

Cancer Center reaches one year milestone

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Special to the Monitor

It is an amazing time when your baby turns one year old and you can see the growth and potential of what is still yet to come.

Last month, the Cancer Corner at Los Alamos Medical Center celebrated their first birthday, and because the month of October is Cancer Awareness month, they plan to celebrate all month long.

Bernice Williams, the president of the Los Ala-

mos Council on Cancer and a devoted Cancer Corner supporter, couldn't be more proud.

"Menolda (Bakker) has been opening the Cancer Corner every Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon and Peggy (Reneau) has helped with making the Cancer Corner aesthetically pleasing," Williams said. She supports the efforts by recruiting additional volunteers like Mary Lee Morgan, who like Williams, fills in when needed.

The consistency on

Thursday allows the Cancer Corner to be a one-stop information shop filled with literature on various cancer topics, along with a variety of wigs, hats and scarves for those going through chemotherapy.

Appointments can be scheduled for those needing an alternate time by calling the Corner and leaving a message. The Cancer Corner also offers a venue for meetings of the Los Alamos Cancer Support Group. The support group meets the first

Monday of each month, from 11:30 a.m.-1p.m. The group supports those just diagnosed, going through treatment, in recovery, or long-term survivors.

"Diagnosis can be a very scary process. Treatment can bring about not only physical scars but emotional ones too," Williams said, "and for long-term survivors, post traumatic shock or just living with the new 'normal', can be a struggle."

See **CENTER**, 3



COURTESY

Bernice Williams, Menolda Bakker and Peggy Reneau show off the wonderful resources at the Cancer Corner, located at the Los Alamos Medical Center.

CENTER

From Page 1

The ethos of the group is to treat everyone with respect, allow everyone to have a voice and provide support through shared experience and advice. "No one knows what you are going through like other cancer survivors," Williams said. The support group is free and consists of relaxed discussion in a comfortable friendly atmosphere.

Jan McGough, who has been a counselor for the Cancer Institute, an oncologist, a nurse and a long-time cancer survivor, leads the group. Los Alamos Medical Center donates the space for the Cancer Corner resources, which provides support to those in Los Alamos dealing with the emotional aspects of cancer.

The Los Alamos Council on Cancer and the Cancer Corner will both be well represented at the Health Fair on Oct. 23 with information available about their network of support, which includes a class called "Look Good, Feel Better," offered in November.

The "Look Good, Feel Better," program is a community based, free, national service that teaches female cancer patients beauty techniques to help restore their appearance and self-image with professionally led small groups that offer practical, hands-on skills to offset the damaging effects of chemotherapy.

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*-Bernice Williams on the
"Look Good, Feel Better" program*

"Women learn about make-up techniques, skincare and nail care. In addition, information related to hair loss such as wigs, turbans and scarves is offered. Each participant receives a free bag of face products to take home with them," Williams said.

The Los Alamos Council on Cancer, in collaboration with the American Cancer Society, runs the classes with the help of volunteer cosmetologists from the community. Those interested in the program can visit the LACC Web site at www.losalamoscounciloncancer.org, to learn more or register for classes or call 661-9510.