

# SUMMER EVENTS



Dance for the Cure

Saturday, August 27

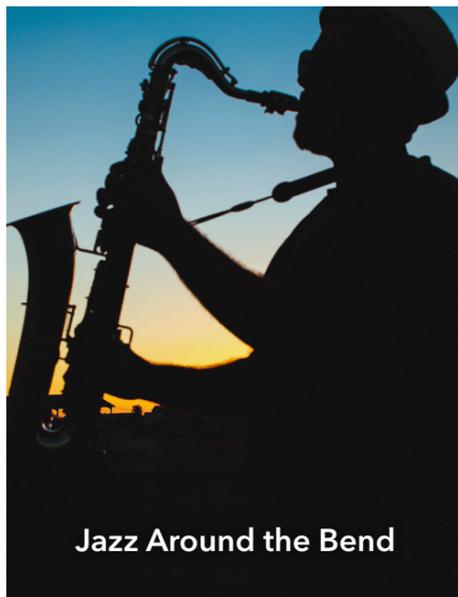
sponsored by Dan O'Day Dance Studio



RiverBend Tennis Tournament

Friday, September 9

hosted by Pam Mullin



Jazz Around the Bend

Tuesday, September 20

at Beiger Mansion

## With Gratitude

Please join us in recognizing the following companies and individuals who have provided significant funding to RiverBend in the past year. Without these everyday heroes, we couldn't provide the services and programs we do:

Beacon Community Impact • Fields Foundation Trust • Great Lakes Heating and Air Conditioning • The PHP Foundation  
 Erin and Sam McGrath • Robert Shriner • David Taber • Dee Tepe • Harper Cancer Research Institute  
 Hilltop Wealth Solutions • Indiana Trust and Wealth Management • United Way of St. Joseph County

RiverBend Cancer Services improves the quality of life of cancer survivors and their families in our community through helpful advocacy, hopeful support and innovative educational programs. Our programs help those living with cancer feel more hopeful and empowered to manage their cancer treatment and survivorship.



RiverBendCancerServices.org

info@RiverBendCancerServices.org

Phone: 574.287.4197 | Fax: 574.287.4393

3516 East Jefferson Boulevard South Bend, Indiana 46615

### Regular Office Hours

Monday - Thursday, 9 am - 4:30 pm

Friday, 9 am - 12 pm

# Around the Bend

SUMMER 2022



## A beacon of light

Remembering Dee Tepe

## Celebrate the return of Jazz Around the Bend

Honoring Dr. Mark and Susan Sandock



**A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
SUMMER 2022



What an incredible community we have here at RiverBend Cancer Services! I have witnessed such resiliency and hopefulness in our clients these past few years and it has been beyond inspiring, making RiverBend's mission that much stronger.

I genuinely believe that our community's compassion and commitment to each other make it possible for RiverBend to impact so many cancer survivors and their families profoundly.

In the pages ahead, you'll see many opportunities to continue to be a part of our community, including RiverBend's annual Jazz Around the Bend (September 20), Dance for a Cure (August 27), or RiverBend Tennis Tournament (September 9).

Every event aims to empower, help and provide hope to those surviving cancer and their supportive friends and families. We are grateful for your participation and enthusiasm in them!

Wishing you a bright, warm and beautiful summer,

Laura Baker  
Executive Director

# SAVE THE DATE

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2022**

# RIVERBEND TENNIS TOURNAMENT

LEEPER PARK

*hosted by Pam Mullin*



*Proceeds directly impact local cancer survivors and their families.*

## Supporting Survivors in St. Joseph County

RiverBend's programs and services come at no cost for clients because of your generosity. Visit [RiverBendCancerServices.org](https://RiverBendCancerServices.org) to make a donation and support survivors in our community today. Or, please consider donating one of these valuable resources for RiverBend to distribute to clients.

- Grocery gift cards
- Adult disposable pull-up style underwear (all sizes)
- Cleansing body wipes (not cleaning wipes)
- Clorox cleaning wipes
- Bottled water for hydration
- Aquafor healing ointment to manage side effects of radiation
- Peppermint and ginger hard candies for nausea and dry mouth
- Hand sanitizer
- Travel-sized, unscented lotions
- Gas cards to travel to and from appointments
- Tea
- Tissues
- Cozy socks
- Disposable dinnerware and silverware

*With any donations of goods, please call ahead to arrange a time to drop them off. Call 574-287-4197. Your kindness and generosity make a positive difference in the lives of cancer survivors! Thank you.*



# Celebrate the return of Jazz Around the Bend

*Honoring Dr. Mark and Susan Sandock*

RiverBend is thrilled to celebrate and honor Susan and Mark Sandock at Jazz Around the Bend 2022.

Susan Sandock has dedicated the past eight years of her professional life to cancer survivors and their families as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Her work at RiverBend perfectly balances fierce, unfaltering advocacy with compassionate listening, allowing those affected by cancer to recognize personal strengths and manage emotional difficulties.

During her time with RiverBend, Susan became an oncological social worker, served on community boards to draw attention to the needs of her clients, and showcased the safety and beauty of our RiverBend community.

Mark Sandock has long offered his talents, skills, and warmth in the service of RiverBend. As a retired internal medicine physician, Mark volunteers his time and works closely and carefully with clients facing end-of-life issues.

Mark's ability to lovingly attend to our clients' needs while bringing clarity to difficult decisions is invaluable. Always willing to find ways to support our mission, Mark has hosted cooking demonstrations for clients, assembled golf teams, made connections with new partners, and shared his insight and humor freely with our community.

Please join us as we show love for Dr. Mark and Susan Sandock and enjoy the return of Jazz Around the Bend on September 20 at Beiger Mansion.

Tickets can be purchased by calling 574-287-4197. Sponsorships are also available.



*Dr. Mark and Susan Sandock celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary*

# JAZZ AROUND THE BEND

Beiger Mansion



# Networking for good

*Why board member and business leader Erik Brenner believes in giving back to the community*



President and founder of Hilltop Wealth Solutions and Hilltop Tax Solutions in South Bend, Erik Brenner, believes that partnering with local nonprofits is good for the community and good for business.

"Nonprofit organizations do so much for our community, but they can't do it alone," shares Erik. "Businesses have the resources to help further their reach, and there are so many ways to get involved."

Giving back feels good too.

"A point of pride at Hilltop is our commitment to the communities where we live and work. Our partnerships, sponsorships and volunteer days are wonderful ways our business puts our values into action."

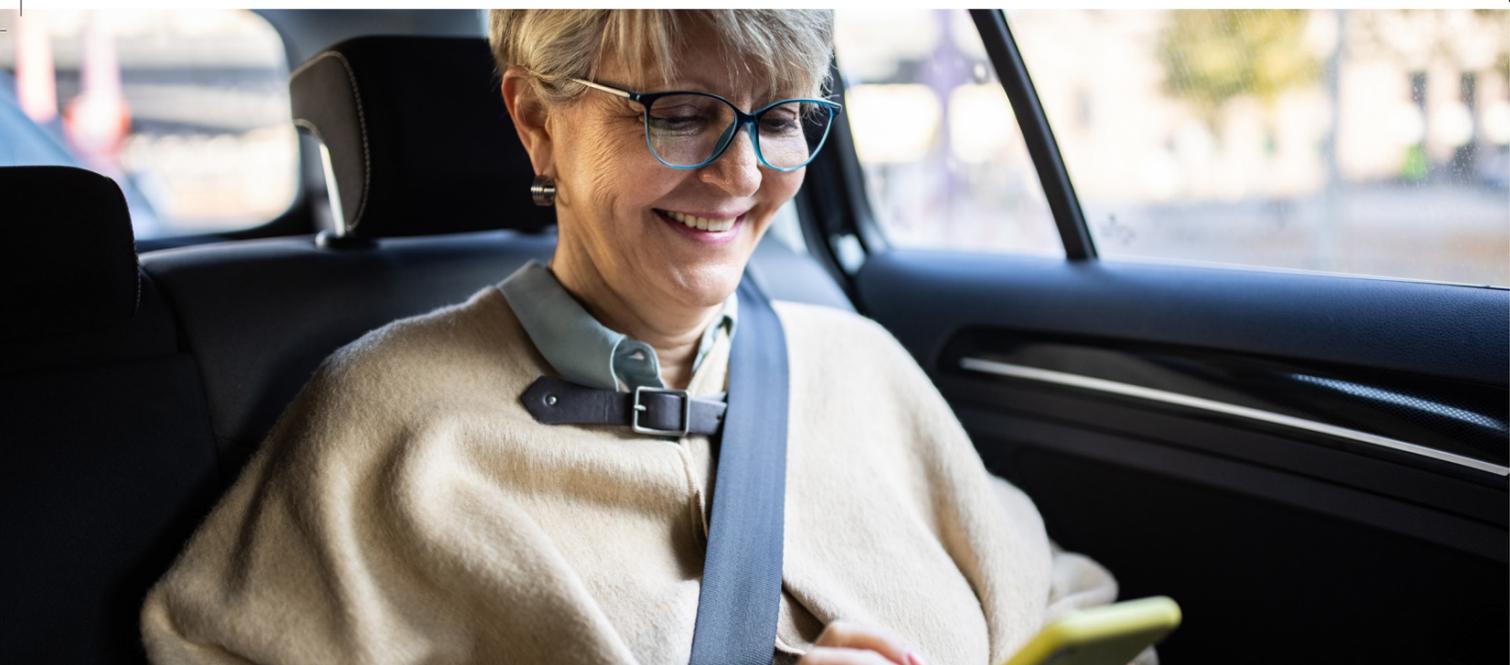
A board member for several years now, Erik helped launch one of Riverbend's most anticipated annual events, Golf Around the Bend, held at renowned Harbor Shores Golf Course in Benton Harbor, Michigan. As a sponsor of the outing, it's one of the many ways his company gives back.

"Golf outings are a great way to raise awareness and funds for a good cause, but they're also great opportunities to gain exposure for your business, make connections and network," says Erik.

Connections formed at events like Golf Around the Bend help strengthen and grow a business's relationship with its community, which can also help companies further their impact.

"There have even been instances where business leaders who've attended the golf outing learn about other needs within RiverBend. One example that comes to mind is a large landscaping company that found out RiverBend needed a sprinkler system for their Wellness Garden. The company ended up donating the sprinkler system and lifetime maintenance."

We all know there is no shortage of worthy causes to support here in St. Joseph County. And, RiverBend is grateful for every business partner that has invested in our mission over the years. We couldn't do what we do without you! Thank you for helping to improve the quality of life of survivors and their families in our community.



# "It's more than helping clients get from point A to point B"

*How a rideshare program is helping save lives*

After surviving head and neck cancer in 2011, Barbara Palatin intuitively knew something wasn't right when concerning symptoms reappeared in early November 2021. Time was of the essence, and she needed to see her doctor immediately. But, she had no way of getting to him.

"I knew I needed to be seen by my doctor and figure out what was happening. I am 74 years old and have vision issues, and can't drive myself," said Barbara. "So, I reached out to RiverBend for help."

That's when Client Advocate, Hannah Demchak, introduced Barbara to Ride Guarantee, a rideshare program provided by Commuters Trust, a private-public partnership between the City of South Bend and several employers and

community organizations - including RiverBend Cancer Services.

Providing options for clients who need transportation is nothing new for RiverBend. For more than ten years, RiverBend has worked with partner agencies, providers, funders, and medical partners to ensure that clients' transportation needs are met.

Over the years, the transportation program has pivoted depending on client demand, funding, and community partnerships. "Our long-term advocacy for reliable transportation for local cancer survivors made RiverBend the perfect partner in this new endeavor," says Executive Director Laura Baker.

"RiverBend serves many clients who don't have access to reliable transportation. Some don't have family and friends to rely on and several clients have medical reasons that make it impossible for them to drive themselves," shared Hannah. "When the City presented us with this new partnership opportunity last September, we were thrilled to add this offering to our other options for transportation for clients. From our past experience, we know the immense impact this will have on survivors in our community."

Clients enrolled in the program can choose between a free 31-day Transpo bus pass or 10

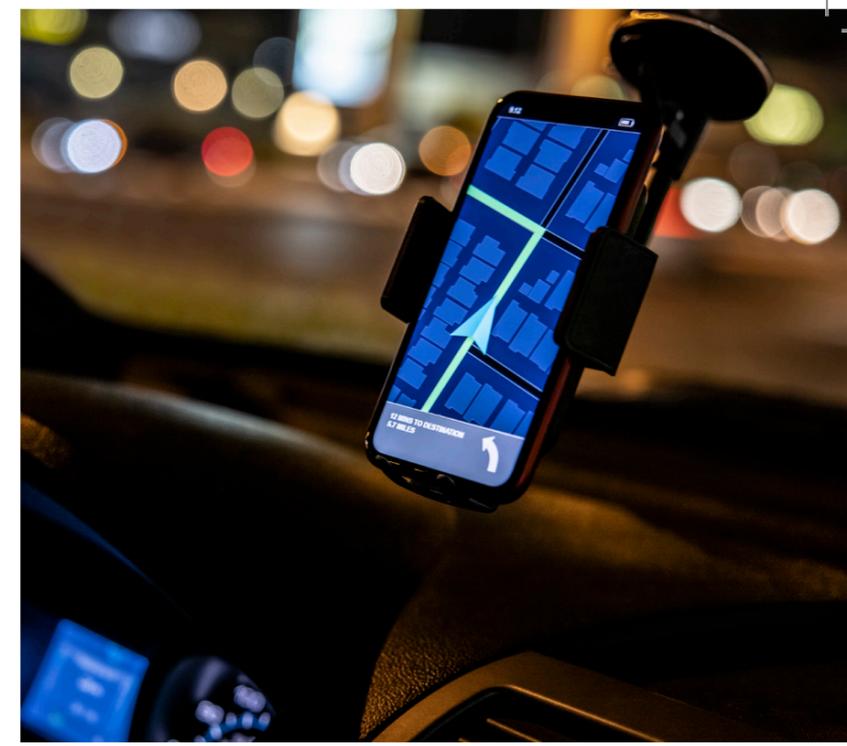
free Uber rides per month through Ride Guarantee. "This program is more than helping clients get from point A to point B," added Hannah. "Often, it's the difference between a client getting treatment vs. not at all, which was the case for our client Barbara."

"If it weren't for this program, I wouldn't have been able to get to my appointments. I wouldn't have been able to get my needle biopsy or my lumpectomy as quickly as I did. This program made it possible for me to get answers regarding my symptoms, and since I was able to get my lumpectomy promptly, I am now cancer-free," shared Barbara.

In addition to providing access to necessary cancer appointments and screenings, the program fits nicely with RiverBend's desire to preserve a client's dignity when asking for help.

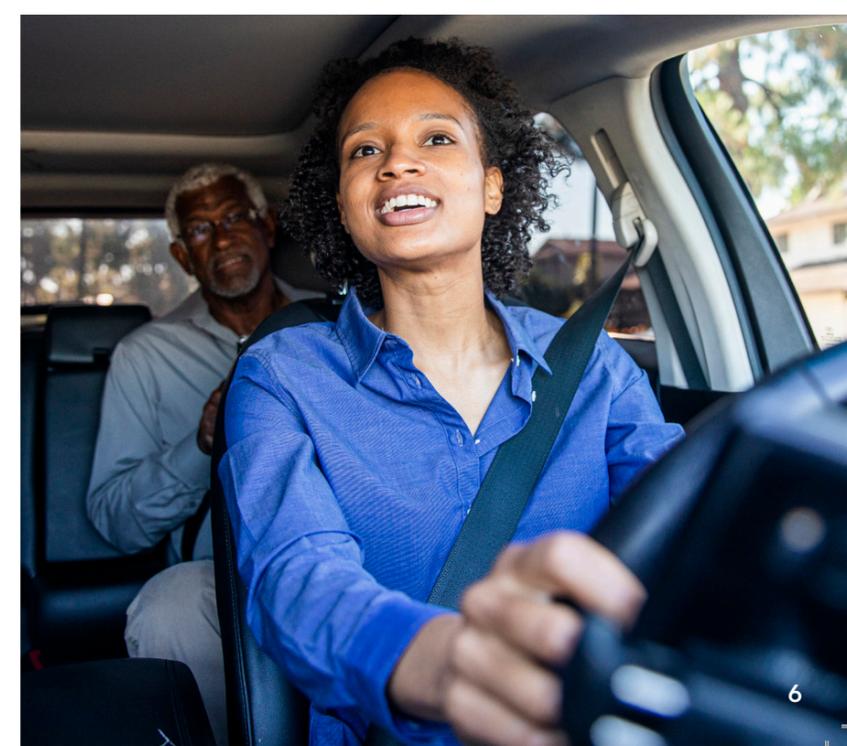
"In my opinion, Ride Guarantee is a dignified way to receive transportation assistance. Our clients arrange their own rides through Transpo or the Uber app boosting their self-sufficiency and returning some control. For others, the program has taken the weight of asking for help off of their shoulders. Because it's not always comfortable to ask friends or family for a ride."

The Commuters Trust Ride Guarantee program has proven to be more than just an innovative solution to reliable transportation for cancer survivors in our community. While the program is scheduled to end in September 2022, RiverBend is hopeful that the Ride Guarantee program will be renewed. "The City of South Bend has been lovely and absolutely wonderful to partner with," said Hannah. "The impact it has had on survivors in our community is astounding. We're incredibly grateful to be involved in this program."



# "Often, [Ride Guarantee] is the difference between a client getting treatment vs. not at all."

- Hannah Demchak, Client Advocate



# A beacon of light

Remembering Dee Tepe

Dee Tepe was one of those rare individuals that didn't know a stranger. She had a knack for making someone she had just met feel like a long-time friend. Flip through her monthly calendars, and you'd find pages filled with multiple reminders to check in on others, pray for those who needed it, phone friends, or just simply send someone a note to say she had been thinking of them or their family.

"She was always thinking of other people and putting them first," shared Dee's daughters Michele and Manette. "That's just the kind of person she was. To this day, people still bring up how much her thoughtfulness meant to them, especially the cards she would send. We always teased her that she kept Hallmark in business."

A woman of strong faith, Dee's belief in God and her personal experiences guided much of her life towards service and volunteerism. She was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer in the late 80s and, after undergoing a long bout of chemo and radiation therapy, was able to beat cancer. It was during this time Dee became a grandmother. According to her son Mark, she was determined to beat cancer so she could see her grandchildren grow.

"Her mom had 21 grandkids, and she wanted to be around to see how many she'd have," remembers Mark. "The joy the grandkids brought her was a driving force in her healing."

Dee had 6 grandkids and 4 great-grandkids, with another on the way at the time of her death.

"My mom was blessed to have a lot of people in her corner providing support every minute of her cancer battle. She wanted the same thing for others," said Michele. "She truly believed if people had someone

to lean on for strength, someone to encourage them and give them hope, it could heal them."

"At the time of Dee's diagnosis, cancer treatment was not as advanced as it is today," said Manette. "She relied heavily on God, family and friends to get her through it and wholeheartedly believed they're the reasons she beat cancer. After that, she was determined to share her story and her blessings with other survivors in the community. That's when she got engaged with RiverBend."

Moved by her personal cancer experience and the mission of Riverbend, Dee and her husband Sonny were early supporters of the Wellness House, and their generosity was influential to its build. In particular, the kitchen.

"Mom was excited to help with the design and layout ideas for the Wellness House Kitchen. The kitchen was a major focal point at our house growing up, and she loved the idea of a kitchen that would be able to help other cancer survivors learn about how to nourish their bodies back to health," said Mark.

Now helping nourish cancer survivors and their families both physically and spiritually, the Wellness House's kitchen has become a gathering place for clients where they can share a meal and share their stories. It's a place where they can connect and lean on others for support—the kind of support Dee received when she was being treated and the same support Dee prayed for every survivor.

"My Mom's way of letting someone know she was thinking of them when they were sick, in the hospital or having some other unfortunate circumstance, was to cook or bake for them," shared Michele. "Lots of

soups were created in her kitchen for others and lots of baked goods were lovingly made and delivered. I couldn't even begin to count the number of people on the receiving end of her kitchen escapades! I'm not quite sure she'd say she 'loved' cooking, but she knew it was a way she could show she cared."

"When somebody is undergoing cancer, they need a support system, they need one that is going to be there unconditionally for them, and RiverBend provides that," shared Manette.

"It's why my parents were such big supporters," remarked Michele. "RiverBend helps survivors and their families, people from all walks of life, get through every challenge cancer throws at them."

"Most people didn't know that my dad, Sonny Tepe, survived prostate cancer. It wasn't something that he wanted to talk about, but he was completely supportive of my mother and was all on board when the idea of Wellness House was first brought to him," added Mark

Dee made loving others the story of her life, and her legacy continues to live on in the community she loved so dearly. 'Thank you' doesn't begin to describe the immense gratitude RiverBend and our clients have for her kindness and generosity. You will be missed, Dee.

**"When somebody is undergoing cancer, they need a support system, they need one that is going to be there unconditionally for them, and RiverBend provides that,"**

*Manette, daughter of Dee Tepe*