

SURVIVOR

A NEWSLETTER FOR CANCER SURVIVORS
Sponsored by The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program **TIMES**

Shooting for the Moon to Make Cancer History

by Generosa Grana, MD, Director, MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper

During his State of the Union address on January 12, 2016, President Barack Obama announced the establishment of a new *National Cancer Moonshot* Initiative to accelerate cancer research and invigorate research programs across the U.S.

The initiative — led by Vice President Joe Biden — aims to make more cancer therapies available to more patients,

while also improving our ability to prevent cancer and detect it at an early stage.

In 2012, nearly four years before President Obama announced the national initiative, The University of



Generosa Grana, MD

Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center launched its *Moon Shots Program* with a single goal in mind: to end cancer.

Inspired by the nation's drive a generation ago to put a man on the moon, MD Anderson Cancer Center has an ambitious and comprehensive action plan to rapidly and dramatically reduce the mortality and suffering from cancer during the next decade.

Clinical Focus

As part of the program, multidisciplinary Moon Shot teams were charged with converting current and new knowledge for 13 different areas of focus into tests, devices, drugs, and policies that could benefit patients as quickly as possible and reduce cancer death. Among the cancers targeted were breast, colorectal, lung, ovarian, and prostate cancer, melanoma, and human papillomavirus-related disease.

Ultimately, the teams' efforts and desired outcomes are meant to benefit not only these specific areas of focus but also be applicable for all cancers.

In its first full year of operations, the Moon Shots Program launched new approaches to ovarian cancer surgery and melanoma prevention, as well as targeted therapies and drug combinations for leukemia, prostate, and lung cancer.

MD Anderson Moon Shot teams have conducted more than 125 immunoncology (targeting the body's own immune system to fight cancer) clinical trials across all major cancer types involving nearly 6,000 patients. These trials have yielded practice-changing advances with improved long-term survival for a number of deadly cancers. And there's more to come.

Groundbreaking Clinical Research at MD Anderson Cooper

MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper will assist in extending Moon Shot advances nationally by offering

local participation in clinical trials and by rapidly integrating new knowledge and therapies into the standard of care provided to patients in South Jersey.

Clinical trials are the best way physicians have to translate exciting scientific developments into treatments that will be valuable to our patients.

Our cancer clinical trials are designed to test new ways to:

- Treat cancer.
- Find and diagnose cancer.
- Prevent cancer.
- Manage symptoms of cancer or side effects from its treatment.

Participating in clinical trials offers patients the opportunity to try new and effective treatments that could potentially improve their condition, while taking part in vital research that can benefit many future patients.

I strongly encourage you to speak with your physicians about the opportunity to participate in a clinical trial and be part of this historic effort in Making Cancer History. ■



Letter from the Editor:



Bonnie Mehr

Dear Friend,

This issue is dedicated to you; the Warriors, the Ninjas... those with true grit and the fierceness of Navy Seals...those cancer survivors who are fighting, or have fought with breathtaking grace and dignity. Bask in your own resilience and legacy of hope.

They say people come into our lives for a reason. Some, if you're lucky, for an entire lifetime; and some, like a bright burst of color and light, blow through with the intensity, purpose, and determination of a shooting star. They leave deep and meaningful footprints on our hearts and, to the greater good, to some piece of humanity. I encourage you to take a minute as you read this and think of those who fit this description for you, people that we continue to "carry with us" for a lifetime. For me, those people are the late great Michele Lucas, Ralph and Shirley Mehr, and the unforgettable Dr. Diane Barton.

As we are entrenched in the 13th year of The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program, it becomes clearer with each passing year that Dr. Diane Barton, my friend and mentor, was a true visionary. Her honorable legacy lives on each day through the vast amount of cancer survivors that experience and benefit from this valuable program. If you are reading this newsletter, or have attended even one of the unique programs offered over the years, then you have benefitted from her noble gift.

This is a new era in cancer care. Recently, Vice President Biden, who has pledged to double the rate of progress toward finding a cancer cure before leaving office, applauded Americans across the country for "jumping in to help prevent" cancer.

"Moonshot is all of you... it's all those people spending nights and weekends in their labs looking for the next breakthrough," said the vice president. "It's the patients who are being treated for the cancers, hoping they can return to their lives and their families."

The world, he added, is "on the cusp of breakthroughs."

MD Anderson Cooper is part of this exciting initiative in "Making Cancer History." I feel honored to have Dr. Generosa Grana, our inspiring leader and

Director of MD Anderson Cooper, contribute and write the front page article for this special edition; giving us all great insight into the contributions and commitment that MD Anderson, and MD Anderson Cooper, has pledged towards eradicating cancer. In this edition, our new Head of the Division of Hematology/Medical Oncology, Dr. Robert A. Somer, shares with us cutting edge breakthroughs in precision medicine and genomic profiling...and our genetics team educates us all on the changing face of genetic testing.

The quality of your cancer journey and survivorship is important to us. This edition of the *Survivor Times* also encompasses heartwarming and inspirational stories from cancer survivors, those living with, through, and beyond a cancer diagnosis. To Loretta Aloia, Susan Nurge, and all of The Seeds of Hope Project cancer survivor gardeners, I thank you for encouraging us all by sharing a piece of your cancer journey, or by participating by gardening and supporting other cancer survivors going through chemotherapy by growing and giving them organic vegetables so that they can thrive.

Whatever stage you fall under, the common denominator is quality of life.

It is with this focus in mind that both Integrative and Complementary Medicine utilize evidence-based therapies that focus on the three pillars of a healthy lifestyle – nutrition, physical activity and emotional health – incorporating complementary therapies focusing on mind, body and spirit while supporting mainstream medical care. Our programs are designed to help cancer survivors discover ways to cope with the stress and anxiety of their diagnosis, and to alleviate some of the side effects of their treatment. These programs, lectures, and activities offer patients access to social, educational, and support opportunities.

All programs are free for cancer survivors. If you would like to submit an article or make a donation to The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program, please contact me at: mehr-bonnie@cooprhealth.edu

Be Well...

Bonnie Mehr
Editor, *Survivor Times* Newsletter
Director, Integrative Oncology Services
Director, The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program
MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper

VOORHEES
THE DR. DIANE BARTON COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER–DECEMBER 2016

Signature Class SERIES

A FREE series of classes for cancer survivors.

Core Strengthening & Stamina Building Through Belly Dancing FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

This fun class will cover all the basics of the ancient art of belly dancing in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere. We will work on strength, isolations, and conditioning through the belly dance technique. Come learn a variety of moves and choreography that will be broken down at the beginner level. No experience is necessary, and hip scarves will be provided.

PRACTITIONER: Dee Farley, *The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program*

DATES: September 21; October 12; November 9

TIME: 9 a.m. – 10 a.m.



Guided Imagery & Meditation for Calming Anxiety FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

This class uses meditation and guided imagery to calm anxiety by teaching patients:

- How to use meditation to cultivate well being.
- Mindful meditation to reduce stress and anxiety.
- Visualizations for inner peace and healing.

PRACTITIONER: Corinne Corcoran, EdD, NCBTMB, ARCB
The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program

DATES: September 21; October 12; November 9

TIME: 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Seeds of Hope Project FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

Join us as we plan our organic vegetable garden. Our bounty will be shared through the Tea Cart Program with patients receiving chemotherapy.

DATES: September 15; October 27; November 10

TIME: 9 a.m. – 10 a.m.

LIVE & LEARN

A NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR THE CANCER PATIENT

TIME: 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

• **Thursday, September 22, 2016:**
HOT TOPICS IN NUTRITION

PRESENTED BY: MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper
Oncology Dietitian

• **Thursday, November 17, 2016:**
**LEARNING TO COPE WITH FEAR AND ANXIETY:
Living With, Through, and Beyond a Cancer
Diagnosis**

PRESENTED BY: MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper
Behavioral Medicine Expert

• **Thursday, December 8, 2016:**
**ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON
For Cancer Survivors**

Come join us for the Annual Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program Holiday Luncheon! Please feel free to bring a dessert for all to share. Limited space available this year! **For cancer survivors only.**

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL CLASSES.

Please call: **1.800.8.COOPER** (1.800.826.6737),
or register online at events.CooperHealth.org

Workshops may be cancelled due to inclement weather.

LOCATION FOR ALL CLASSES:

Cooper Clock Tower, 931 Centennial Boulevard
Voorhees, NJ 08043

CLASSES ARE FOR CANCER SURVIVORS ONLY

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Making Cancer History®



SEPTEMBER–DECEMBER 2016

Signature Class SERIES

A FREE series of classes for cancer survivors.

Core Strengthening & Stamina Building Through Belly Dancing FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

This fun class will cover all the basics of the ancient art of belly dancing in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere. We will work on strength, isolations, and conditioning through the belly dance technique. Come learn a variety of moves and choreography that will be broken down at the beginner level. No experience is necessary, and hip scarves will be provided.

PRACTITIONER: Dee Farley, *The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program*

DATE: September 26; October 31 **TIME:** 10:30–11:30 a.m.



Guided Imagery & Meditation for Calming Anxiety FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

This class uses meditation and guided imagery to calm anxiety by teaching patients:

- How to use meditation to cultivate well being.
- Mindful meditation to reduce stress and anxiety.
- Visualizations for inner peace and healing.

PRACTITIONER: Corinne Corcoran, EdD, NCBTMB, ARCB
The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program

DATES: September 12; November 28 **TIME:** 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Qi Gong and Meditation FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

This class combines two very valuable, centuries-old modalities. Qi Gong uses movement and breath as a way to increase, harness, and move the vital energy that is within and around us. It can increase circulation and relax you. Enjoy incorporating the deeply relaxing practice of meditation for the purpose of nurturing and supporting yourself through life's stresses and joys.

PRACTITIONER: Corinne Corcoran, EdD, NCBTMB, ARCB
The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program

DATE: October 17 **TIME:** 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Creative Arts for Healing Workshops FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

This workshop is designed for cancer survivors to inspire creative flow and personal expression. All materials are provided, and no artistic skills are required. The workshop is free for cancer survivors, and there is no cost for materials. Please register so the appropriate number of supplies can be provided.

PRACTITIONER: Andrea Meehan, *The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program*

DATE: November 14 **TIME:** 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Gentle Chair Yoga FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

Chair yoga is a unique yoga style that creatively adapts traditional yoga poses to be done while seated. The chair replaces the yoga mat and becomes an extension of the body. We will warm up the body safely, engage in meditative breathing, and flow into gentle yoga poses mindfully with support and stability. This class is open to all levels of flexibility and experience.

PRACTITIONER: Julie Fischer, *The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program*

DATES: Sept. 12; Oct. 17; Nov. 14 **TIME:** 9:30–10:30 a.m.

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL CLASSES.

Please call: **1.800.8.COOPER** (1.800.826.6737),
or register online at events.CooperHealth.org
Workshops may be cancelled due to inclement weather.

LOCATION:

MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper
Two Cooper Plaza, 400 Haddon Avenue
Room C4100/C4101, Camden, NJ 08103
FREE VALET PARKING

CLASSES ARE FOR CANCER SURVIVORS ONLY

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The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program Presents:

2016 Creative Arts for Healing WORKSHOPS

These classes are free and open to CANCER SURVIVORS ONLY (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.

VOORHEES

2016 DATES	PROJECTS
Sept. 14:	Make Your Own Stationery
Sept. 28:	Affirmation Jewelry
Oct. 5:	Découpage Project
Oct. 19:	Make Your Own Greeting Cards
Nov. 2:	Coloring for Relaxation

TIME: WEDNESDAYS 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

LOCATION: Cooper Clock Tower
931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

PRACTITIONER: Andrea Meehan
The Dr. Diane Barton
Complementary Medicine Program

Therapeutic Massage & Reflexology Days

ATTENTION ALL CANCER SURVIVORS:
Come enjoy the mind–body–spirit benefits of
Therapeutic Chair Massage and Reflexology.

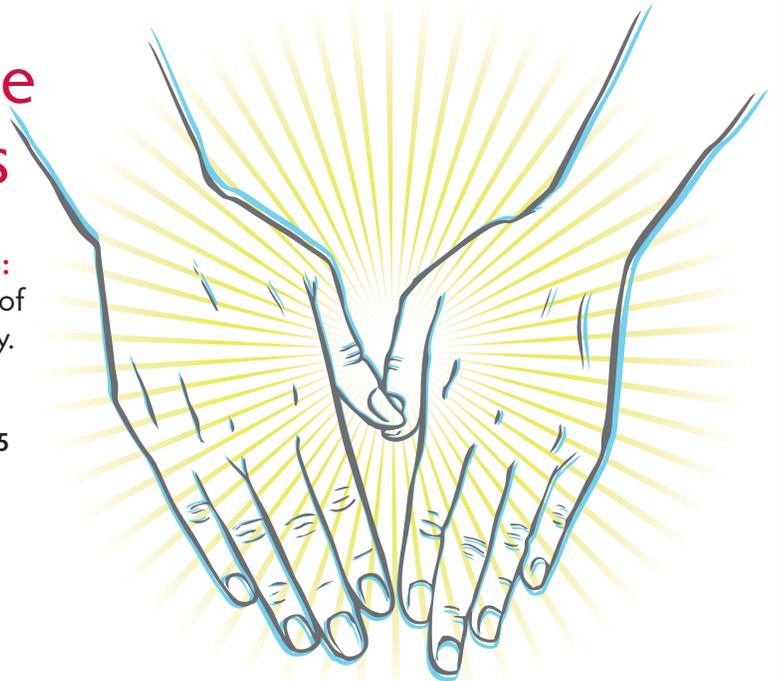
2016 DATES:
September 20 / October 4 & 18 / November 1 & 15

TIME:
9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION:
Cooper Clock Tower
931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

Classes are free and open to CANCER SURVIVORS ONLY

Please register by calling **1.800.8.COOPER** (1.800.826.6737). You can also register online at events.cooperhealth.org.



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The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program Presents:



HORTICULTURAL THERAPY

FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

2016 DATES

Please register for either a Tuesday OR Thursday session. Projects are the same on both days. Each class is limited to 20 cancer survivor participants.

TIME:
Tuesdays & Thursdays
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

TUESDAYS	PROJECTS	THURSDAYS	PROJECTS
September 13:	Colorful Fresh Foliage Arrangements	September 15:	Colorful Fresh Foliage Arrangements
October 25:	Homemade Autumn Potpourri	October 27:	Homemade Autumn Potpourri
November 8:	Corn Husk Wreaths	November 10:	Corn Husk Wreaths

LOCATION:
Cooper Clock Tower
931 Centennial Boulevard
Voorhees, NJ 08043
Please register online at:
events.cooperhealth.org.

FACILITATOR:
Rachelle Hasenberg, BS, HTM,
Senior Therapist of Inspirational
Horticultural Therapy

**This class is free and open to CANCER SURVIVORS ONLY
(there is no cost for materials).**

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Making Cancer History[®]

The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program

Becoming a cancer survivor starts the moment a patient is diagnosed, and at MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper we realize that physical healing is only part of our mission.

The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program enhances traditional cancer treatment by focusing on mind, body, and spirit. The program offers a variety of mind-body therapies performed by certified therapists and practitioners.

Our complementary therapies are designed to lessen the pain, stress, and anxiety associated with a cancer diagnosis. They also provide assistance in managing the side effects of traditional treatments, such as radiation and chemotherapy.



The following are available throughout the year in our Camden and Voorhees locations:

- Laughter play shop
- Therapeutic chair massage
- Reflexology
- Qi Gong and Meditation
- Horticultural Therapy
- Gentle chair yoga
- Music therapy
- Creative Arts for Healing classes
- Gentle body movement
- Nutrition education
- Behavioral Medicine workshops
- Educational seminars
- Survivor Times newsletter
- Tea Cart program



Tea Cart Program

Program Highlights

- The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program has provided services to thousands of cancer survivors, at no cost, regardless of where they receive care, since its inception in 2004.
- The program has recently expanded to include chair-side reflexology services and creative arts in the chemotherapy infusion units, as well as therapeutic chair massage throughout the cancer center in Camden for patients and their family members.
- Surveys are conducted annually to measure the program's effectiveness in reducing stress and anxiety, and in patient satisfaction. The most recent survey conducted on Chair-Side Reflexology, Introduction to the iPad classes, and Creative Arts for Healing classes demonstrated a 100 percent satisfaction rating in all areas.

For any questions, please contact Program Director Bonnie Mehr at mehr-bonnie@CooperHealth.edu or 856.325.6646



Participants bask in a sense of community, nurturing friendships, and the mutual support they have experienced through The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program.



Radiation Therapy:

What Every Patient Needs to Know.

VOORHEES

When:

This class is offered **every Wednesday** from 2 – 3 p.m.

Where:

MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper
Two Cooper Plaza
400 Haddon Avenue
Conference Room C1111
Camden, NJ 08103

Pre-registration is required for this class.

Please call **1.800.8.COOPER** (1.800.826.6737) or register online at events.cooperhealth.org



Chemo and Biologic Therapies:

What Every Patient Needs to Know.

CAMDEN

When:

This class is offered **every Tuesday** from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Where:

MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper
Two Cooper Plaza
400 Haddon Avenue
Conference Room C1111
Camden, NJ 08103

VOORHEES

When:

This class is offered **every Thursday** from 2 – 3 p.m.

Where:

Cooper Clock Tower
931 Centennial Blvd.
Voorhees, NJ 08043

Pre-registration is required for this class.

Please call **1.800.8.COOPER** (1.800.826.6737) or register online at events.cooperhealth.org



SUPPORT GROUP SERIES

US T00 Prostate Lecture Series (Voorhees)

Presentations led by medical professionals on the diagnosis, treatment options, and management of prostate diseases. There will be ample time to ask questions and share experiences. Significant others are invited to attend.

DATES: September 13, November 8

TIME: 6 – 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION: MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper in Voorhees, 900 Centennial Blvd., Building #1, Suite L Conference Room, Voorhees, NJ 08043

Breast Cancer Support Group (Voorhees)

A support group for women with breast cancer and those who care about them. We offer information about breast cancer, treatments, and an opportunity to meet with other survivors. The group sessions will provide emotional support as well as strategies for coping.

DATES: September 12, October 10, November 14, December 12

TIME: 2 – 3:30 p.m.

LOCATION: The Ripa Center for Women's Health & Wellness, 6100 Main Street, Voorhees, NJ 08043

Women's Cancer Support Group (Camden)

A support group for women diagnosed with any cancer type. The group will provide a space in which female cancer survivors can provide emotional support for one another, share experiences, and express feelings and thoughts. A facilitator will be on hand to help guide the discussion.

DATES: September 9, October 14, November 11, December 9

TIME: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

LOCATION: MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper in Camden, Two Cooper Plaza, 400 Haddon Avenue Room 4100/4101, Camden, NJ 08103

Head & Neck Cancer Support Group (Camden)

This group is for anyone (patients, families, caregivers) affected by cancers of the mouth, tongue, larynx, and nasopharynx.

DATES: September 8, October 13, November 10, December 8

TIME: 2 – 3:30 p.m.

LOCATION: MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper in Camden, Two Cooper Plaza, 400 Haddon Avenue, Room C1111, Camden, NJ 08103

Sister Will You Help Me (Camden & Willingboro)

A breast cancer support group for women of color and faith. The group's mission is to empower through knowledge, encourage through sisterhood, enlighten through faith, and bond through love.

CAMDEN:

DATES: September 8, October 13, November 10, December 8

TIME: 6 – 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION: One Cooper Plaza, Roberts Pavilion 10th Floor, Room 1014, Camden, NJ 08103

WILLINGBORO:

DATES: September 1, October 6, November 3, December 1

TIME: 6 – 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Willingboro Public Library 220 Willingboro Parkway, Willingboro, NJ 08046

Brain Tumor Support Group (Voorhees)

A support group for people with brain tumors and those who care about them. We will offer information about brain tumors, treatment, and an opportunity to meet with other survivors.

DATES: September 8, October 5, November 2, December 7

TIME: 6 – 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Clock Tower Building 931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

Young Women with Breast Cancer (Voorhees)

A support group for all young breast cancer survivors, whether you are newly diagnosed, or a long-term survivor. For more information and to register, please contact: **Carla Doorman** at cdoorman_ysc@outlook.com or **856.630.6659**. www.youngsurvival.org/ysc-f2f

DATES: September 20, October 11 & 28, November 14, December 13

TIME: 7 – 8:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Clock Tower Building 931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

Latino Cancer Survivors (Camden)

Cancer information and support for you and your family. Free refreshments and parking. For more information and to register please call: **Virgenmina Lopez 856.968.7092**.

DATES: September 8, October 13, November 10, December 8

TIME: 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

LOCATION: One Cooper Plaza, Roberts Pavilion, 10th Floor, Room 1004, Camden, NJ 08103

LLS Multiple Myeloma Group (Camden)

For myeloma patients and their loved ones.

DATES: September 26, October 24, November 28, December 19

TIME: 10 – 11:30 a.m.

LOCATION: MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper in Camden, Two Cooper Plaza, 400 Haddon Avenue, Room C1111, Camden, NJ 08103

Look Good, Feel Better (Voorhees & Camden)

Program offered in partnership with the American Cancer Society to help women undergoing cancer treatment learn to cope with the appearance-related side effects of treatment and to regain a sense of self-confidence. Each participant receives a free cosmetics kit to use during the program and at home. To register, you are required to contact The American Cancer Society at **1.800.ACS.2345**.

VOORHEES:

DATES: October 10, December 12

TIME: 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Cooper Clock Tower 931 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043

CAMDEN:

DATES: September 19, November 21

TIME: 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

LOCATION: MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper in Camden, Two Cooper Plaza, 400 Haddon Avenue Room C1111, Camden, NJ 08103

To register for these support groups, please call 1.800.8.COOPER (1.800.826.6737) or register online at events.cooperhealth.org (unless otherwise noted).

Call for cancellation information due to inclement weather.



Precision Medicine, Personalized Medicine, Genomic Profiling: *What Does it Mean?*

by Robert A. Somer, MD, Head, Division of Hematology/Medical Oncology;
Director, Clinical Trials Program at MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper

In our fall 2015 issue of *Survivor Times*, I wrote about the advances we had made over the past year in oncologic care. These advances are in no small part related to a better understanding of the biology of cancer. I would like to further this discussion as it relates to “genomics” or “precision medicine,” which is a recent term used to describe how genetic information about a person’s disease is used to diagnose or treat the disease. I am going to attempt to make a very complicated discussion simple. I hope I do not lose the sophistication of our era by watering down the science behind this most exciting time in my field.

In 1882, the relationship of ovarian function to breast cancer was first discovered when Dr. Thomas Nunn reported disease improvement in a perimenopausal woman with breast cancer six months after her menstruation stopped. This is considered the first description in the medical literature of “targeted therapy” in that it was recognized that it was the estrogen pathway that drove certain breast cancers to grow. Until recently, it was thought that all cancers deriv-



Robert A. Somer, MD

ing from the same body part (breast, colon, lung, etc.) acted the same and diseases were separated based on the type of cell and the extent of the disease. Surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy has been the cornerstone of treatment for the majority of cancer patients despite the side effects, which kill

rapidly-dividing cancer cells but also affect healthy cells, resulting in partial benefit due to limitations of dosing and unwanted side effects which decrease quality of life.

Advances in science have caused us to recognize that tumors previously categorized as a single entity on the basis of their microscopic appearance are now known to be extremely different in their molecular characteristics, or genetic profiles. To use an analogy: I am sure you would admit that although two people may look very similar, we are genetically different and “behave” a certain way due in part to our genetic profile. With cancer, these genetic differences give cancer a survival and proliferative advantage and can dictate the choice of therapy for a number of tumor types, including breast cancers, lymphomas, lung cancers,

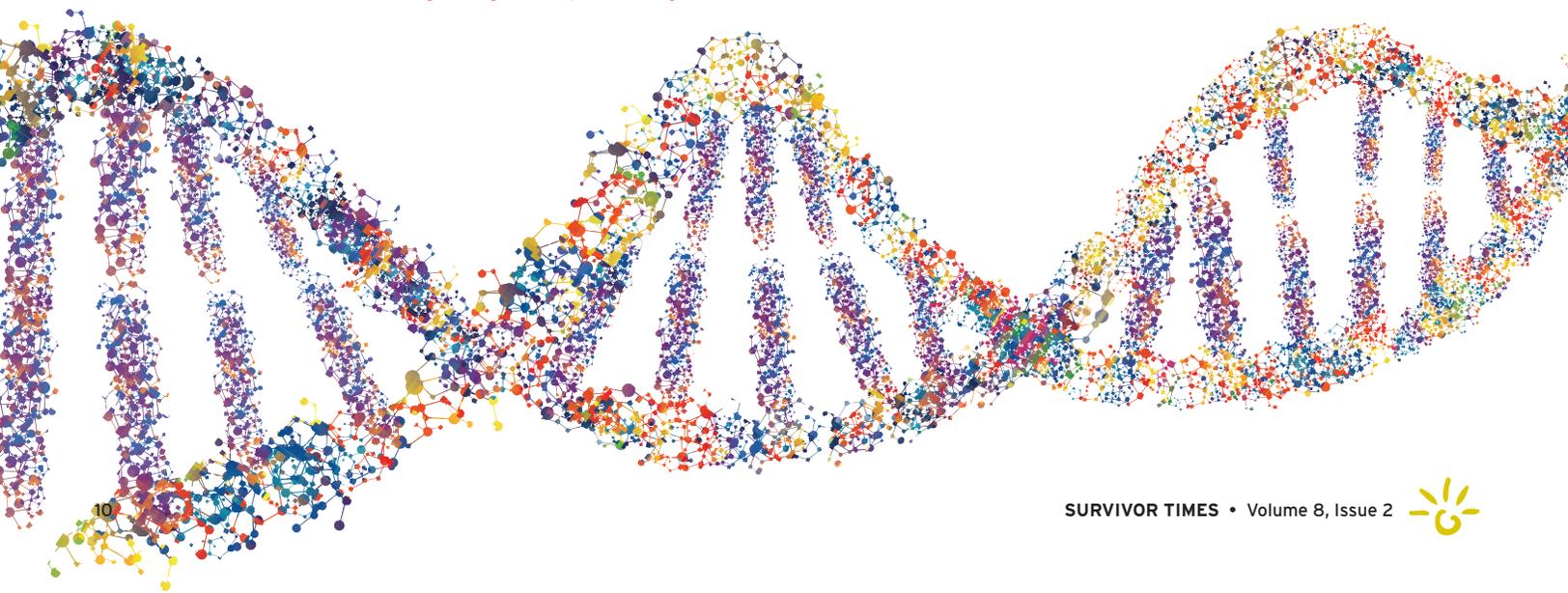
“A major challenge facing oncologists today is how to effectively match each tumor with the right therapy and give all cancer patients the best chance of survival. A new era of cancer therapy has developed drugs to selectively target such cancer-promoting pathways.”

melanomas, renal cancers, and others. The tumor’s “fingerprint” is also the cancer’s greatest weakness, as cancer becomes highly dependent on them to survive. Thus, therapies are now developed to target specific genetic abnormalities, and only the tumors that have the specific, targeted mutations will respond to each precise drug targeting that pathway.

A major challenge facing oncologists today is how to effectively match each tumor with the right therapy and give all cancer patients the best chance of survival. A new era of cancer therapy has developed drugs to selectively target such cancer-promoting pathways. Thus, we are moving away from the more conventional treatments such as chemotherapy. We have become less concerned where the tumor came from and more concerned about what genetic markers a cancer cell has so we can target them. Rather than relying on what body part the tu-

“Therapies are now developed to target specific genetic abnormalities, and only the tumors that have the specific, targeted mutations will respond to each precise drug targeting that pathway.”

(continued on page 24)



The Changing Face of Genetic Testing

by Janice Horte, MS, Brooke Levenseller Levin, MS, and Kristin DePrince Mattie, MS,
Licensed Genetic Counselors, MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper

Most people develop cancer as a result of multiple exposures that occur over the course of a lifetime. However, some families have a hereditary cancer syndrome, meaning that the cancers in the family are primarily caused by an inherited change (mutation) in a gene. People who have a hereditary cancer syndrome are at increased risk to develop certain cancers compared to the general population. Features of a family history that are suggestive of a hereditary cancer syndrome include relatively early ages at cancer diagnosis, multiple blood relatives diagnosed with cancer over several generations, uncommon cancer types, and multiple primary cancers in a single person.

Historically, genetic testing for hereditary cancer syndromes has been limited to a small number of genes in a single test. For example, most people who have had genetic testing for hereditary breast and/or ovarian cancer were tested for mutations in two main genes, BRCA1 and BRCA2. However, over the past few years, changes in technology have allowed for the option of testing multiple genes on a single blood or saliva sample. These “multi-gene panel tests” can look for mutations in varying numbers of genes associated with hereditary cancer syndromes.

- Multi-gene panel tests can look for mutations in genes that cause one specific type of hereditary cancer, such as breast cancer, or multiple different types of hereditary cancer, such as breast, ovarian, uterine, pancreatic, colon, and/or other cancers.
- Multi-gene panel tests can be used to look for mutations in genes known to cause a high risk for cancer. For many of these genes, when a mutation is found there are national guidelines to help doctors and patients make medical decisions about managing cancer risk.
- Multi-gene panel tests can also be used to look for mutations in genes that moderately increase cancer risk and/or for which the exact cancer risk is not yet known.



The Genetic Team (L-R): Brooke Levin, Janice Horte, Kristin Mattie

Therefore, medical decisions regarding managing cancer risk are often made on a case-by-case basis, considering the personal and/or family history in combination with what is currently known about the particular gene.

Depending on the situation, testing of only one or a few genes may be most appropriate, especially if there is a known genetic mutation in a close family member. However, multi-gene panel testing might be a consideration for individuals with negative or uncertain genetic test results in the past or a personal and/or family history of cancer that is suggestive of more than one hereditary cancer syndrome.

Potential Benefits of Gene Testing:

- A positive result may explain why cancer developed in the family.
- Results may guide medical decisions about cancer risk management.
- Results may provide information about cancer risk for family members.

Potential Risks or Limitations of Genetic Testing:

- A negative result cannot completely eliminate the possibility of hereditary cancer for a family.

- An unexpected positive result could diagnose a hereditary cancer syndrome that would not have been anticipated based on the personal or family history.
- National guidelines for risk management may not be available for all positive results, especially for some genes included in a multi-gene panel test.
- An uncertain or inconclusive result could cause worry or concern for a person or family.

If you are concerned about the possibility of a hereditary cancer syndrome in your family, you are encouraged to discuss your personal and/or family history with your health care provider. Your physician may refer you to the MD Anderson Cooper William G. Rohrer Cancer Genetics Program for genetic evaluation and discussion of your current genetic testing options. If genetic testing is warranted and you choose to proceed, a blood or possibly saliva sample will be taken during your visit to start the genetic testing process.

Please note that medical insurance carriers may cover most, if not all, of the cost of genetic testing if medical necessity criteria are met. ■

If you are interested in learning more about the William G. Rohrer Cancer Genetics Program or would like to schedule an appointment, please call 1.855.MDA.COOPER and ask to speak with Vicki Atkinson, Genetics Program Administrative Coordinator.



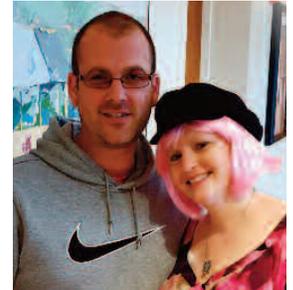
My Story is Simple

by Susan Nurge, Breast Cancer Survivor

I had Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC) in one breast, Ductal Carcinoma in Situ (DCIS) in the other breast, and I also have the BRCA 1 gene mutation. Those that know me know this news was not going to take me down. I am a survivor.

I won't bore you with my treatment details, but what did it take for me to become a survivor? What kept me sane during this difficult, stressful time? A little fun and all the clichés: Pink warrior. Fight the fight. The power of positive thinking. It took a village.

Fighting triple negative breast cancer did take a village, an amazing village of caregivers, doctors, nurses, social workers, therapists, receptionists/schedulers, valets, friends, and family. My Village provided the care, encouragement, prayers, and support I needed during this journey. My Village kept me strong and assisted me to overcome my hurdles. My Village helped me forget (if even temporarily) that I had been diagnosed with such an awful disease. My Village made my cancer path as pleasant as it possibly could be. We ALL worked together to put my cancer in its place. I can't even begin to express my gratitude to everyone for all they did to help me fight this battle. I appreciate and love every single Villager, especially my soul mate, Justin. He stood by my side throughout



everything. I am so very fortunate and grateful to have him, as well as my Village, in my life.

Besides surrounding myself with amazing people as much as possible, I needed to have a little fun to put a smile on my face as well as the faces of those around me. How does one make cancer fun? I made the most of losing my hair by stocking up on a plethora of brightly-colored wigs, scarves, and hats. I don't think I wore the same scarf twice during my 12 treatments of Taxol/Carboplatin. When it was time for my four rounds of the "Red Devil" Adriamycin Cytoxan, I asked the valets at the MD Anderson Cooper what 'color' wig I should wear for each treatment and each subsequent Neulasta shot. I wore something different each time I hung out with my friends. Was I going to be a bleach blonde? A Goth? A redhead? Teal? Purple? Pink? Lady Gaga White? I made it a game, and it worked. My Village smiled and laughed with joy seeing 'who' I was going to be each day.

Cancer can suck the happiness, joy, and beauty out of life — but only if you let it. I did not let cancer take over my mind, spirit, or humor. Having fun and being around family and friends was the best medicine for me personally. They helped me endure my aggressive treatment plan and my subsequent surgeries. I overcame cancer with the love, care, compassion, and prayers of my Village. I overcame cancer with a little fun! Just look at the smile on my face. ■

A Friend Indeed

by Julie Fischer, Practitioner, The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program



Cancer rocks the world of every person it lands in, as well as their families and friends. This is a pretty obvious truth. It causes great outpourings of support, dedication, compassion, and community as it wreaks havoc, previously unthinkable.



Julie Fischer

In the short couple of years I have had the privilege of working for The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program, I have witnessed and learned much about cancer care, heroism, and life. Maybe someday I'll try to write it all down. For now, this observation: There is nothing that can replace the wisdom and support exchanged between cancer survivors.

Support is essential in this journey, which is another obvious truth: The more the better. Of course, the doctors, nurses, technicians, and staff here stream endless expertise, knowledge, and caring. They are the best of the best, which certainly adds a giant layer of confidence and comfort. Strong, supportive families and friends add another. Survivor to survivor though, is a unique and irreplaceable level.

In the complementary medicine classes and workshops, we see people who are very alone in their processes, and while there they begin relate with other survivors in ways that others just cannot. A single interaction can change that feeling of isolation and add perspective.

One of my favorite jobs as a practitioner for The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program is giving hand and foot massage to patients while they receive chemo infusion. In any given morning, I'm witnessing the powerful effects of camaraderie between patients. I first noticed this when a few guys who regularly declined a hand massage (even though nurses, family, and friends were urging them to try it), changed their minds because of a call out from a nearby chair saying something like, "man, you gotta try this! It makes the tingling better!"

Cancer may weaken the body, but seems to grow the compassionate spirit. And when that spirit meets with another survivor, it has the ability to shine

through the darkest of times.

So often I hear survivors tell of how they were consoled, validated, relieved, motivated, and inspired by other cancer survivors. Even the people with the most positive outlooks find dark times as they wade through this journey, and in those times the voices of the ones who have been through it

are bright lights that peek through, and that light can be the lifeline that makes all the difference.

I love the meetings that happen in infusion and the waiting rooms. As I massage hands in the lobby, I witness the meeting of two guys, both Vietnam vets, together they discover they are survivors on many levels. A couple in the next row guides another through a hilarious narration of what to do (and never say) when hot flashes occur, and then discover they have a mutual friend from high school.

Recipes are exchanged, resources

are shared, injuries and side effects are compared and commiserated. Laughter and humor often flow. These encounters are balm for the nerves, not to mention fantastic for strengthening the immune system!

The words and subjects are varied; the subtext is the same: You can do this. I understand...I've been through it. Keep going. Never give up. You aren't alone...truly.

Who knows who is helped more in these interactions: the one sharing their experience or the one receiving it? One woman told me that each time she shares her story of recovery to others, it confirms within herself that her life has greater purpose.

Maybe the next time you are in a waiting area or come to a class through The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program, remember the deep well of support that is present, and maybe say hello to the ones sitting next to you. Your smile may be the very thing that helps them the most someday! ■





The Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program

Seeds of Hope

PROJECT

- The first harvest day at the Seeds of Hope Project in Voorhees!
- We harvested 30 bags of mixed varieties of lettuce. They were washed, bagged, and tagged (grown with love by fellow cancer survivors for the Seeds of Hope Project) by a group of very enthusiastic cancer survivors!
- Our organic bounty was given out on the tea cart in Voorhees...the patients loved it!
- Our proud cancer survivors have worked joyfully to make our garden grow.
- For more information or to make a donation, contact Bonnie Mehr at mehr-bonnie@cooperhealth.edu or 856.325.6646.



The Benefits of Eating Seasonal and Local Produce

by Joanna M. Myers-Casale, RD, CSO,
Outpatient Oncology Dietitian,
MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper

From September to November, the autumn harvest brings a variety of healthful and delicious produce, from squash and sweet potatoes to apples and pears. While almost all produce can be grown somewhere year-round, trucking produce across the country (or across the world) isn't easy. Buying local seasonal produce not only potentially reduces our carbon footprint and helps local economies, but also may result in more nutritious produce. Here are some of the benefits to eating seasonal and local produce:

Cost: When produce is in season locally, the relative abundance of the crop usually makes it less expensive.

Flavor: When food is not in season locally, it is either grown in a hothouse or shipped from other parts of the country or world – both of these factors affect the taste. Produce that has been allowed to fully ripen in the sun and is freshly picked has optimal flavor.

Nutrition: Plants get their nourishment from the sun and soil. Seasonal fresh produce has had more sun exposure, which means it may have higher levels of antioxidants.



MD Anderson Cooper oncology dietitian staff.
Samantha Farr, Joanna Myers-Casale, Linda Goldsmith

“Buying local seasonal produce not only potentially reduces our carbon footprint and helps local economies, but also may result in more nutritious produce.”

Environment: Food grown outside of its season or natural environment needs a lot more assistance (pesticides, wax, chemicals, and preservatives) to grow and look appealing to consumers. Seasonal produce can grow without too much added assistance so you are more likely to get a cleaner and more natural product. We know these toxic compounds can contaminate the water and soil. And since seasonal produce is more likely to

be produced locally, there is less of an environmental impact due to transportation.

Community: Farmers' markets create communities around food that encourage us to meet the individuals who grow our food, ask questions, and engage in our local environment.

I hope this inspires you to visit your local farmers' market, purchase a vegetable you have never tried before, and use it in a new recipe, and maybe even start growing some of your own food!

Find a local farmers' market:

- **Local Harvest:** www.localharvest.org
- **The Food Trust** (Philadelphia markets): <http://thefoodtrust.org/farmers-markets>
- **USDA:** <https://www.ams.usda.gov/local-food-directories/farmersmarkets>

Seasonal produce in the fall:

Apples, arugula, beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chard, collards, cranberries, cucumbers, eggplant, fennel, garlic, green beans, green onions/scallions, kale, leeks, lettuce, onions, oregano, parsley, parsnips, pears, peppers, potatoes, pumpkins, radicchio, radishes, rutabagas, squash, sweet potatoes, turnips ■



“In what aisle are the ‘won’t-immediately-kill-me’ foods?”



Baked Apple Slices

These baked apple slices require no added sugar. Fuji apples provide more than enough sweetness. Simply sprinkle the apple slices with cinnamon, and bake until tender. Great for dessert, or serve these baked apple slices with a cup of plain Greek yogurt for a healthy, filling snack.

Recipe type: Dessert, Snack, Gluten-Free, Primal/Paleo, Vegan

Yield: 1 serving

Ingredients

- 1 large Fuji apple, unpeeled
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Instructions

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.



2. Cut the apple in half, and then cut each half into four slices, discarding the core.
3. Sprinkle the apple slices with cinnamon on both sides. Arrange in a single layer on the prepared baking sheet.
4. Bake 10 minutes on each side, until golden brown and tender.

Nutrition per Serving

Calories: 131; **Fat:** 0g; **Carbohydrates:** 34g; **Sugar:** 21g; **Sodium:** 0g; **Fiber:** 7g; **Protein:** 0g
Prep and Cool time: 5 mins. **Cook time:** 20 mins. **Total time:** 25 mins.

Farro with Butternut Squash and Baby Kale

Ingredients

- 1 cup farro, uncooked
- 3 cups vegetable stock, divided
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 ½ cups thickly-sliced onions (cut vertically)
- 12 ounces peeled butternut squash, sliced into small pieces (about ½-inch thick)
- 1 large green apple (we used Granny Smith), peeled and diced into ½-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage (or ½ tablespoon dried)
- 5 ounces baby kale or Tuscan kale that has been cut up into bite-sized pieces
- ¼ cup dried cranberries
- ½ cup Romano cheese, plus additional for serving

Instructions

1. Place farro and two cups of the vegetable stock in a medium



- saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce to low, cover, and cook 45-60 minutes depending on how you like it cooked. (We like ours with a little bit of “chew” and took ours off the heat at 50 minutes.)
2. While farro is cooking in a large skillet over medium low heat, melt butter and add onions. Cook, turning occasionally, until cooked and just starting to brown.
 3. Add squash, apple, and sage and sautee over medium heat for 3 minutes. Add last cup of vegetable stock and cook only until squash is tender (Do not overcook. You

want the squash to hold its shape and not melt into the dish).

4. Add kale, cranberries, and Romano cheese, and toss just until combined and kale is starting to wilt (no more than 2 or 3 minutes). Remove from heat and serve immediately.
5. Serve with additional Romano cheese sprinkled over the top.

Nutrition per Serving

4 servings. **Prep time:** 15 mins. **Cook time:** 1 hour. **Total time:** 1 hour 15 mins.

Ridding Your Life of Toxins

Ridding your life of toxins can be an important part of a healthy lifestyle before and after cancer care.



Pallav K. Mehta, MD

There is no doubt that the toxins in our food and our environment contribute to cancer.

A quick list of ways to reduce the toxins in your environment:

- Filter your tap water and then store it in stainless steel, glass, or ceramic containers to avoid exposure to BPA or other plastic components.
- Avoid produce grown with chemical fertilizers or pesticides, and wash all produce thoroughly before eating.
- Buy meat, chicken, fish, and dairy that is free of hormones and antibiotics.
- Buy organic vegetables and fruit.
- Avoid processed, charred, or well-done meat.
- Do not use plastic containers to heat food in your microwave.
- Reduce exposure to cell phones.
- Go organic in caring for your home and garden.
- Check your home's radon level.
- Use nontoxic personal products.
- Use BPA-free or glass storage containers.
- Throw out nonstick cookware.
- Do not use conventional dry cleaners. Avoid wall-to-wall carpeting and stain-proof furniture.

MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper

INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY PROGRAM

Integrative Oncology outpatient consultations are now available with

Pallav K. Mehta, MD

Director of Integrative Oncology, MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper, Co-Author of *After Cancer Care: The Definitive Self-Care Guide to Getting and Staying Well for Patients After Cancer*

An Integrative Oncology consultation with Dr. Mehta can guide you through cancer diagnosis, treatment, and long-term survivorship with strength and confidence.

Dr. Mehta is a staunch believer that traditional cancer treatment, combined with a focus on strengthening the body through exercise and nutrition and empowering the mind to manage stress and anxiety, can result in optimized cancer treatment and a return to wellness.

The Integrative Oncology Program focuses on incorporating the three pillars of a healthy lifestyle — nutrition, physical activity, and emotional health — into the patient's care plan no matter where they are in their cancer journey.

An Integrative Oncology consultation can help you with:

- Symptom management.
- Nutrition.
- Understanding the benefits and risks of supplements.
- Exercise and physical activity.
- Physical rehabilitation.
- Emotional health and psychosocial needs.
- Incorporating complementary medicine options into your care plan.



THE THREE PILLARS OF A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Consultations are made by appointment by calling 1.855.632.2667. For more information, please talk to a member of your cancer care team.

MD Anderson  Cooper
Cancer Center

Making Cancer History®



Inspiration for Giving

A Message from Susan Bass Levin, President and CEO, The Cooper Foundation:

“Learn from yesterday, hope for today, live for tomorrow.”

– Albert Einstein



Susan Bass Levin

I have always been inspired by these words from Albert Einstein that hang over our Building Hope donor recognition wall in the lobby at MD Anderson Cancer Center

at Cooper in Camden.

As an ovarian cancer survivor, I know that when it comes to fighting cancer, we need to learn from those who have come before us and face each day with hope for the future.

When you make a donation of any size to MD Anderson Cooper, you are sharing in the belief that there are better days ahead and that each of us in our own special way has the ability to help in Making Cancer History.

Your gift supports learning by funding research to identify new approaches to diagnosing and treating cancer. We are excited that this fall Cooper will host a conference for nurses across the Delaware Valley to learn and share best practices for treating breast, lung, and skin cancer.

Your gift supports the hope that is present throughout MD Anderson Cooper, including in the artwork that is part of our Artful Healing program and in the Tranquility Garden, which provides a calm and relaxing environment for patients and families.

Your Gift Supports Life

Say “Thank You” or “I Love You.”

There are many ways to give to



MD Anderson Cooper and to recognize the care you or a loved one received.

Tribute and memorial gifts are especially wonderful opportunities to provide hope and encouragement to those battling cancer, celebrate our survivors, and remember those we have lost.

These gifts also provide a chance to express your appreciation for someone who has made a difference in your life or in the life of someone special to you.

- Say thank you to a member of your care team by making a contribution in their honor.
- Celebrate milestones and mark special occasions such as a wedding, anniversary, or birthday.
- Instead of birthday presents from family and friends, ask that gifts be made to MD Anderson Cooper.
- Offer your condolences with a memorial gift to the family of someone who has passed away. This thoughtful gesture is one way to express that you are thinking of them in their time of sorrow.

You can even decide what area of MD Anderson Cooper you would like

to support. Consider the Patient in Need Fund, which provides assistance to cancer patients undergoing treatment who are experiencing financial hardship. Small grants are available to pay for urgent financial needs — prescription drugs, rental assistance, and food.

Or consider The Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Fund, the Behavioral Health Fund or a fund to support research in the areas of lung cancer, GI cancer, and melanoma. You can give to Pink Roses Teal Magnolias to support breast and gynecological care or you can direct your gift to the MD Anderson Cooper Fund to be used where we need it most.

No matter how you direct your gift, as a special gesture we will send the honoree or family of the deceased a beautiful card, featuring a distinctive watercolor by an artist and former Cooper patient. This small token can be used again or saved as a keepsake.

Let Your Light Shine

There is another quote that will soon hang on the walls of MD Anderson Cooper. The words are from one of my favorite authors and poets Maya Angelou, whose own strength in the face of adversity helped give me strength during my battle with ovarian cancer in 2003:

“Nothing can dim the light that shines from within.”

Even on my worst days, I remind myself that nothing – not even cancer – can take away the light that is inside of me.

Please consider making a gift to MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper, and let your light shine. ■

Giving is Easy

Making a gift of any size to MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper is easy, and anyone can donate. Simply visit The Cooper Foundation website at foundation.cooperhealth.org and click the “Donate Now” button or send a check to: The Cooper Foundation, 200 Federal Street, Suite 146, Camden, NJ 08103. Make sure to note that your gift is for MD Anderson Cooper. More information on ways to give and a full list of funds you can support is also available online. For more information, please call **856.342-2222** or e-mail basslevin-susan@CooperHealth.edu.





MD Anderson  Cooper
Cancer Center
Making Cancer History®

BRUNCH CAN BE A LIFESAVER

Join the fight against breast & gynecological cancer

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Fabulous **Raffle Baskets** • **Live Auction**

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Associate Director
Janet Knowles Breast Cancer Center



Helen Nichter, APN
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Advanced Practice Nurse



Robin Wilson-Smith, DO
Gynecologic Oncology Program

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Questions? Call 856.342.2222 or email events-cooper-fdn@cooperhealth.edu



Honorary Club Member: *The View from My Window*

A Message from Cori McMahon, PsyD, Director of Behavioral Medicine

The View

With a unique perspective, as someone who has the privilege of honorary membership in the club...the club that no one wants to join, the club that requires pretty grueling hazing rituals, and, in an ironic way, the club that can even offer some of the most beautiful experiences, relationships, and moments in life – I realize that I have been given a great gift. On a daily basis, I am invited into some of the most unsettling, intimate moments of an individual's life at a time when they are feeling their most vulnerable. I realize the courage it takes for someone to allow me this opportunity to help, and I am truly thankful to be able to be a part of the process. Not only am I incredibly fortunate to be with that patient at that moment, I also appreciate being a Health Psychologist practicing Behavioral Medicine at this place and time in history. It is becoming increasingly common to establish integrated Behavioral Medicine programs within medical systems



Cori McMahon, PsyD

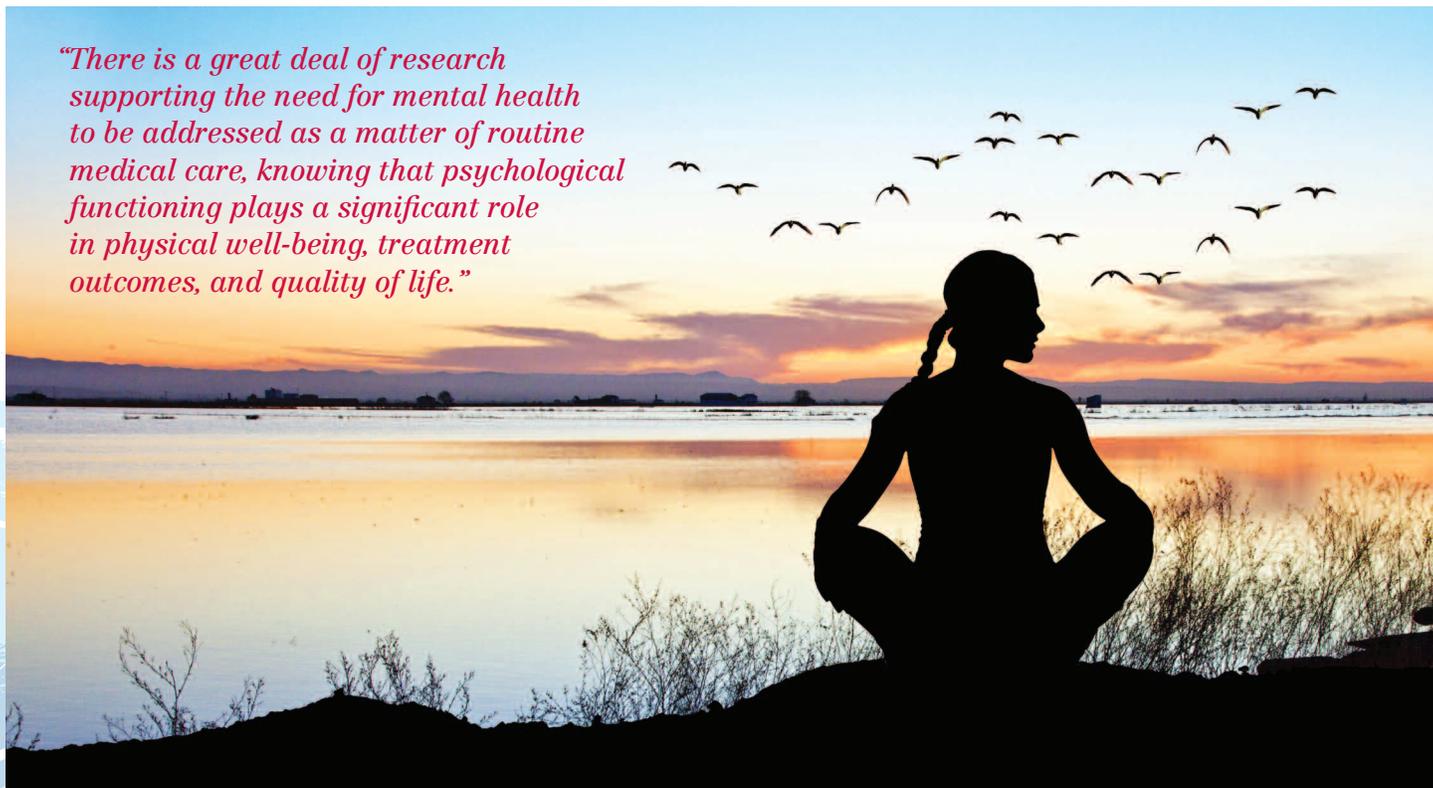
(primary care and cancer centers specifically) as more and more attention is paid to the psychological and behavioral aspects of overall physical health. There is a great deal of research supporting the need for mental health to be addressed as a matter of routine medical care, knowing that psychological functioning plays a significant role in physical well-being, treatment outcomes, and quality of life.

Psychology and Professional Sports

As a Health Psychologist, the daily task is quite varied, with patient care at the core of the mission. We are fortunate to be working alongside a multidisciplinary team of professionals with a common goal. There are a number of players on the team, and our specific position on the field can change multiple times daily, including the provision of direct clinical care, consulting with the medical team, collaborating with other supportive services (such as social work, dieticians, and complementary

medicine), conducting research studies that help us continue to learn and do our jobs better, and educating those around us (staff, patients, trainees, the community) about the role of health behaviors and psychological functioning in medical care. On a very well-established team, including the larger medical community, the position of the psychologist on the playing field continues to be honed as we work to establish ourselves as equally important players among our medical colleagues. For many physicians, having a psychologist at their disposal remains a novel idea, making it important for us to consistently share information regarding how to most effectively use our services. The focus of our practice differs slightly from that of a general clinical psychologist. To follow along with the sports theme, we can be considered to be more like a tennis coach than a gym teacher — both are athletically inclined and have expansive knowledge of sports, but the tennis coach is also very well-versed in a specific area. In the case of the Behavioral Medicine psychologist, we have specific training in

“There is a great deal of research supporting the need for mental health to be addressed as a matter of routine medical care, knowing that psychological functioning plays a significant role in physical well-being, treatment outcomes, and quality of life.”



understanding illness (chronic and acute) and the interplay between psychological functioning and medical illness. We are able to offer techniques geared specifically toward addressing the experiences of our patients. Interestingly, even within the small specialty of health psychology, clinicians specialize in different types of medical illness, such as diabetes, obesity/weight management, heart disease, and cancer.

Cheerleaders Have Their Role

In learning valuable lessons from patients over the years, I have gleaned something that I think may be helpful to offer here. Cheerleaders have their role in your cancer care...it is an important role, and you will know exactly when you need it most. They will be there to lift your spirits, to tell you you're doing great, to tell you how strong you are, and to try to convince you that everything will be okay. Importantly, however, cheerleaders are not the only ones you will find (or have found) that you need. In fact, there may be times when a cheerleader's positive words may seem invalidating to you as you are feeling awful and would really benefit from someone just being able to appreciate that fact. Therefore, also essential in your personal cancer posse are: drivers, chemo buddies, cooks, housekeepers, shoulders to cry on, partiers (to be there when you wish to step out of the role of cancer patient for a moment), and business managers. You might find that those around you all have skills (and of course deficits) that can be best used at different times during treatment. I urge you not to fault loved ones for their deficits, as we are not all wired perfectly to handle cancer and all that comes along with it, but we all have skills that can be best applied based on different needs.

Executive Assistants Wanted

Based on the consideration that you need a number of different members of your cancer team, you might also benefit greatly from appointing one or two "executive assistants," people who are close to you who can handle attending appointments and taking notes for you, helping you manage medical appointments, help conduct the orchestra of friends and family who are interested in being helpful and are uncertain of what to do, and even, as



“It is becoming increasingly common to establish integrated Behavioral Medicine programs within medical systems as more and more attention is paid to the psychological and behavioral aspects of overall physical health.”

can be necessary in the age of technology, help manage the flow of medical information (via social media or other communication) you desire to share. What I have learned from our patients is that trying to navigate the added layer of stress that comes from approaching these tasks can be overwhelming when one is trying to focus on taking care of oneself...on surviving through treatment. So, the position may not offer a high-paying salary and it is certainly not an easy one, yet keep in mind that those close to you are very interested in helping, that they often feel helpless to do anything directly for your cancer, and they may appreciate the opportunity to be able to lend a hand in a very concrete and meaningful way.

High-Wire Balancing Acts

For our patients, we are aware that trying to manage a cancer diagnosis and treatment in addition to maintaining a life outside of cancer (or alongside of cancer) may feel much like a high-wire balancing act – it is precarious, it is frightening, it feels completely foreign (unless you have circus experience), and it can feel as though you are all alone regardless of the hundreds of onlookers below. Patients may have any of a variety of life responsibilities outside of cancer treatment, including children, work,

spouses, other family, and friends or roles in the community. Upon cancer diagnosis, most, if not all, of these roles are impacted at least to some extent. Prepare for the next metaphor...I like to talk with patients who are newly diagnosed, in particular about their family and life's roles so that I can best understand their personal spider web. A family, an individual's life, might be understood as a beautiful spider web with many intricate pieces (people, roles, etc.) that all work in collaboration to form a well-balanced whole. Regardless of how healthy a person is, or feels, the spider web has balance and is specific to that individual. All of the pieces are necessary in order for the web to work as it needs to. Introducing a cancer diagnosis into the system is akin to the spider web experiencing a hurricane. The wind whips through and wreaks havoc on the balanced system, sometimes throwing things up in the air and leaving pieces detached, changed, or at the very least...shaken. We are interested in helping patients gain an understanding of the impact that their diagnosis and course of treatment is having on their personal web, helping them cope with the high winds, and offering strategies for working to maintain the web for the long-term — even if that entails having to make some amendments to pieces (people, relationships, health behaviors, internal dialogue, etc.) in the process. We hope to offer a sturdy net of support as our patients tread carefully along the high wire.

Foreign Languages

In addition to the people who play essential roles in your personal life, you have probably found that there are certain members of the medical team who are highly skilled at translating foreign languages...the foreign language of cancer and cancer treatment. Some say that receiving a cancer diagnosis is like being dropped off in a foreign country where you do not speak the language, have no idea where you are, and do not understand the customs. It is imperative that you find your tour guide(s) early and use them well, as they have a wealth of knowledge to offer. An author and sports ombudsmen named Robert Lipsyte took a satirical approach to writing about his experience with testicular cancer in his book titled,

(continued on page 24)



Precision Medicine, Personalized Medicine, Genomic Profiling: What Does it Mean?

(continued from page 10)

mor came from, it is these genetic aberrations that are frequently present across various cancers and allow us to treat cancers similarly, as in the case of HER2 positive cancers of the breast or upper GI tract!

Speaking of breast cancer and continuing to use the estrogen pathway as an example, cancer eventually becomes resistant to therapies that target the estrogen pathway. We call this “endocrine resistance.” This resistance can be overcome by incorporating agents that target proteins called “MTOR” or “cyclin D4/6” mutations with hormonal therapy in endocrine-responsive breast cancers. By adding a medication called palbociclib (a cyclin D4/6 targeting agent) to letrozole (an endocrine treatment), we can more than DOUBLE the time patients benefit from treatment!

In advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), activating mutations in something called the (EGFR) gene predicts response to medications erlotinib and gefitinib. Patients with these mutations have a greater benefit from these drugs compared to standard chemotherapy. This genomic signature is so important, screening for EGFR mutation at the time of diagnosis is a standard of care. Another example is colorectal cancer: Mutations in KRAS, BRAF and PIK3CA are associated with resistance to treatment with monoclonal antibodies cetuximab and panitumumab, which also target EGFR.

“Targeted cancer therapy is revolutionizing cancer care and driving efforts to incorporate tumor molecular analysis in clinical decision making.”

Targeted cancer therapy is revolutionizing cancer care and driving efforts to incorporate tumor molecular analysis in clinical decision making. Testing for the tumor’s “genetics” such as the ones described above holds great promise to make personalized cancer care a reality. “Basket” trials are an evolving form of clinical trials that investigate whether the presence of a particular pathway predicts a response to a targeted therapy independent of tumor type. Meaning, a patient with lung cancer, breast cancer, GI cancer or other cancer may all receive similar therapy targeting a specific pathway they all share rather than directing treatment towards cancer type. Trials investigating this concept that are currently accruing patients include the National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) MATCH (Molecular Analysis for Therapy Choice) trial, or the NCI-MPACT (Molecular Profiling-Based Assignment of Cancer Therapy) trial.

The implication that oncology care was “one size fits all” no longer applies. Oncologists have always sought to create treatment that was most effective and best tolerated. There was a time when the state-of-the-art in pathology was capable of recognizing only three types of lymphoma. We now recognize at least 50 kinds of lymphomas which have very different treatments! I suspect when I write a future article for the *Survivor Times* five years from now, the care of my patients will incorporate genomic profiling to the extent that it will become a standard of care. ■

Honorary Club Member: The View from my Window

(continued from page 23)

“In the Country of Illness.” For those of us who journey to the country of cancer daily for our jobs, we want you to know that we are very concerned with your feeling welcome, cared for, and getting what you need to make your way...also hoping that you’re here but for a brief visit.

One Moment at a Time

Amidst all that I have shared here, I’ll ask that we do our best to focus on one moment at a time. To be mindful, or to practice mindfulness, is to be aware — of ourselves, of our bodies, and the environment around us. With awareness of the present, we leave less room for focus on the past, which cannot be amended, or on the future, on which we may not have complete control. Upon trying to digest the entire picture at once, it can be entirely overwhelming...and when overwhelmed, we tend to become stuck. If we can try to break the larger picture down into manageable pieces, we can address them one at a time, feeling much more able to approach each one as it comes. There is a book about mindfulness practice titled, “How to Eat an Elephant.” Imagine standing in front of the enormity of a two-ton creature and trying to strategize an approach to eating the entire thing! Most would give up immediately, and understandably so. The mindfulness approach would suggest you consider one bite at a time, focusing only on the small bite in this moment in time.

I am thankful for the opportunity to share a bit of the view from my window, and even more so for being an honorary club member. I am humbled by the opportunity to continue serving our patients and our community at MD Anderson Cooper. ■



“This dark area on the x-ray looks suspiciously like chocolate.”



Early Detection Saves Lives

by **Loretta Aloï**, Director, Continuing Medical Education, Cooper University Health Care



I am Loretta Aloï, Director of Continuing Medical Education at Cooper University Health Care. I was asked to share my story with you. I hope it will encourage you to get screened for breast cancer yourself, or urge a woman in your life to do so.



Loretta Aloï

fully, I regularly did self-examinations of my breasts. It truly saved my life.

A Tough Year

From February through June 2015, I had seven cycles of chemotherapy. In July, I had a lumpectomy and lymph node dissection. Then I had three more rounds of chemotherapy and six weeks of radiation that ended on December 1, 2015.

After a horrific year, I celebrated with a fabulous trip to Las Vegas with my sons, Michael and Vincent, between Christmas and New Year's. The ability to enjoy this trip gave me such a renewed appreciation for life and reaffirmed my deep love for my family.

A Hopeful Future

This year is looking much brighter. A couple of weeks ago, on April 25, 2016, I experienced a day I will never forget. I completed my Herceptin infusions and rang the fourth and final bell

at MD Anderson Cooper, with my friends and family at my side. The same day, I was honored by Adrienne Kirby, PhD, FACHE, President and CEO of Cooper University Health Care, at Cooper's Top Performer's Lunch with my two sons and parents in attendance. What a day! I was truly touched by all of the love and support by my own family and my Cooper family.

The Cooper Experience

I have been an employee for nearly 20 years. I am proud and blessed to work at such a caring and special place as Cooper University Health Care.

I can't thank my great team of doctors enough. Doctors Generosa Grana, Kristin Brill, and Ashish Patel have been absolutely wonderful. I will be forever grateful for the tremendous care, compassion, and support I received from them and all the staff at MD Anderson Cooper. The oncology nurses, radiation therapists, and support staff got me through many tough days. I could never have gone through this journey without them.

My Simple Message

Please make sure that you or someone you love schedules their annual mammogram and regularly performs self-examinations. Be certain to make this a regular part of your health care routine. Early detection is paramount. Know your family history and get regular screenings. Don't put it off. You are loved and needed by those around you. Make it a point to put yourself first, and do everything you can so you can be there for them. ■

My Life-Changing Discovery

On December 21, 2014, while showering, I felt a lump in my right breast. Though my May 2014 mammogram revealed nothing, I immediately scheduled a gynecological appointment for December 26, 2014.

Although my gynecologist could not feel a lump, he sent me for imaging. This was done on January 5, 2015. The ultrasound revealed two small masses—the one I had found earlier in my right breast, as well as another under my arm in a lymph node. On January 28, 2015, after a biopsy, I received a diagnosis of stage 2, invasive ductal carcinoma. Thank-



Volunteer Program

MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper volunteers are an important component in our quest to make cancer history. Becoming a volunteer is an opportunity to help us perform our most important work – the elimination of cancer.

A volunteer's role is to provide comfort, care, and support to patients and their caregivers, to share the considerable resources that MD Anderson Cooper has to offer, and to assist faculty and staff in meeting the needs of patients and caregivers.

MD Anderson Cooper volunteers may provide support in the following areas:

- Radiation Oncology
- Multidisciplinary Clinic
- Breast Clinic
- Infusion
- Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program
- Music therapy
- Pet therapy
- Pastoral care
- Administrative/clerical
- Special events

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or would like more information, contact mdacc-volunteers@CooperHealth.edu or call 856.735.6315.

Volunteers have access to complimentary valet parking and receive meal vouchers to the Cancer Center's cafés.

Prospective volunteers will be required to complete a personal interview and attend volunteer orientation and training specific to their assignment. Colleagues, patients, and visitors should feel confident that our volunteers are well prepared and educated regarding patient safety, privacy rights and confidentiality, patient satisfaction, and environmental policies and procedures.

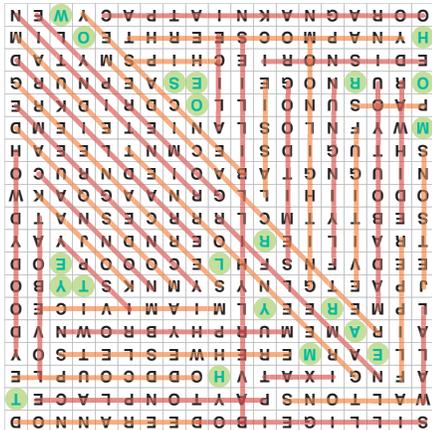


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Theme: Old TV Shows

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The hidden TV show:
THE MARY TYLER MOORE SHOW



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Survivor Times newsletter is created and published through the Dr. Diane Barton Complementary Medicine Program. Print versions of the newsletter are available at MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper outpatient offices. Digital versions of current and past issues can be found on the Cooper University Health Care website at CooperHealth.org.

For more information about *Survivor Times*, contact Bonnie Mehr at mehr-bonnie@cooperhealth.edu or 856.325.6646.

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"Typically, I don't accept Magic Beans as payment."