



# SURVIVOR TIMES

A newsletter for cancer survivors, by cancer survivors.  
Sponsored by The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program.

## Share Your Smile, Spread the Warmth

by Loretta O'Donnell

Having gone through more difficult times recently over the holidays and after, the contrast between my worried state of mind and the seemingly preoccupied people in offices, stores and other public places was starker than usual, sometimes making me feel alone or invisible.

I noticed what a difference a kind word or smile of recognition could make in reducing my feelings of separateness and anxiety. By coincidence or "karma," as I was thinking about that, I noticed some relevant inspirational quotes that I wanted to keep and share...

**"Today, give a stranger one of your smiles. It might be the only sunshine he sees all day."**

— H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

**"Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing."**

— Mother Teresa

**"Everyone smiles in the same language."**

— George Carlin

A smile has great power when it is sincere. When a person smiles from the heart their empathy toward others increases. In a new book, "How Words Can Change Your Brain," neuroscientist Dr. Andrew Newberg includes note of how when you consciously smile like this, you will feel more positive and it will improve the mood of those you talk with because smiling is contagious.

Imagining a loved one or loving memory promotes greater empathy

and compassion for others. Heartfelt smiling also boosts your spirit by releasing feel good dopamine chemicals in the brain. Authentic smiling strengthens the brain's ability to maintain a positive outlook.

I saved the best for last. My favorite truism, to paraphrase Maya Angelou, is that **people will forget what you said and did, but they will never forget how you made them feel.**



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# Letter from the Editor:

Welcome to the tenth issue of the *Survivor Times* – a newsletter for cancer survivors, by cancer survivors.

A wise person once said “Carve your name on hearts... a legacy is etched into the minds of others and the stories they share about you.”

Your love, actions and anecdotes over your lifetime are the greatest legacy that you will leave to your friends and family.

Part of my legacy, and my joy, is to fearlessly carry on the brilliant, altruistic legacy of Dr. Diane Barton who was a visionary regarding cancer survivorship.

She knew as a cancer survivor and physician, the importance of using her voice and knowledge to make a positive difference in the cancer survivorship community.

It is with that spirit in mind that I

created the *Survivor Times* four years and ten issues ago with the intent of giving cancer survivors a vehicle to use their voice and insights about their cancer journey and make a positive difference.

Hats off to those of you that have contributed! The feedback has been overwhelming... the articles published in this newsletter have truly struck a chord in the hearts of those who have read them.

What is your legacy? If you are a cancer survivor will you consider sharing some of your stories and insights with others?

Consider this; something you write may resonate with another cancer survivor, and bring them peace and ease on their journey.

**The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program** is part of the many clinical and educational programs and services offered through Cooper Cancer Institute. This program is committed to providing cancer survivors with

access to an array of complementary medicine experiences. Our programs are designed to help survivors discover ways to cope with the stress and anxiety of their diagnosis, and to alleviate some of the side effects of their treatment by focusing on healing the mind, body and spirit. My goal through this program is to bring together, empower and engage cancer survivors to incorporate complementary medicine options into their lives. The inception of this newsletter is the outcome of one such special program offered throughout the year.

If you would like to submit an article, please contact me at [mehr-bonnie@cooperhealth.edu](mailto:mehr-bonnie@cooperhealth.edu).

Bonnie Mehr  
Editor, the *Survivor Times* Newsletter  
Manager, the Dr. Diane Barton  
Complementary Medicine Program

## Legacy by Loretta O'Donnell

A cancer diagnosis brings a sudden reflection on one's life, the good and the bad and what changes we want or need to make with a new sense of urgency and sometimes thoughts on how we would like to be remembered. After my initial stage 4 diagnosis nearly three years ago, I pondered my choices on how I wanted to spend my time and energy.

Like many people, outside of my family I identified myself with my career. After 30 years in the news and public relations profession, I felt that I needed to adjust to a slower pace and wanted more free time to spend with family and friends. With my children grown and my husband working, I was able to take early retirement from my job which was bittersweet as I thought about my successes and missteps along the way, hoping that I would be remembered for contributing to the workplace and people I collaborated with regularly.

After recent news that my stage 4 cancer had progressed, I had new choices to make and reflected on my life since my diagnosis and how I want to live and be remembered for my unknown remaining amount of time. For the past three years I have developed closer relationships and



Loretta O'Donnell

friendships, done a lot of soul searching and learning. With all the reading, workshops and research, I sometimes feel like I'm back in college.

When I think of my late parents and sister, I wonder if they knew how much positive influence they brought to my life and others long after they were gone. I hope so but probably not. I read a suggestion that it is very meaningful for people to ask friends and family to write down some memories and ways that the person has added value to their life. I did that recently and was awestruck by so many loving responses, compliments and fond memories spanning decades and all aspects of my life. I highly recommend it as a pick me up you can read whenever you're feeling down and a tangible reminder of your value and legacy.

Some people wrote memories of things I had forgotten and others saw the strength I didn't know I had. Here are a few excerpts I liked from friends...

You're like an ice dancer—nobody sees the grit and falls and hard work that it has taken you to get to where you want to be. Even with cancer – I'm still surprised at your peace and strength when we came to visit. I admire your inner steel and your outward grace.

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# Signature Class SERIES

A FREE series of classes for cancer patients and their caregivers.

## YOGA STRETCH FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

Yoga Stretch for Cancer Survivors is especially beneficial for people with flexibility limitations due to a variety of degenerative conditions, as well as those recovering from surgery.

**DATES:** January 8; February 5; March 5;  
April 2 & 30; May 7

**TIME:** 12 P.M. – 1 P.M.

**LOCATION:** Town Square Building  
931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

## QI GONG

Qi Gong is a modality several centuries old using movement and breath as a way to increase, harness and move the Vital Energy that is within and around us. It can increase focus, improve balance and flexibility, increase circulation, and relax you.

**DATES:** January 15 & 29; February 12 & 26;  
March 12 & 26; April 9 & 23; May 14 & 28

**TIME:** 12 P.M. – 1 P.M.

**LOCATION:** Town Square Building  
931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

## MEDITATION FOR RELAXATION

Join practitioner Jo Anna Carey and you will be led on a journey of self-discovery through the deeply relaxing practice of meditation for the purpose of nurturing and supporting yourself through life's stresses and joys. Enjoy experiencing a variety of meditation techniques and breathing exercises.

**DATE:** January 22; February 19; March 19;  
April 16; May 21

**TIME:** 12 P.M. – 1 P.M.

**LOCATION:** Town Square Building  
931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

## LIVE & LEARN

### A New Perspective for the Cancer Patient

**TIME:** 11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

**LOCATION:** Town Square Building  
931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

- Thursday, March 28, 2013: Evaluating Media Regarding Cancer:** It is up to us to seek out media that empowers and informs us, and to say no to media that drains energy and hope.  
**PRESENTED BY:** *The Cooper Cancer Institute Behavioral Health Team*
- Thursday, April 25, 2013: Virtual Grocery Store Tour:** Come and partake in this informative, computer generated, interactive tour of the supermarket, while sitting comfortably in our Voorhees Town Square Building, with Cooper Cancer Institute's expert Nutritionist.  
**PRESENTED BY:** *Linda Goldsmith, MA, RD, CSO Outpatient Oncology Dietitian, Cooper Cancer Institute*
- Thursday, May 16, 2013: Seasons of Beauty: Aging Gracefully in a not so Graceful World:** Engage in stimulating conversation about issues that we all face as we reach different ages and stages in our lives.  
**PRESENTED BY:** *The Cooper Cancer Institute Behavioral Health Team*
- Thursday, June 13, 2013: Reinventing Yourself After a Cancer Diagnosis:** No matter when; yesterday, or 20 years ago; a cancer diagnosis is life changing... we will evaluate how it has changed your life and where you are heading.  
**PRESENTED BY:** *The Cooper Cancer Institute Behavioral Health Team*

**Pre-registration is required for all workshops. Please call: 1.800.8.COOPER (1.800.826.6737).**

You can also register for these classes online at **events.CooperHealth.org**

*Please note that workshops are subject to cancellation due to inclement weather.*



# THE DR. DIANE BARTON Complementary Medicine Program 2013

## 2013 Creative Arts for Healing WORKSHOPS

### Location:

Town Square Building, 931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

**Time:** 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

### Dates:

- **March 13: Watercolor** • **March 27: Spring Wreaths**
- **April 3: Six Word Memoirs** • **April 17: Decorative Ceramics**
- **May 8: Affirmation Bracelets** • **May 22: Decorate Herb Pot**
- **June 5: Plant Herb Garden** • **June 19: Personalize Tote**

This class is free for cancer survivors and there is no cost for materials. Please register for each class so the appropriate number of supplies can be provided. Please call:

**1.800.8.COOPER** (1.800.826.6737).

You can also register online at [events.cooperhealth.org](http://events.cooperhealth.org).

## Therapeutic Massage & Reflexology Days

**Attention all cancer survivors:** Come enjoy the mind body spirit benefits of therapeutic chair massage and reflexology.

**Dates:** March 12 & 26, April 9 & 23,  
May 7 & 21, June 4 & 18

**Time:** 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**Location:** Town Square Building  
931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

## Bonnie's Book Club

A story is always better if you have someone to share it with... what could be better than sharing it with a group of friends who have read it too?

- **March 27: The Lifeboat**  
by Charlotte Rogan
- **April 17: The Secret Keeper**  
by Kate Morton
- **May 22: Gone Girl**  
by Gillian Flynn
- **June 19: Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker**  
by Jennifer Chiaverini

**Time:** 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

**Location:** Town Square Building,  
931 Centennial Blvd.  
Voorhees, NJ 08043

This book club is for cancer survivors. If you have any questions or need additional information please contact **Bonnie Mehr** at **856.325.6646**

 **Cooper**  
Cancer Institute

# My Angel: Angela Frantz, RN Breast Cancer Nurse Navigator

by Christine Gonnelli

## I was raised in a household with a strong spiritual foundation:

Throughout my life, I have had several eerie coincidences that are just too uncanny to ignore. You have heard the metaphors; "At the right place at the right time," "God only gives you as much as you can handle," etc. You may also have had times when you pray for something over and over and out of the blue, it miraculously appears. Amazing, isn't it? Or not? And are there angels? I think so... Angela Frantz, breast Nurse Navigator at Cooper Cancer Institute is my proof!

## So here is my story of divine alignment:

After divorcing in 2007, I married the love of my life, my husband, Joe. We relocated to Moorestown with my three sons and his five children; suddenly we were quickly in charge of a family of ten. Needless to say, I had very little time to meet new friends and embrace my new surroundings. My realtor was instrumental in finding us the perfect home as well as offering a wealth of information I would need for survival with my new crew. She parted with, "The best pizza is on Main Street, I know most of the coaches at the high school, and if you ever need a breast surgeon, I have the best one in South Jersey."

## So fast forward four years to 2011:

Having very little time alone, Joe surprises me with tickets for a ten day cruise through the Mediterranean. Just us! Seizing the opportunity for a vacation of his own, one of my sons arranged to stay at the shore with his best friend's family. Since both of our children are athletes, I know Angela at this point only casually. Angela is a working mother who never misses a sporting event. She is the woman who is constantly intro-



Christine Gonnelli and Angela Frantz

ducing parents to each other, showing special interest in children who come from single family homes, offering rides to stranded players, working the snack bar, etc. She seems to know everyone and was one of the nicest people I met when I moved to town. We called each other only occasionally, mostly with issues pertaining to the children. I knew Angela was a nurse, but what she actually did, I couldn't recall.

## Our second honeymoon, our fabulous European cruise, was a disaster from the start:

Two hours into the flight, holding hands looking over the Atlantic, the pilot announced he has to turn the airplane around and return back to

Philadelphia due to severe engine trouble. Severe engine trouble; what the heck is that? Yikes. Like most mothers, all I could think of was our children. Not being a good swimmer, I immediately asked for extra paper for my goodbye letters, just in case! Being unable to resume our flight until the next day, we missed our ship's departure in Barcelona. Rerouted to Rome, we were able to catch the ship at its next port; however, we not thrilled to find we had no luggage, no medicine, and no toiletries for eight days, putting a huge damper on our romantic getaway! Our gift shop bill was twice the cost of the trip! As if that wasn't enough, I experienced routine migraines and started hemorrhaging mid cycle, spending more time in the infirmary than in my cabin. I left the airport in a wheelchair with what was soon diagnosed at the emergency room as stress related DUB (dysfunctional uterine bleeding). Like a sledge hammer to the head, I was forced to schedule my extremely late annual tests, which many busy women foolishly put on the back burner. My bleeding was simply due to stress, but the routine mammogram scheduled two weeks later showed a dismal picture, requiring an immediate biopsy.

## What just happened, I wondered:

My husband was back to work. The kids were busy in a multitude of directions and I now wondered when in the world would I have gotten around to my mammogram had I not been forced to get one. I got in my car and within seconds I was sobbing in total disbelief. Retrieving my largest sun-

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## About The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program

The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program enhances the quality of life and wellness of individuals touched by cancer – including patients, their caregivers and family.

It utilizes therapies that focus on mind, body and spirit while supporting mainstream medical care. The complementary therapies offered through CCI are designed to lessen the pain, stress and anxiety associated with cancer. Therapies also assist in managing the side effects of traditional treatments such as radiation and chemo-therapy. While complementary therapies cannot cure cancer, many patients have found them to be helpful in managing and coping with their cancer. While traditional medicine and healthcare treat the illness, complementary medicine therapies help promote wellness in the whole person.

In addition to the therapeutic benefits, taking part in complementary medicine therapies empowers participants – providing survivors with an opportunity to take a positive, active role in their care and treatment.

All therapies and programs offered through the Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program are available at no cost and are open to all cancer patients and their caregivers, regardless of where they receive their treatment. These programs, lectures and activities offer patients access to social, educational and support opportunities. Programs are offered weekly throughout the year. Our outpatient complementary medicine programs include:

- Restorative Yoga
- Therapeutic Chair Massage
- Meditation for Relaxation
- Qi Gong
- Body Movement Classes
- Behavioral Health Workshops
- Creative Arts
- The Tea Cart (brought to outpatients while receiving chemotherapy)
- Educational Seminars
- Horticultural Therapy

**This program is wholly funded through philanthropic support. As the reputation and demand for our programs and services grow, so does our need for funding. If you are interested in learning more about The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program or would like to make a donation, please contact, Bonnie Mehr, Program Manager, at 856.325.6646.**

## My Angel: Angela Frantz

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glasses, I snuck into the house and quickly and called my husband's office to unleash the unpleasant news. Joe, the ultimate problem solver, was searching the web even before I had finished my story.

Suddenly, I remembered my realtor's statement; "If I ever need a breast surgeon..." I called her immediately and she proceeds to tell me all about Dr. Kristin Brill who is on staff at Cooper Cancer Institute and her outstanding reputation as one of the best breast surgeons in South Jersey. She would contact her immediately. Not being able to reach her, my realtor leaves a message for the always busy, Dr. Brill. I throw myself in bed in total shock at how my life had changed in thirty minutes time. After an hour of heart-wrenching blubbing, it comes to me out of the blue... Angela Frantz. She took a job in Voorhees. She worked in oncology. I wonder if she has heard of this Dr. Brill. Too grief stricken to call, I sent Angela a text, explaining my problem and asked if she had ever heard of Dr. Brill.

**In less than twenty seconds, my phone rings and the angelic voice is Angela Frantz:**

"Are you CRAZY"? She screams. "Don't you know, I am Dr. Brill's breast cancer Nurse Navigator? I work directly with her on..., oh, never mind. Wash you face and get your tail directly to Cooper. I just scheduled you for a biopsy in one hour."

And that was it. From that point on, and to this day, sixteen months later, Angela handles every aspect of my regimen with the greatest of care. When your breast cancer is identified just short of stage three, the treatment is extensive. In my case, chemotherapy, double mastectomy, radiation and reconstruction was the protocol, in that order. Being

the queen of multi-tasking, Angela quickly set up my dream team of physicians; Dr. Brill, Dr. Grana, Dr. Liao, Dr. LaCouture, Helen Nichter NP, and Dr. Tamburrino. I call them my dream team, not just because of their exceptional talents, but knowing I had the best of the best, allowed me to sleep at night and dream; dream of beating my cancer and getting on with my busy life.

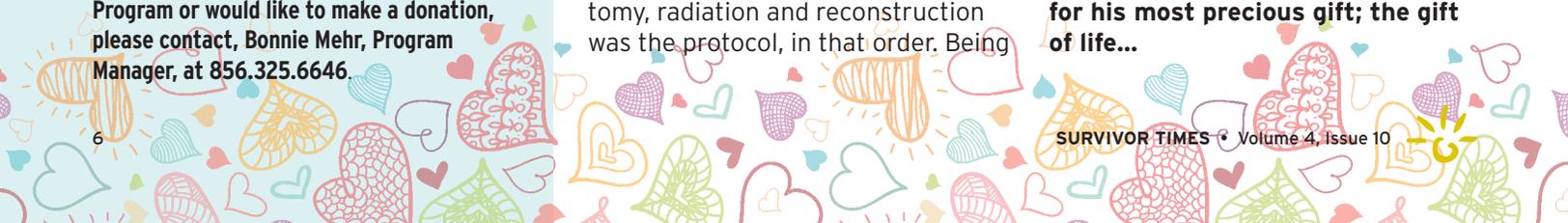
**After meeting my dream team, even with a rough road ahead, somehow I just knew I was going to be okay...**

I still remember my greatest fear of all was the fact that I had to tell my sons I had cancer. I sat each child down individually and told them I had some "not so great news" to share and I really only wanted them to understand one thing; that I wasn't going to die." I made each of them repeat it three times until they promised they believed me. Then I told them what was going to lose all of my hair, drag around for months, but eventually would look like a Beyonce. After all, how could such a perfectly aligned story not have a happy ending?

**Having cancer requires fighting... like when I shaved my hair on my 54th birthday to prepare for battle. But many times, the biggest fight is keeping the faith...**

I was once told, "You are allowed to have dark days, but you just can't stay there." I can honestly say while my regimen was worse than most, my experience was not that bad. I had many days laughing with Angela; my favorite was when my wig blew half way off my head in the football stadium during a blizzard; Or, when I quickly whipped off my wig when I was speeding so the policeman would let me go. Being Greek, imagine how thrilled I was for not having to shave my legs for 8 months!

**Now, as a survivor, I thank God for his most precious gift; the gift of life...**



## Be a Monthly Sponsor of the Tea Cart

**Your donations of ShopRite gift cards are appreciated. We have expanded the tea cart in Voorhees to 5 days per week!**

Every delicious snack given to our patients while they are receiving their chemo is given from the heart. Our patients are always pleasantly surprised when sitting in the outpatient chemo unit for hours and perhaps feeling a little down, when a beautiful flowered cart filled with free juices and snacks, program updates and the *Survivor Times*, and many more surprises, comes along and serves them a little spot of sunshine. It's an inspirational initiative through the Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program along with Cooper Cancer Institute employees that voluntarily give up part of their lunch time to make a positive difference in the quality of each patient's journey. It serves as a testament of the spirit that defines Cooper Cancer Institute's commitment in providing Excellence in Patient & Family-Centered Care.

**For more information please contact; Bonnie Mehr, Manager, the Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program at 856.325.6646 or mehr-bonnie@cooperhealth.edu**

**You may mail your ShopRite gift card donations to: Attn: Bonnie Mehr, Cooper Cancer Institute, 2017 Piazza Main St., Voorhees, NJ 08043**



## A Celebration of Life

by Louise Flannery

My oldest sister, Helen, passed away this past October, at the age of 85. She was a cancer survivor (both uterine and colon, several years apart) with the last over 20 years ago. She took both in stride even dealing with complications. In the end, it was her heart that gave out, her big generous heart...

We were not particularly close, due in part to an over 10 year age difference and the fact she moved out of the area when her husband had a job transfer. So I was not prepared for the flood of emotions and memories that came pouring in. The day after receiving the news I was washing the dishes (where I receive some of my best ideas) when I started remembering events of our childhood. The first memory was how generous she always was, her cheerfulness and optimism. Our Dad was a very hard worker and we always had what we needed... but with 6 children in the family, we didn't have a lot of extras. My sister went to work after high school and she started buying us some of those "extras:" most notable was a big box fan that really helped to cool us off during those sweltering Philadelphia summers. She also learned how to drive and bought a new car, a '57 Chevy, pink and gray, which was her pride and joy. She took us on a road trip up through New England into Canada to view Niagara Falls from that side which was very thrilling to my younger siblings and me.

When I think of Helen, the word resilience comes to mind. She had that incredible quality that allows some people to be knocked down by life, and come back stronger than ever. She inherited that trait from my father when he successfully battled colon cancer many years ago. I was grateful to have that trait when I had to deal with my own cancer. We both took the blows... but we always got back up again.

After my sister married and had a son, she studied and received her broker's license and went on to have a successful career in real estate.

I guess what I am trying to say is that even without that closeness, when a family member passes away, you feel a definite void. It made me realize that love comes in many different packages... and there is comfort in all the good memories.

I am grateful Helen was my sister. She is survived by her devoted husband of 55 years who is still active at 94, her loving son and 2 grandchildren.

Her's was a life well-lived.

## Legacy

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Thanks for being a great example of how to approach life with an optimistic attitude. You see what needs to be done and you do it.

You look for the best in all situations. You have taught me to be willing to investigate new adventures, never knowing what I may find.



You are such a strong, courageous lady and what a fighter too. You have had such a positive attitude during the past couple years. You really are an inspiration to others.



The impact of having written notes of what people like about you is a huge boost to your resolve. I had read that a teacher once asked everyone in the class to write one thing they liked about each person in the class and many years later, all the classmates still had and cherished those writings.

Our reach goes far beyond what we think. One of my out-of-state nephews just sent me a copy of his college application essay and much to my surprise it was about me. "Her actions and attitude inspire all of us that know her. My Aunt Loretta is truly an inspiration and a role model on how to handle adversity. The lessons I've learned from her are invaluable, and ones that I want to pass on to countless others."

We often compare ourselves to others and think we are just average, but we are all special and influential. The next time you're feeling down or that you aren't doing enough, remember Jimmy Stewart in *It's a Wonderful Life*, and how his town and many people in it were so much better from his one "average" life.

My mother-in-law's yearly production of a book of memories, with the input of children and grandchildren, is a treasure to the family.

**The recording of a family's history and stories can be a powerful reminder of a family's legacy.**

## Lemon Chicken with Broccoli and Ginger



- 1/2 cup fat-free reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. ground white or black pepper
- 1 Tbsp. coconut oil, divided
- 1 lb. skinless and boneless chicken breast, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 Tbsp. grated or finely chopped ginger, plus 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1/2 cup sliced leek, white and pale green parts, 2-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup thinly slice red onion, in crescents
- 3 cups broccoli florets cut to bite-size
- 1/4 cup chopped scallions, green and white parts

In measuring cup, combine broth, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Set aside.

Heat a wok over high heat. When wok is hot, drizzle half of the oil around sides, then lift and swirl wok to coat it. Add chicken, and stir-fry until no pink color shows, 2 minutes. Scoop out chicken and place on plate.

Drizzle remaining oil into wok and swirl to coat. Add fresh ginger, ground ginger and garlic and stir fry until fragrant, 30 seconds. Add leek and onion and stir fry for 1 minute. Pour in broth mixture, cover wok and cook for 2 minutes until broccoli looks bright green. Return chicken to wok and stir fry until pieces are white in the center, 1 to 2 minutes. Turn contents of wok out onto serving platter. Sprinkle on scallions and serve.

**Makes 4 servings.** Per serving: 193 calories, 5 g fat (3 g sat fat), 8 g carbohydrates, 29 g protein 1 g fiber, 452 mg sodium.