

Construction on Lydia house for women begins

by Kelly Jasper, *The Augusta Chronicle*, 12/16/2011

On the command “Ready, set, dig,” the first shovels of dirt were turned at the groundbreaking of the Daksha Chudgar Lydia House, a respite center for women being treated for cancer.

Supporters of The Lydia Project gathered Friday morning on an empty lot on Interstate Parkway near Doctors Hospital for the ceremony. By April, organizers said, the .74-acre tract will be home to a new 8,000-square-foot center that gives women undergoing cancer treatment a place to stay.

The center was named in honor of Dr. Daksha B. Chudgar, an OB/GYN and fertility specialist who died in 2009 after her second bout with cancer.

The \$2 million facility will have 12 rooms with two beds each, and a resource library and a space for volunteers, support groups and counseling.

It was a day worthy of celebration, said Doug Welch, the CEO of Doctors Hospital.

“It’s really two celebrations in one,” he told the crowd of about 80, which included representatives of six area hospitals.

The new house marks not only the expansion of The Lydia Project’s services, but also the legacy of the doctor it honors, he said.

The Lydia Project was founded in Augusta in 2003 and has provided thousands of hand-crafted tote bags, support *Continued pg. 3, House*



New at Lydia:

Kindle and Ipad Covers

Pictured above and below, shoppers will love the new Kindle and Ipad covers now offered at Lydia. The custom made covers come in a variety of designs and colors. The covers compliment Lydia’s already diverse offerings of beautiful handmade, one of a kind signature purses made from designer material that range from small to large enough for a laptop, and of course, Lydia’s signature Pricilla bags. With hundreds of designer fabric and trim combinations you’re sure to find just the right fit for your loved one who has everything.



Above, Representatives from Aiken Regional Medical Center, Doctors Hospital, Dwight David Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Georgia Health Sciences, Trinity Hospital of Augusta, and University Hospital break ground with Augusta’s Mayor Deke Copenhaver, Dr. Chudgar, and Lydia team members.

“This is such a wonderful program that fulfills such a great need. I start chemo in 2 days and am so thankful to have found your program!”

–Linda (MO)

Lydia Welcomes New Partners distributing totes to women coping with cancer in their cities:

1. Arizona Oncology - Phoenix, Arizona
2. Cancer Care Center - Paris, Tennessee
3. Cancer Care of Western North Carolina - Asheville, NC
4. Cancer Navigators - Rome, GA
5. Harriet's Closet - Milledgeville, GA
6. OAK Ovarian Awareness of Kentucky - Louisville, KY
7. Pickens County Cancer Association - Pickens, SC
8. St. Joseph Hospital Radiation Oncology - Atlanta, GA
9. UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center - Birmingham, AL

“Our patients love getting the Lydia totes. Patients have shared with me how much it has meant to them to receive a note of encouragement during their cancer journey. Every bit of support is greatly appreciated. Many thanks to The Lydia Project.”

***-Melissa Mealy,
American Cancer Society
Patient Resource Navigator
Wheeling Hospital, West Virginia***

“I was given a tote at the James Brown Cancer Center in Louisville when I was going through breast cancer. Now I am sending one to my mom as she continues her journey through breast cancer.”

-Sherri, Kentucky



Above left photo, Lydia Volunteer Nancy Creech works with Sue Morris at *The Augusta Chronicle's We Think Pink* in October. Right, key note speaker Hoda Ktob talks with Lydia 2010/11 Board president, Jerry Renbarger. The event's Silent Auction generated \$8k. *The Augusta Chronicle* generously donated an addition \$5K for the women Lydia serves.



The Daksha Chudgar Lydia House - built for patients, built with love - A small act of kindness made a tremendous impression on a physician's family and now will reap huge benefits for a local charity.

When Dr. Bipin Chudgar's wife, obstetrician and gynecologist Daksha Chudgar, was diagnosed with colon cancer in 2005, she received a tote bag from The Lydia Project, personally delivered to her

by a volunteer.

Although she won her first bout with cancer, she was diagnosed with a second cancer in 2007 and died April 18, 2009. Her husband now wants to make a lasting contribution to the group and the women it serves in the form of a temporary home.

"So many women, who are cancer patients and from outlying areas, do not come back to treatment because of lack of transportation or money or other issues. They don't come back until they end up in an emergency room in the last stages of cancer," said Chudgar, who is spearheading the effort to create the Daksha Chudgar Lydia House.

Chudgar, who is also an obstetrician and gynecologist, has donated \$500,000 toward the project and has put a contract on 0.74 acres near Doctors Hospital for an 8,000-square-foot home to provide temporary housing for 12 to 15 women with cancer.

He said additional money or in-kind donations will be raised. The cost of the total project will be about \$2 million.

To donate funds, resources, or services email contactus@thelydiaproject.org or call 706.736.5467.

Dr. Daksha B. Chudgar had a successful and fulfilling medical career in Augusta, Georgia. She dedicated her life to her family, her patients and her passion for academia. Daksha was committed to serving her community, offering unconditional support to friends and strangers alike. The Daksha Chudgar Lydia House will emulate her compassion by caring for women fighting cancer who need a safe place to stay during treatment.

House, Cont. and prayer for women with cancer, said Michele Canchola, the executive director of The Lydia Project.

The agency offers free services to cancer patients and their families, including rent, utility and prescription assistance.

"We could not do what we do without the dedication of Lydia's volunteers and staff," many of which were present Friday, Canchola said. "I thank God for all things Lydia."

It's because of generous individuals who know the pain of cancer that events such as Friday's groundbreaking happen, Mayor Deke Copenhaver said

"All of our lives at one time have been touched by cancer," Copenhaver said. "We as a community are truly blessed to have such giving people."

Dr. Daksha Chudgar's husband, Dr. Bipin Chudgar, who is also an OB/GYN and sits on Lydia's board, has pledged \$500,000 to the project.

Individuals and businesses are also supporting the project, with some signing up to sponsor rooms in the new house.

"People are incredibly generous," said Hap Harris, the president-elect of the Lydia board of directors. "Cancer is the scourge

of the planet. We all want to beat this thing."

His wife, Frances, was diagnosed with cancer twice.

"It knocked us off our feet at the time, but we've been blessed to beat it both times," he said.

"I always say to people, I hope you don't need The Lydia Project's help. I hope you don't have to deal with cancer, but if you do, we'll be there for you."

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Calendar - Upcoming Events

January 2012

4th, 11th, 18th, 25th – Wednesdays. Lewis Memorial United Methodist Church Lydia Work Evenings. 5:00pm-7:00pm, 5555 Hereford Farm RD, Evans, GA 30809

5th, 12th, 19th, 26th – Thursdays. Prayer Group. 9:30am at the Agency. Lifting up prayer requests received current week. 2501 McDowell St., Augusta, GA 30904

7th – Saturday. Sewing Hope Lydia Work Day. 10:00am-12:00pm. Carolina Presbyterian Church, PCA 406 Renee Ford Road, Locust, North Carolina 28097.

8th, 22nd, 29th – Sundays. Lewis Memorial United Methodist Church Lydia Work Evenings. 5:00pm-7:00pm, 5555 Hereford Farm RD, Evans, GA 30809.

10th – Tuesday. Alpha Delta Kappa Lydia Work Night. 7-9pm at the agency. 2501 McDowell St., Augusta, GA 30904

10th, 17th, 24th - Tuesdays. Cedar Creek Sew n Sews Lydia Work Day. 10:30 - 1:00pm, Cedar Creek Community Center, 2584 Club Drive, Aiken, SC 29803. New volunteers welcomed!

14th – Saturday. Augusta Riverhawks Game / Pink the Rink highlighting breast cancer and the concerns of all women with cancer. 7:30pm at the James Brown Arena, 601 &th Street, Augusta, GA 30901. *Ticket sale proceeds and commemorative jerseys auction benefiting the women Lydia serves.* Lydia designer bags on sale at event.

18th WED - New Office Volunteer Orientation. 1:00pm-2:00pm at the agency, 2501 McDowell St, Augusta, GA 30904.

For every \$10 lotion purchased/donated

to The Lydia Project – Outdoor Hands donates a second tube.

Donation purchases can be made:

- **Online at www.outdoorhands.com/**
- **At 318 Baston Road, Ste 103,
Augusta, GA 30907**

Inquiries? Call toll free 866.880.1915

Outdoor Hand's goal: to provide enough
specially formulated lotion for all women Lydia serves in 2011

Thank you

Outdoor Hands for being the first national product to carry the Lydia logo!





Rewarding Opportunity for Volunteer Sewers *Anywhere in the nation*

Experienced sewers love volunteering for Lydia!

- Volunteering couldn't be easier -- tote kits are provided with material/ pattern already cut and ready to sew any time in the comfort of home.
- Lydia fills and distributes the completed totes to the women Lydia serves.

*Find out why volunteers love sewing for Lydia,
Locally or from any where in the nation!*



- Lydia's outreach is to women coping with *any* kind of cancer, worldwide.
- Lydia's services are free and include on-going emotional support every month for at least twelve months.

*Individuals can request Lydia services for themselves
or a loved one anywhere in the world
by visiting www.thelydiaproject.org, by calling 706.736.5467,
or by visiting the agency.*



Lydia team members Mi'esha Freeman and Brianna Lewis helped with the Silent Auction at the October We Think Pink sponsored by *The Augusta Chronicle*.

“I found a tote in my mailbox right after spending four hours telling my parents that I have cancer. It is beautiful and so are all the staff and volunteers who provide this loving service. I am having all my friends and family write notes to me in the journal, so I can read them at each chemo treatment. I have shown mine to many people, and at my clinic and hospital. Everyone is so impressed! Words cannot describe my appreciation. “

At The Lydia Project, women coping with cancer are not alone.



2501 McDowell Street
Augusta, GA 30904
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Toll Free: 877-593-4212
Fax: 706-736-5142
www.thelydiaproject.org

“Thank you so much for the care, love and hope you give to strangers who are suffering and afraid. “

–Shirley, Tennessee

Faith Partners:

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