

H.E.R.O.C. INC. CANCER MISSION TRIP TO GUYANA

OCTOBER 22 – NOVEMBER 4, 2017

MEMBERS WHO TRAVELED TO GUYANA FOR THE MISSION:

Lorna Welshman- Neblett – President
Harold Lutchman – Vice President
Barbara Chase – Event Coordinator
Marion Theresa Nadir – Recording Secretary
Shirley Collins – Asst. Secretary

Robert Fraser – Nursing Team
Desrene Wallerson – Nursing Team
Dr. Isaac Fordyce – Naturopath/
Nutritionist
Pauline Roach – Member
Salima Baksh – Member

Our Team arrived safely on Sunday, October 22 via Fly-Jamaica Airline. It was an awesome flight and we were all excited to start our Mission 2017.

Monday, October 23 - This day was assigned to be spent with families/friends and to be energized for the next day's work and firm planning for the rest of the week's agenda.

Tuesday, October 24th – Team H.E.R.O.C. met at the office of our Guyana based Patron, Norma Daniels. Everyone brought the gift items they carried in their luggage and the thirty-five (35) gift bags were assembled for the Look Good Feel Better Event for our Survivors and current patients. The gift bags were hefty and included lots of items beneficial for our guests as follows:



- Lemon, Ginger and Peppermint Tea Bags
- Biotene Mouthwash
- Pro-Enamel Toothpaste
- Ginger Candies
- Fresh Mint Chewing Gum
- Nutri- Health Protein Bars
- Lip Balms
- Hand Sanitizers
- Stevia Sweetner Packs
- Wig Caps
- A gift bag of Stila Cosmetics (Lipstick, Eye Pencil, Powder Blush, Mascara, Make-up sponge applicators, Hand Lotions, Body Cream, Cosmetic Bag
 - Mary Kay Gift Bag with full size Body Moisturizers
 - Cancer Souvenir Pack that includes:
 - Pink Fan with Cancer Insignia
 - Hand Band with cancer Insignia
 - Dog Tag (Someone I love needs a cure)
 - Heart Pin with cancer insignia
 - Ball Pointed Pen (with signals of strength, courage, love, faith, hope, survivor)

All of the items were enclosed in a tote Bag, compliments of Elmhurst Hospital, New York, USA.

After the completion of the bags, the H.E.R.O.C Team was hosted for lunch by one of our Guyana based Patrons, Mr. & Mrs. Corlette.

At the end of Lunch we were featured on the Voice of Guyana Radio Program with Andrea Joseph at the NCN Studios, in Georgetown. H.E.R.O.C was represented by our President, Lorna Welshman-Neblett while Dr. Latoya Gooding, President of our sister organization, represented The Giving Hope Foundation. This was a very informative radio interview on educating persons on early detection. It was a live program with persons being able to call-in and ask questions pertaining to the subject. To our surprise, the callers were all men who are very concerned for their women and themselves with regard to breast cancer and prostate cancer. This was a very successful program and we were impressed by the questions that were being asked by the public.

Wednesday, October 24

Team H.E.R.O.C. and our sister organization embarked on a trip to Pandama Resort for a day's retreat. It was an inspirational and motivational day for both groups and this brought out the synergy of the two groups and the purpose of working together for the same cause. We started the day with prayers and singing of hymns.



Members identified themselves via a motivational game and expounded on their reason for being part of their respective organizations. This turned out to be a very emotional exercise and it was very rewarding for everyone. We were joined by three young doctors from Africa who were interning at the Georgetown Hospital and they enjoyed every moment with us.

After our devotion, we were able to tour the resort and was then joined by Mrs. Tracey Douglas with a presentation of Yoga and exercises that actually released our bodies of excess stress.

Thursday, October, 26

The two organizations hosted the Look Good Feel Better Session for thirty-five (35) Cancer Survivors and Patients at the headquarters of the Giving Hope Foundation at Ketley and Drysdale Streets in Charlestown, Georgetown. Both members and guests showed much enthusiasm. Our guests arrived with enthusiasm and we greeted them just the same.

Nurse Desrene Wallerson presented how to conduct breast checks and identify early signs and unusual variations via a Power Point presentation. Dr. Isaac Fordyce presented a detailed session on Nutrition that was very beneficial for everyone.



Presentations delivered by Nurse Desrene Wallerson and Dr. Isaac Fordyce

After these two sessions, our guests proceeded to their make-overs. There were two Hair Stylists and a few Make-up Artists on board. They selected wigs that were styled for them and their make-up was completed by the artists.



Wide variety of wigs and cosmetics for distribution and use by the Survivors/Patients

Our guests were all transformed to a point where they were unrecognizable. At the end of the session, the survivors and patients were very anxious to get home with their new look.



One of the Cancer Patients Before and After their make-over

They were provided with lunch and the gift bags were distributed to everyone prior to their departure. This was an exciting day and we were so pleased that we were able to make the hearts of these women so happy.

Later in the evening our Team was hosted for dinner at New Thriving Restaurant at Providence. Hearty thanks to Mr Chung (Proprietor of the restaurant) and Ms Sonia Noel (Our Patron) who coordinated this wonderful evening with a very scrumptious meal for the team.

Friday, October 27 – Our Nurse Fraser traveled to Bush Lot, West Coast Berbice where he presented a program on Sickle Cell. Mr. Fraser has completed some extensive research and studies in this area and continues to educate the community in his hometown. He was accompanied by Dr. Isaac Fordyce.

In the early afternoon we were hosted on NCN Television for a special program. Dr. Gooding from the Giving Hope Foundation and Lorna Welshman-Neblett from H.E.R.O.C. along with two Cancer Survivors were live on this program. Our Cancer Survivors were able to relate to the public their life changing experience through treatment and their push to be a survivor. . Dr. Gooding enlightened persons on early detection where to save lives before going on to stages where it is difficult for the person to regain good health. Ms. Welshman-Neblett expounded on the support system required for persons by Family and friends to help them through the journey.

We later gathered at the 1763 (Cuffy) Monument, Square of the Revolution, in Georgetown for the Candle Light Vigil. A number of supporting organizations, Lions Club, Governmental Ministries, OSHAG, family members of persons that were lost to Cancer and Survivors joined for this memorial. This was hosted by the Giving Hope Foundation and H.E.R.O.C Teams, Dr. Latoya Gooding and Mr. Harold Lutchman. There were performances of song and dance in addition to the singing of 'Carry Your Candle'. H.E.R.O.C. provided Candles in cups that indicated our slogan 'GIVE CANCER THE BOOT' for all attendees. This was a very successful event with over one hundred and fifty (150) persons in attendance.



Section of the supporters at the Candle light Vigil

Saturday, October 28 – Giving Hope Foundation with the assistance of H.E.R.O.C. conducted Free Screenings at the Surgical Department at the Georgetown Hospital. Another rewarding day! We were there from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.



A total of ninety-one (91) persons were in attendance, twenty-one (21) of them were men for prostate screening. The women were screened for Breast and OBS/Pap Smears.

At the free Cancer Screening

Sunday, October 29 – Strides for Breast Cancer Walk 2017. We gathered at 6:00 AM at Parade Ground for the annual walk. Our supporters based in Guyana all arrived in their H.E.R.O.C. T-Shirts in support of their family members and friends. Over six thousand (6,000) persons came out in attendance for the walk led by our First lady, Mrs. Sandra Ganger accompanied by the Survivors. They were followed by the Cancer Institute and The Giving Hope Foundation/H.E.R.O.C. Teams.



Giving Hope Foundation and H.E.R.O.C Inc. Teams heading the walk



Team H.E.R.O.C. after the walk

We extend a big thank you to all the persons in Guyana who purchased the H.E.R.O.C. T-Shirts to walk with us this year. We stood tall and strong in our bright pink tops and white bottoms. You could not miss us. The weather held out for us until the walk was ended and the presentations at the Parade Ground were completed. Then came the rain but we had accomplished what we supposed to at the time.

Monday, October 30 – Giving Hope and H.E.R.O.C completed our mission with a trip to the Bartica Hospital. On our way to Parika, we stopped to visit our Patron Ms. Vanessa Adamson-Carr at CIDI in McDoom Village. Here we presented a plaque to her for her continued support for our missions.



Dr Gooding presents Certificate of Recognition to Ms. Vanessa Adamson-Car of CIDI

The Bartica Mission Trip was indeed an adventure but we needed to present a program to the Administrators of the Hospital and nothing was going to stop us. We arrived in Bartica through pouring rain. It was an experience disembarking from our Speed Boat into puddles of water, but we were there for a purpose and we continued on to the Hospital.



Some of our members aboard the Speed Boat headed to Bartica

We met with Mrs. Ferrier, the Hospital Administrator and the Regional Chairman, Mr. Gordon Bradford and successfully presented our program. It was accepted with flying colors and we will be able to announce this program at a later date as the Bartica Regional Hospital will become the Pilot Program for this wonderful opportunity.



Ms. Marion Theresa Nadir presented H.E.R.O.C's press kit to the Regional Chairman and the Hospital Administrator

Off we went through the pouring rain again for our boat homeward bound via Parika and then to Georgetown. This was one of the most courageous trips in our entire lives. One engine on our boat failed and we were floating slowly in the middle of nowhere awaiting a relief boat on its way to us. When the relief arrived, Team H.E.R.O.C all dressed in their life jackets were escorted by jumping from the bow of one boat to the other in the middle of the Essequibo River. We were then on our way to Parika in the darkness of the river. But we know that we were guided by the Master and our work was completed and was brought safely down the river to Parika. God was in the midst of this extraordinary mission.

Some of our members departed on November 1st and others on the 4th. We are back feeling very accomplished with our work and ready to continue to prepare for our next year's mission.

H.E.R.O.C was featured in the following two articles in the daily Newspaper during the mission trip:

Cancer survivors benefit from another 'Look Good, Feel Better' initiative

Kaieteur News: Oct 27, 2017 Page 18



Dr Latoya Gooding [standing] interacts with cancer survivors and volunteers during yesterday's event

They came from a number of districts but they all shared the common goal – living to wage war against cancer. Some of them are cancer survivors, others are volunteers and members associated with the locally based Giving Hope Foundation and the United States based Health and Education Relief Organisation for Cancer [HEROC].

They all gathered at the Drysdale and Ketley Streets, Charlestown, Georgetown office of the Giving Hope foundation yesterday. Stories were shared by the survivors of varying number of years ranging from 14 and another who is currently battling the scourge of the disease. Essentially, the many stories told of the dreadful diagnosis of cancer and the will to overcome it were enough to give the weakest of persons the zeal to be triumphant. The occasion was the annual 'Look Good, Feel Better' event aimed at enlightening cancer survivors, in particular, about ways they can not only battle cancer but look good during and even after too.

This is the second year that the Giving Hope Foundation has collaborated with HEROC to host the event. The event, yesterday, started with Dr. Latoya

Gooding, President of the Giving Hope Foundation, amplifying to those in attendance why such a venture is important. She made it clear from the onset that the forum is one designed to ensure that "you come in one way and leave transformed." Elaborating about the programme, President of HEROC, Ms. Lorna Welshman-Neblett, underscored, "You can talk about education and motivation and eating habits; all the different things, but if you don't have a reality of it then you are not really familiar yet." She said that the programme not only emphasises the collaborative role of HEROC and the Giving Hope Foundation as not-for-profit organisations focused on helping to combat cancer, but as a team showing cancer survivors that they can be stunning and health conscious as they take on cancer. Moreover, the visiting HEROC team brought along a nutritionist whose task yesterday was to enlighten the cancer survivors about how to improve their nutritional intake ranging from natural fruit juices to herbal teas.

Added to this, HEROC yesterday made available to the survivors bags of goodies which included the appropriate mouth wash, toothpaste and pro-enamel to whiten their teeth, since, according to Welshman-Neblett, chemotherapy, which many cancer patients are subjected to, has been known to discolour their teeth.

Also, she disclosed, "We are giving them ginger candies because it helps restore their taste buds...cancer patients tend to lose their taste buds too because of chemotherapy." The survivors were also the recipients of cosmetic items to help enhance their physical appearance. "We have little cosmetic bags for them and will have make-up artists who will make them look good," said Welshman-Neblett of plans for the event yesterday. As she commented on the 'make-over' activity, she asserted that the cosmetics that were sourced for the project were in fact the highest quality available in the United States. Sourcing the cosmetics was particularly easy for

Welshman-Neblett since she has for a number of years worked in the Cosmetics and Fragrance Industry.

"I have many contacts in this field, so all I did was write them and let them know that I was doing this for the cancer patients and they donated all that we needed," she related. HEROC, a registered New York City charitable organisation, was formed by a group of business-oriented US based Guyanese – none of whom were formerly involved in areas of health. But, according to Welshman-Neblett, it was because of a desire to give back to Guyana that the organisation was formed and has ever since directed its mission to helping Guyanese, wherever possible to combat cancer. The organisation's efforts are however not only evident in Guyana but also in the United States as well. Currently the organisation is providing housing and other support to a Guyana-born young woman who was diagnosed right here in Guyana, at the age of 26, with stage four breast

cancer.

"She had gone through 16 sessions of chemotherapy, 25 sessions of radiation, she had both breasts removed and she is being treated right now with medication as part of the final aspect of her treatment," said the HEROC President.

But according to her, based on the interactions that have been had with a number of resident Guyanese, members of HEROC have concluded that cancer is still a taboo issue in many factions.

"It is kind of like a stigma here; people are still afraid to talk about cancer," said Welshman-Neblett who noted that because of HEROC's efforts a number of people are changing the way they think about the disease. This is especially noticeable, she said, with the young woman currently receiving cancer treatment. "She has learnt to open up and to meet people and to talk about the illness," said a proud Welshman-Neblett.

More work needed to end late stage cancer detection

Guyana Kaieteur News: Nov 01, 2017 page 27

New York Edition – Kaieteur News: November 3 – 9, 2017 Page 55

Having the facilities in place, along with available treatment, is only part of the fight against cancer. But there is even more to combating this dreadful disease that has been wreaking havoc in Guyana and across the world for that matter.

According to President of the United States-based Health and Education Relief Organisation for Cancer [HEROC], Ms. Lorna Welshman-Neblett, "We have a lot of work to do here and most importantly we have a great deal to do in terms of educating people. We have to help people to understand what signs they should look for and to catch things very early because the earlier you catch it, the more likely you are to save a life." But the message of screening and early detection has been preached for many years.

Despite this, the number of cancer cases has been increasing. HEROC has been able to recognise this dilemma, although it has only been collaborating with the Giving Hope Foundation for the past two years to help with the cancer awareness drive in Guyana. The Giving Hope Foundation is a local non-governmental organisation which has the fight against cancer as one of its main objectives. The organisation, which has Dr. Latoya Gooding as its President, is one that also directs focus to helping to reduce the prevalence of suicide.

But given the fact that a great deal of attention is given to cancer during the month of October, the two organisations have been collaborating to raise awareness. According to Welshman-Neblett, "There are instances based on what we have heard, the

health workers here are finding most of their [cancer] cases at stage three or stage four and at that point it involves a lot of treatment and a whole lot of care.” This state of affairs has been substantiated by Dr. Gooding, who has had involvement in the past at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation [GPHC].



Lorna Welshman-Neblett

She revealed recently that there are many occasions when cancer is detected it is already at an advanced stage. “What we are finding is that more and more persons are coming at late stages, that is, stage three and stage four,” said Dr. Gooding, as she too amplified the importance of regular screening.

With regular screening, she noted that the

possibility of cancer being detected at an early stage is very possible. However, despite constant appeals for persons to embrace early screening, Dr. Gooding revealed that “it is still very rare to find somebody being diagnosed with cancer when it is stage one.” But Welshman-Neblett noted that if deliberate efforts are made to ensure that cancer is detected as early as stage one or by stage two the latest, “you have a better chance to not only survive but to save yourself a lot of expense and a lot of wear and tear on the body, because chemotherapy and radiation are not easy on the body.”

Welshman-Neblett highlighted, too, that while some patients’ treatment regimen might be more difficult than others the fact remains that early detection is likely to ease the severity of the fight.

“While some may go through these treatments like thunderbolts, others really suffer, so early detection is really important,” the HEROC President related.

The collaboration between HEROC and the Giving Hope Foundation was born out of a recommendation made by Dr. John Mitchell of another US-based organisation – Health and Education Relief Organization [HERO]. The HERO team during a medical mission earlier this year visited the GPHC and was able to complete about 30 surgical procedures. HEROC is in fact an authorised affiliate body of HERO, according to Welshman-Neblett.

Persons wanting to contribute and donate to our Cancer Missions, please mail checks to:

Health & Education Relief Organization for Cancer
P.O. Box 21727
Brooklyn, New York 11202-1727



: <https://www.facebook.com/herocinc/>

Email address: herocinc@gmail.com

Website: Will be available soon.