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Glendale resident finds Arizona Myeloma Network

By Jeffrey Javier

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A Glendale resident running a cancer awareness organization out of her own home is working to enlist broader local support and expand the statewide effort.

Relying on years of social work and volunteer experience, Barbara Kavanagh, 68, founded the Arizona Myeloma Network in 2004 for her husband Jack, 71, who was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a cancer of the bone marrow plasma cells, 17 years ago.

Kavanagh said she is looking for more permanent volunteers to help the organization.

The AzMN is a non-profit organization that serves as a gateway for cancer patients to learn more about myeloma and find better treatment through conferences held each year.

"I want to demystify treatment and research and define what cancer is, and tell people that it is treatable," Kavanagh said.

Working out of a spare bedroom of her Glendale home, Kavanagh has

planned conferences and golf tournaments and sought grants and sponsors for her organization.

She also has enlisted the help of actor Ray Romano from the TV show *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Romano, who also is an honorary chairman, donated tickets to his comedy show in Las Vegas to get raffled off in the annual charity golf tournament.

Since 2004 the AzMN has held two "Living with Myeloma" conferences, three charity golf tournaments and has started the Tissue Donor Awareness Project.

A fourth charity golf tournament will be held Nov. 7 at the Orange Tree Golf Resort in Scottsdale.

The donor awareness project is a new program and that brings together the Translational Genomics Research Institute, a non-profit group that works on early cancer diagnosis and better treatment, and four major hospitals in Arizona to encourage tissue donation for cancer research.

For volunteer and donation information, call 623-388-6837 or visit www.azmyelomanetwork.org.