

CROP participant Janet Woodhouse helped organize a Vinton cancer support group in September 2010. Participants are from all age groups.

To learn more about the support group, please e-mail Janet at JRWoodhouse@prodigy.net.



CROP

CLINICAL TRIALS YIELD RESULTS

The Cedar Rapids Oncology Project (CROP) is marking 25 years of conducting clinical trials designed to help cancer patients in our community receive the latest cancer therapies while staying close to home. The trials also allow local physicians to gain experience with the newest treatments.

Martin Wiesenfeld, MD, FACP, is a medical oncologist and principal investigator for the National Cancer Institute (NCI) funded project. Dr. Wiesenfeld also is Mercy's Medical Director for the Hall-Perrine Cancer Center soon to be constructed on Mercy's campus.

CROP is a non-profit organization affiliated with Mercy Medical Center, Oncology Associates, St. Luke's Hospital and Trinity Medical Center in the Quad Cities area. It is part of a network of 50 world-class cancer research centers located in communities across the United States.

CROP serves a relatively underserved rural area, with patients coming from distances of up to 100 miles. Interestingly, rural and poor urban areas have some things in common, including a high incidence of smoking and limited access to cancer screening.

"Smaller communities in rural areas need access to screening, prevention trials and clinical trials provided by CROP," says Dr. Wiesenfeld, adding that more than 3,500 people have participated.

Most of the lifesaving drugs approved for treating cancer today were tested first in clinical trials conducted by CROP. Medical breakthroughs dramatically increase survival rates for many cancer patients.

"CROP's clinical record is outstanding and it's the reason that, today, we are conducting 65 separate clinical trials using \$450,000 in annual grant money from the National Cancer

Institute," Wiesenfeld says.

A study participant for 20 years, Janet Woodhouse was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1990. She says she made the decision to participate with her husband's support.

"I'd had a really close friend diagnosed with breast cancer when she was 40 and she struggled with her chemo treatments. She died and it was difficult. Then, I was diagnosed at 45 when our oldest daughter was a freshman in college, our son was in high school and our younger daughter was in middle school," says Janet.

She explains, "If it helps somebody else, I'm glad to do it – it was something I could do that might be beneficial to others and the opportunity to perhaps make something positive from a negative experience."

At this point, someone from CROP calls Janet once a year and asks a couple questions. "It is really painless on my part," she says. She also was one of more than 130 Vinton residents who walked in the 20th Annual *Especially For You*® Race Against Breast Cancer at Mercy Medical Center to raise funds to provide breast care services for local women and men in need. To date, more than 4,300 people have utilized \$1.2 million in services from the fund.

Janet and all the participants are the faces behind the success of CROP and their support makes a real difference in improving the health of cancer patients everywhere.



Martin Wiesenfeld, MD, FACP
Medical Director,
Mercy Cancer Center

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