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FREDERICK COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

After a year of breast cancer, recovery includes making plans

2026-10-26

Source: Frederick County Health Department

A year ago, on my birthday, I learned I had breast cancer.

I remember thinking about my children and family. About everything I had planned for the coming year. About whether I would be here to see the things I had always assumed I would see.

There is something terrifying about suddenly having to consider the possibility that your life may be shorter than you expected.

Until that moment, cancer had been something I understood professionally. I had spent my career in public health, studying disease, evaluating risk and working to improve health outcomes. I knew the statistics.

I understood the importance of screening and early detection.

Then, I became one of those statistics.

Over the past year, I have undergone surgery, radiation and months of chemotherapy. I spent months in the hospital, faced rare and life-threatening complications, and had to learn to walk again.

I lost strength and independence. There were days when getting through the next few hours was all I could manage.

And through it all, life continued around me. People went to work, attended football games, celebrated birthdays and made plans for next summer. I wanted desperately to be part of that ordinary world again.

Cancer has a way of making ordinary life look extraordinary.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. We see pink ribbons, fundraising campaigns and reminders to schedule mammograms. But awareness alone does not save lives. What people do with that awareness is what really matters.

Breast cancer remains one of the most commonly diagnosed cancers among women, and early detection can make a meaningful difference in treatment options and survival.

Yet the benefits of advances in breast cancer care are not shared equally.

According to the American Cancer Society, Black women have a 38% higher breast cancer death rate than white women, despite being about 5% less likely to develop the disease.

Only 58% of breast cancers among Black women are diagnosed at a localized stage, compared with 68% among white women.

American Indian and Alaska Native women also face disparities.

According to the American Cancer Society, only 51% of women in this population ages 40 and older reported receiving a mammogram in the previous two years, compared with 68% of white women.

These differences reflect more than individual decisions about screening. Access to timely diagnosis, quality treatment, transportation, insurance coverage and follow-up care can shape whether someone survives.

Biology also plays a role, including differences in the prevalence of aggressive breast cancer subtypes.

Where someone lives, what they earn and whether they can obtain care should not determine their chances of surviving cancer.

Breast cancer is also increasing among younger women. According to the American Cancer Society, incidence among women under 50 rose approximately 1.4% annually between 2012 and 2021, twice the rate observed among women 50 and older.

Many younger women have not yet reached the recommended age for routine screening, and some report having their symptoms dismissed because of their age.

A concerning lump or breast change deserves evaluation, regardless of how young someone is.

Know your family history. Talk with your healthcare provider about your personal risk and when screening should begin. Understand that screening recommendations may differ for people at higher risk.

And if you notice a new lump, changes in your breast or another concerning symptom, seek medical evaluation rather than waiting for your next scheduled mammogram.

Screening is important, but it's not a guarantee. Cancer can develop between screenings. Some cancers are aggressive even when detected relatively early.

There is no test, treatment or healthy lifestyle that can promise anyone immunity from this disease.

That uncertainty is frightening. It's also why timely access to healthcare matters so much.

Access to care can make the difference between an early diagnosis and a missed opportunity. For many, getting a mammogram is only one hurdle.

Follow-up testing may require additional appointments, transportation, time away from work and expenses they cannot afford. Delays at any point can have serious consequences.

A mammogram is only the beginning if something suspicious is found.

And when cancer is diagnosed, the need for support grows.

I have learned that serious illness is exhausting in ways difficult to explain. There is the physical exhaustion of treatment, but also the constant work of being a patient. Appointments, medications, test results, insurance questions and decisions that can carry enormous consequences.

Meanwhile, the rest of your life still needs attention.

People often ask someone with cancer what they can do to help. My advice is to be specific. Bring dinner. Offer a ride. Walk the dog. Help with groceries. Keep inviting them to things, even when they have to decline.

And keep showing up.

Support often arrives in abundance immediately after a diagnosis. But cancer treatment can last months or years, and recovery may continue long after the appointments become less frequent.

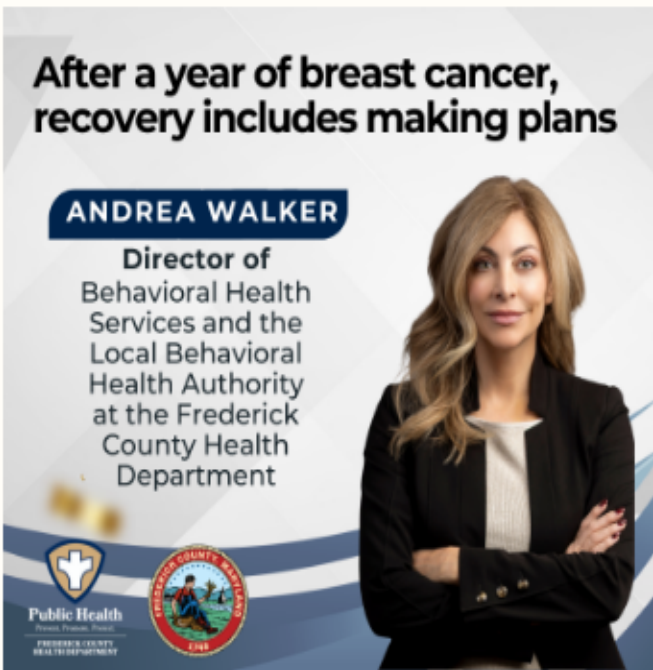


Image courtesy of Frederick County Health Department.

The person who looks better may still be struggling. The person who has returned to work may be using every bit of energy just to get through the day.

We cannot always see what someone is carrying.

As I approach another birthday, I have been thinking about the difference a year can make. I am still recovering. I have difficult days and uncertainty about what lies ahead.

But I am making plans again.

I want to watch my children build their lives. I want more ordinary evenings with family.

I want to continue the work I care about, take walks, travel and complain about things that don't really matter.

I want the luxury of assuming there will be another birthday.

A year ago, I learned how quickly that assumption can disappear.

This October, I hope you will do more than wear pink. Schedule the screening you've been putting off. Have the conversation about family history. Check on someone who is still recovering, even if their treatment ended months ago.

And when you have the chance to spend an ordinary day with someone you love, recognize what a remarkable thing that is. I certainly do now.

This was written by Andrea Walker, an Inaugural Fellow of the Bloomberg American Health Initiative at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She is a national leader in public behavioral health systems design. She has led the development of mobile crisis response systems, firearm risk reduction protocols, school-based prevention initiatives, and cross-sector strategies that integrate public health, law enforcement, violence prevention and clinical care. Her work has been recognized for its innovation, durability, and commitment to building systems that protect people before, during, and after crisis. She is the director of the Behavioral Health Services Division for the Frederick County Health Department.

FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT NEWSFLASH

Free Curbside Lithium-Ion Battery Collection Program Extended Through November

2026-10-26

Source: Frederick County Government

Frederick, Md. – Frederick County is extending its free, appointment-based curbside collection program for lithium-ion batteries and small electronics through November, giving residents additional time to safely dispose of rechargeable batteries and electronics that can pose a fire risk when thrown in the trash or placed in curbside recycling.

“Lithium-ion battery fires are a preventable hazard, and this program gives residents a simple, convenient way to help reduce that risk,” said Fire Chief Tom Coe.

“The response so far has been encouraging, and extending the collection program through November allows us to reach more households with a practical solution that protects our residents, first responders, and community.” Since the program launched, the Battery Brigade has collected more than 50 batteries and small electronic devices from more than 20 households.

Part of the County’s “Be A Li-Ion Tamer” initiative, the program provides residents with a convenient way to dispose of potentially hazardous batteries and electronics without making a special trip to a drop-off location.

Through November, Frederick County residents can schedule a free curbside pickup from the Battery Brigade for eligible lithium-ion batteries and small electronics, including cell phones, laptops, and tablets.

The appointment-based service offers a convenient alternative to placing these items in household trash or curbside recycling.

The Battery Brigade is a specialized team of personnel from the Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services (DFRS) and the Division of Solid Waste and Recycling (DSWR).

Through this partnership, the Divisions combine fire prevention education with practical disposal options to help residents reduce battery-related fire risks and protect their families, emergency responders, and waste management infrastructure.

October saw month long messaging around batteries, including, proper charging, and calling 9-1-1 if a battery is swelling, popping, sparking, odors, or hot to the touch.

Frederick County encourages residents to take advantage of the extended collection program, check their homes for unwanted rechargeable batteries and small electronics, and share information about the service with family and neighbors.

Properly disposing of

Curbside Lithium-Ion Battery Collection Program Extended these items is a simple but important step toward preventing fires and keeping the community safe.

To learn more about lithium-ion battery safety or schedule a free curbside pickup, visit www.FrederickCountyMd.gov/FPW.

Residents can also follow the Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services (@FCDFRS) and the Division of Solid Waste and Recycling (@FrederickRecycles) on Facebook and Instagram for additional safety tips and program updates.

[Read the original release](#)

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The Day’s Run Log

Complete call activity for Monday, October 26. Excludes medical calls.

TRAFFIC & ROADS6:11 am

Vehicle Accident - Bls (Automatic Crash Notification)
I-270SB / MONOCACY RIVER
UNITS: A319, A239, R3, PE311, E231

6:18 am Units checked both directions of I-270 between Frederick and Urbana; nothing found.

PUBLIC SAFETY7:42 am

Elevator Malfunction
100 block S. COURT ST — COURT STREET PARKING DECK (FREDERICK)
UNITS: TT4

7:48 am TT4 reports occupant has been removed from the elevator. TT4 in service.

ALARMS7:56 am

Commercial Fire Alarm
600 block E. CHURCH ST — J&J REAL ESTATE (FREDERICK)
UNITS: PE23, TT4

8:03 am PE23 investigated, reports no hazards present. Alarm system reset by the staff prior to fire department arrival.

ALARMS7:59 am

Commercial Fire Alarm
2400 block WHITTIER DR — WHITTIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
UNITS: E11, T50

8:05 am E11 in the scene, single story educational facility. Nothing evident.
8:08 am E11 reports maintenance working on the alarm system. No fire department services needed.

ALARMS8:26 am

Commercial Fire Alarm
8300 block PINECLIFF PARK RD — MAINTENANCE BUILDING AT PINECLIFF PARK
UNITS: E331, TT4

ALARMS8:47 am

Commercial Fire Alarm
5500 block BUCKEYSTOWN PIKE — JC PENNEY (FRANCIS SCOTT KEY MALL)
UNITS: PE311, TT4

8:52 am PE311 on the scene, normal conditions. Making contact with representative at the alarm system control room. Investigating.
8:53 am PE311 reports alarm system is being tested. No fire department services needed. Units in service.

TRAFFIC & ROADS8:57 am

Vehicle Accident - Hazmat
I-70EB / WASHINGTON COUNTY LINE
UNITS: A89, WCM751, E82, WCR10, WCE161, HM33, HMSU33, HM50, E121, BC903, SAF901

9:04 am WCM751 on the scene, single HVAC van upright along the side of the roadway. Occupant standing outside.
9:06 am WCM751 reports single patient for evaluation; holding WCM751, WCR10, E161. No hazardous fluids involved. Other units in service.
9:58 am WCM751 transporting patient to Meritus Medical Center.

ALARMS9:49 am

Commercial Fire Alarm
8300 block PINECLIFF PARK RD — MAINTENANCE BUILDING AT PINECLIFF PARK
UNITS: E331, R3

9:55 am R3 reports maintenance is working on the alarm system. No fire department services needed.

FIRE & RESCUE10:07 am

Farm /Const/Excavation Machinery On Fire
BLACKS MILL RD / LAYMAN RD (CREAGERSTOWN)
UNITS: PE102, EK224, BR226, BR106

10:14 am PE102 on the scene. Investigating.

ALARMS10:10 am

Commercial Fire Alarm
1400 block PORTER ST (FT. DETRICK)
UNITS: E11, T50, BC950

10:13 am T50 on the scene, normal conditions. Investigating.
10:50 am BC950 holding T50 to reset the alarm system. E11 in service.

FIRE & RESCUE10:23 am

Barn Fire
17600 BLK FREDERICK RD (MT. AIRY)
UNITS: R15

ALARMS12:38 pm

Residential Fire Alarm (Single Family Resd/ Mobile Home)
100 block ALBANY AVE E (WALKERSVILLE)
UNITS: E111, C11

12:39 pm Frederick ECC advises responding units that the proper alarm passcode was received. Units in service.

PUBLIC SAFETY2:13 pm

I-270Sb Between Rt109 / Rt121
Frederick County
UNITS: A239

PUBLIC SAFETY3:05 pm

Service Call
RT194 / LEGORE BRIDGE RD
UNITS: E162

3:05 pm E162 alerted to assist with mitigating fluid / fuel spill in the roadway.

FIRE & RESCUE3:13 pm

Brush Fire
I-270SB / RT85 (FREDERICK)
UNITS: BR156, E231, E501

3:20 pm BR156 on the scene. Holding BR156, E501. Other units in service.]
3:26 pm E501 reports fire extinguished. Units clearing the scene.

TRAFFIC & ROADS3:43 pm

Check Up After Accident - Police On Scene
GREEN VALLEY RD / ARTIE KEMP RD
UNITS: A158, E172

3:48 pm E172 on scene, single vehicle involved. Occupants are out.
4:05 pm E172 reports A158 obtained 2 patient refusals. Fire/EMS clearing the scene.

FIRE & RESCUE4:34 pm

Appliance Fire Contained
5500 block HIDDEN WATERS LN
UNITS: PE311, E33, TT4

4:35 pm PE311 on the scene, 2-story townhouse. Nothing evident. Investigating.
4:37 pm PE311 reports overheated food in the oven. Holding PE311, other responding units in service.

TRAFFIC & ROADS4:36 pm

Vehicle Accident - Bls
GEORGES MILL RD / TRITICUM LN
UNITS: A198, R20, PE52

TRAFFIC & ROADS5:40 pm

Vehicle Accident - Bls
11900 block SOUTH ST (LIBERTYTOWN)
UNITS: A179, E172, C17

5:42 pm A179, E172 in the area, attempting to locate.
5:46 pm E172 investigated, no crash found. Units in service.

FIRE & RESCUE7:04 pm

House Fire
6100 block FIELDCREST DR (SPRING RIDGE)
UNITS: E33, E331, E153, PE23, E311, E11, R3, TT4, R15, A339, ALS4, C3, BC901, BC903, SAF901

7:04 pm Units alerted for possible fire on the deck to the rear of the residence.
7:06 pm BC901 on the scene, 2-story single-family dwelling; nothing evident. Investigating.
7:09 pm BC901 completed 360-assessment; small fire in the grill on the deck. BC901 holding R3, A339. Other responding units in service.
7:10 pm BC901 confirms fire extinguished, no extension. Fire contained to the grill. Remaining units in service.

TRAFFIC & ROADS7:37 pm

Check Up After Accident - Police On Scene
US-15SB / RT340 (FREDERICK)
UNITS: A19, E11

7:43 pm E11 on the scene, 2 vehicles involved on I-270SB prior to the exit for S. Jefferson St.
7:45 pm A19 evaluating one patient.

PUBLIC SAFETY7:40 pm

Outside Investigation Of Smoke
E. FOURTEENTH ST / ROSE LN (FREDERICK)
UNITS: PE23

7:43 pm PE23 in the area, investigating.
7:49 pm PE23 checked the area, nothing found.

TRAFFIC & ROADS7:56 pm

Vehicle Accident - Bls
I-270NB / RT80 (URBANA)
UNITS: A239, A339, A259, ALS23, R3, E231, PE251, TT23

7:59 pm E231 on the scene, 3 vehicles involved on Rte. 80 at the time entrance ramp to I-270NB. Holding A239, E231, TT23. Other units in service.
8:02 pm E231 requesting third ambulance (A339 dispatched to replace A259 who came upon a crash on Rte. 80 at Green Meadows Petting Farm)
8:10 pm A259 cleared the call at Green Meadows, now responding to this call.
8:25 pm A239 transporting a patient with non-life-threatening injuries to FHH.
8:27 pm M259 transporting one patient to Suburban Hospital.
8:30 pm A339 transporting one patient to FHH.

TRAFFIC & ROADS8:01 pm

Vehicle Accident - Bls
10100 block FINGERBOARD RD — GREEN MEADOWS PETTING FARM
UNITS: A259, PE251

8:01 pm PE251 came upon crash involving 2 vehicles while returning from call in Urbana.
8:05 pm A259 evaluating one patient.
8:09 pm A259 obtained patient refusal. Units clearing the scene when ready.

TRAFFIC & ROADS8:33 pm

Pedestrian Struck - Als
7200 block BOWERS RD
UNITS: A18, ALS4, E11, EMS902

8:37 pm E11 on scene, reports patient is out from beneath vehicle, conscious and alert.
8:40 pm A18, ALS4 evaluating patient.

PUBLIC SAFETY8:49 pm

Service Call
5500 block SPECTRUM DR — COUNTRY INN AND SUITES
UNITS: PE311

8:49 pm PE311 alerted to assist with resetting a malfunctioning elevator.
9:08 pm PE311 reports elevator has been reset. PE311 in service.

ALARMS9:00 pm

Commercial Fire Alarm
2400 block PLEASANT VIEW RD — SHORESH DAY CAMP
UNITS: E141, TT23

9:07 pm E141 on the scene, visual alarm active. Investigating.
9:09 pm E141 investigating water flow alarm.
9:15 pm E141 located pump room, confirms water flow.
9:25 pm E141 reports sprinkler system was active. System was shut down and drained, and system was reset.

PUBLIC SAFETY11:21 pm

Washdown - Non Emergency Response
1800 block N. MARKET ST — DSS (FREDERICK)
UNITS: PE23



PUBLIC SERVICE NOTICE

Missing: Summer Harbison (MD) - Summer Harbison, Age Now: 17, Missing: 10/17/2026. Missing From Derwood, MD. ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT: Montgomery County Police Department (Maryland) 1-301-279-8000 . #PleaseShare <http://www.missingkids.org/poster/NCMC/2106037/1> [View original notice](#)

FREDERICK, MARYLAND

7-Day Weather

MON
Oct 26



72° / 44°
Partly Cloudy

ISSUE DAY

TUE
Oct 27



67° / 46°
Sunny

2% precip

WED
Oct 28



67° / 49°
Partly Sunny

1% precip

THU
Oct 29



72° / 49°
Sunny

0% precip

FRI
Oct 30



77° / 50°
Sunny

0% precip

SAT
Oct 31



70° / 51°
Partly Sunny

5% precip

SUN
Nov 1



69° / 55°
Mostly Cloudy then Slight
Chance Rain Showers

21% precip

National Weather Service

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