and hidden inside a lot of tissue. The biopsy had already removed about 75% of the cancerous tissue, which was contained within one of the ducts.

Treatment proceeded swiftly. Christensen underwent a lumpectomy for the tiny tumor,



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“I knew when the radiologist came back and said she thought I needed a biopsy, I knew that wasn’t good,” Christensen said.

followed by a reduction of both breasts and 15 radiation treatments. The early detection and precise treatment have allowed Christensen to remain cancer free since completing therapy.

Christensen credits regular mammograms with saving her life.

“If I didn’t have mammograms, by the time it was large enough that it could be felt, it would have come through a lot of that tissue,” Christensen said.

Her oncologist in Rochester offered two pieces of encouragement that stayed with her: “You became a survivor the day you were diagnosed,” and “If you have to have cancer, this is the best kind to have.”

Christensen’s cancer experience reinforced what she already knew but perhaps took for granted – the importance of friends, work colleagues and her family.

“Sometimes you know that they’re there for you, but you don’t take it for granted that you’ll have that support. And you never take your health for granted. One day you’re fine and the next day you find out there’s an issue,” Christensen said.

Christensen’s two daughters, now in their early 50s, wanted to connect with her after treatment and they went for matching tattoos. Christensen’s bears the word “survivor” in a meaningful tribute to her journey.

Christensen has been a 20-year volunteer with Relay for Life. She started as a member of the Bank Plus team. The bank no longer fields a separate team, but remains a corporate sponsor of the event. Christensen remains devoted to the cause of cancer prevention through her participation with the Happy Hoofers team from Ringsted.

Her story at this year’s Relay for Life event will center on the importance of early detection through regular mammograms and the critical importance of self-examination, even though Christensen’s tumor was small and deep in the tissue. A practitioner told her there was no way she would have caught it herself.

As she continues her annual mammograms and advocates for others to do the same, Christensen embodies the spirit of survivorship in a small community where everyone truly does take care of each other. Her story is one of vigilance, community support, and modern medical advances that can transform challenging diagnoses into stories of hope.

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LIFESTYLE CHOICES THAT AFFECT ORAL CANCER RISK



Oral cavity and oropharyngeal cancers affect the mouth and throat. Estimates from the American Cancer Society predict around 59,660 new cases of oral cavity or oropharyngeal cancer and about 12,770 deaths. The Ontario Dental Association says around 5,400 Canadians will be diagnosed with oral cancers and 1,500 will die from them. No one can make themselves immune to cancer. However, recognition that certain lifestyle habits can increase a person's risk for oral cavity and oropharyngeal cancers may help them avoid behaviors that could increase their chances of being diagnosed with the disease.

- **TOBACCO USE:** Smoking cigarettes, pipes or e-cigarettes and using chewing tobacco or snuff can increase the risk for oral cancers. There is some evidence that newer nicotine pouches may increase the risk of oral cancer, but more research is needed.
- **ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION:** Heavy alcohol use increases the risk for oral cancers. Alcohol abuse, defined as drinking more than 21 standard drinks in one week, is the second largest risk factor for the development of oral cancer, according to The Oral Cancer Foundation.

- **AGE:** The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research says the risk of oral cancer increases with age, and most cases occur in people over the age of 40.
- **HPV VIRUS:** Research indicates that approximately 70 percent of cases of oropharyngeal cancer are caused by the human papillomavirus, particularly HPV16. The HPV16 virus is detectable in the tumors of these cancers.
- **POOR DIET:** A diet low in fruits and vegetables has been linked to increased risk of oral cancers.

· **SUN EXPOSURE:** The American Cancer Society says oral cancers that begin on the lips can be the result of radiation from the sun.

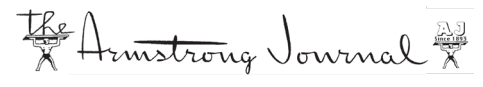
Cancers of the mouth affect thousands of people across North America. Understanding which habits increase risk for oral cancers can help people do what's necessary to potentially prevent their formation.



Relay for Life corporate sponsors Armstrong Journal, Estherville News and Ringsted Dispatch donated a check for \$200 from the advertising sales of this section. Kris Grabinoski and David Swartz, representing the newspapers, present the check to Lori Sherling of Relay for Life.



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