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News

Wellness Community quilting bee designed to offer aid

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By Tony Di Domizio

Leave it to an incident of coincidence to affect Doylestown resident and quilter Sandy Stiegler and The Wellness Community at the Anne McCouch Center in Lansdale.

"While going through the experience of having breast cancer, I happened to buy this fabric that was very unusual for me," the quilter said.

"I didn't know what I was going to do with it," Stiegler said. "When I got it home and showed it to people, I found it was covered with representations of breasts. It was fabulous and I knew I had to make a quilt to help me to come to terms with my diagnosis."

She completed her quilt and brought it to The Wellness Community.

Sandy Bernstein, program coordinator at The Wellness Community, was very interested in the quilt and spoke to Stiegler about it.

"She thought it was a good idea to teach people to quilt and work on a group quilt," Stiegler said.

"Quilts, throughout centuries, are symbols of comfort and people reach out to make ones for events, like a new baby, someone going to college, someone moving cross-country, and an idea of a quilt as comfort is something she thought people will really relate to."

So the Quilting Bee was born.

It will take place Jan. 16 and Jan. 30 from 1 to 3 p.m. at The Wellness Community at the Anne McCouch Center, 1000 W. Main St., Lansdale.

People with cancer, their families and friends are invited to join in the bee and learn how to quilt. All materials will be provided.

The sessions are free, and will continue for two more dates in February. People must register by calling (215) 393-9105 by Jan. 15.

The Wellness Community provides support and educational programs to people with cancer and their families.

These programs include a Mind and Body series and a stress management series. The Quilting Bee will be a part of the stress management program, said Bernstein.

"We think that being in a group of people who understand the experience is an important part of healing," Bernstein said. "Tapping into creativity is a piece of what people can do to manage stress."

The event is for anyone affected by cancer, be it a personal diagnosis or the care of someone with cancer.

"It's a way for people to learn and come out with a finished product," Bernstein said. "People may be nervous of their own ability, but to work on a group project is fun."

Bernstein hopes to get a good turnout for the event.

"It should be a fun program," she said. "It seems like the perfect winter activity."

Stiegler said if the quilting bee is something that can help us all, it's definitely a good thing.

"The emotional part of making the quilt and coming together to make something comfortable and beautiful is a big part of it," she said.

The Wellness Community at the Anne McCouch Center will hold mindfulness-based stress reduction programs over the next couple of months, as well as feature programs on music, poetry and journaling.

A cancer and spirituality session will be held on Feb. 20.

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