

# Sharing stories of hope

## Celebration on National Cancer Survivors Day

BY VERA CHINESE  
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Christina Vendetto's cancer is 10 years in remission, but by the time the Lake Ronkonkoma resident turned 35, she had already battled colon cancer once and lung cancer twice.

Vendetto, now 45, pressed on with chemo and surgery after each diagnosis and her "light at the end of the tunnel" came when daughter Allison was born June 30, 2010 — under the Cancer zodiac sign.

Dozens of survivors like Vendetto shared stories of hope and perseverance Sunday at Stony Brook Cancer Center's annual National Cancer Survivors Day celebration. Dennis Kelty, 71, of Holbrook, who fought prostate cancer in 2007 and bladder cancer in 2014, kicked off the event's "parade of survivors" and had plenty of advice for fellow patients.

"One of the things I have gotten out of the support group is inspiration," said Kelty, who is in remission but attends meetings to offer help to newcomers. "We laugh, we joke, we talk about how embarrassing things have become. You have to come to a mental state where you accept what is going on."

He pressed those with new diagnoses to seek counsel and ca-

maraderie with support groups. Acceptance is key, Kelty said, but it can be a struggle as survivors say their illness can at times feel completely random and unfair.

Vendetto was not a smoker when diagnosed with lung cancer. Kim Tunstall of Brentwood was just days away from giving birth to her second child when older daughter Cianna, then 5, was diagnosed with a type of bone cancer in her right leg.

Cianna, now 7 and nearly a year in remission, missed all of first grade, cannot bend her knee and is likely to require multiple surgeries until she stops growing. Still, the family, which includes dad Mike and 22-month-old Aiden, tries to keep things as normal as possible for the music-loving, Wonder Woman-obsessed little girl.

"If she's good, then we have to be good," Kim Tunstall said. "Kids feed off people's vibes."

Dr. Yusuf Hannun, director of the Stony Brook Cancer Center, said treatments have improved but more work needs to be done by way of clinical trials. He noted Stony Brook's emerging CAR-T therapy, which primes a patient's T-cells to target certain lymphomas and leukemias. Through CAR-T therapy, which stands for chimeric antigen receptor T-cell, a patient's blood sample is removed and modified in a laboratory before being reintroduced into the body.

"We're starting to make inroads and dents in some types of cancers, but not across the board," Hannun said. "We have to do a lot more research."



Dennis Kelty, 71, of Holbrook, center, a two-time cancer survivor in Sunday's "Parade of Survivors" outside Stony Brook Cancer Center.



Cancer survivor Janeen Fink of Farmingville with daughter Taylor, 8, at the National Cancer Survivors Day celebration at the center Sunday.

## Schumer: LI internet speeds should be faster

BY DAVID M. SCHWARTZ  
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Sen. Chuck Schumer said Sunday that 436,000 Long Islanders have slow internet service and a report by the Federal Communications Commission paints a too-rosy picture of broadband access.

Schumer cited a Microsoft report from December that estimated 125,000 residents in Nassau and 311,000 more in Suffolk had slower-than-acceptable internet speeds and were missing out on true broadband service. The FCC defines the minimum broadband speed for downloads as 25 megabits per second

[MBPS]. The FCC has said nearly all Long Islanders have access to broadband internet.

Schumer on Sunday said some Long Islanders may be paying for faster service than they're getting and the FCC should not rely on internet service providers to self-report the data.

"The FCC needs to account for the massive disparity in reported speeds and the real frustration of many New Yorkers who are at a net loss all around when their internet service is slow, possibly paying for speeds that are not as advertised and losing out on their own productivity," Schumer said.

Tim Wu, a professor at Colum-

bia Law School and author of books on internet access, said he supported Schumer's push.

"The cable and phone companies have routinely deceived the public when it comes to the broadband speeds they promise and what they deliver," Wu said in a statement Sunday.

The FCC did not respond to requests for comment Sunday.

Schumer said he wants the FCC to conduct a thorough review into the disparity in data between that supplied by service providers and information in the Microsoft study, which used data generated by internet devices.

Schumer questioned federal policy allowing providers to

count some areas where they are not actually providing service. Schumer said service providers can use the coverage of one household in a census block to account for coverage in the entire area. The FCC uses this data to assess broadband access in the United States and complete its annual broadband report.

Schumer wants the FCC and providers to take corrective action that ensures accurate reporting and better coverage, which translates into fairer prices. Nine percent of Nassau residents and 20 percent of Suffolk residents don't have broadband, according to the Microsoft report.

With Ivan Pereira

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### THIS DATE IN HISTORY

**1935** The French liner Normandie set a record, crossing the Atlantic to New York in four days on its maiden voyage.  
**1962** Air France Flight 007, a U.S.-bound Boeing 707, crashed on takeoff from Orly Airport near Paris; all but two of 132 aboard were killed.  
**1965** Astronaut Edward H. White became the first American to walk in space during the flight of Gemini 4.  
**1968** Pop artist Andy Warhol was shot in his New York film studio by actress Valerie Solanas, a self-styled militant feminist. She served three years in prison for assault. Warhol died 19 years later.  
**1989** Chinese army troops began their sweep of Beijing to crush student-led pro-democracy demonstrations.  
**2017** A white van slammed into pedestrians on London Bridge, killing eight people; the three attackers were shot and killed by police.  
**2018** Graduating seniors at the Florida high school where a gunman killed 17 people in February heard from a surprise commencement speaker, Jimmy Fallon of the "Tonight Show," who urged them to move forward and "don't let anything stop you."