

June 2006

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The Connection



*Created by the Integrative Services Team of Peninsula Cancer Institute—
Combining the best treatments with support and education to promote healing and wellness for each patient*

Peninsula Cancer
Institute

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NEWPORT NEWS
Riverside Cancer Care Center

Happy One Year Anniversary!!!
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Middle Peninsula Cancer Center

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23061
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The Survivorship Issue

The one year anniversary of the newsletter!!!

"So if there is a purpose to the suffering that is cancer, I think it must be this; it's meant to improve us."

~Lance Armstrong

"You can't control what happens in life, but you can control your attitude."

~Jane Hill, cancer survivor

"My cancer scare changed my life. I'm grateful for every new, healthy day I have. It has helped me prioritize my life."

~Olivia Newton-John

"More than 10 million Americans are living with cancer, and they demonstrate the ever-increasing possibility of living beyond cancer."

~Sheryl Crow

In this issue....

- Relay For Life news
- Patients' touching stories
- Survivorship humor
- Healthy diet tips from our dietitian
- "Knead to Know" on living in the moment
- Our Clinical Trial folks help with ideas on "survivorship"
- Local organic food resources
- Special moments in Mary's Corner
- Complete PCI staff listing (as of June 2006)

Relay For Life 2006



The Survivors Walk

The American Cancer Society's Relay For Life is a celebration of life in honor of those whose lives have been touched by cancer. Relay For Life involves teams of 8-15 people who take turns walking around a track for 16 hours. A party-like atmosphere prevails as team members enjoy music, food, a silent auction, games and other activities while building camaraderie with fellow teammates and participants. Money is raised through team commitment, fees, and contributions. The money raised helps support American Cancer Society programs in research, education, advocacy, and service—locally, statewide, and nationally. This year, the Williamsburg Relay For Life has raised \$318,000 with a significant amount yet to be turned in. There were 80 teams present and 1200 (very rough figure) people present, not including survivors. Around 300 survivors were in attendance at the survivors' reception and walk (not including their guests).

Way to go Williamsburg!!!!

Peninsula Cancer's Contribution To Relay For Life

Over the year, PCI's team ("E's Angels") has worked very hard to raise money for Relay For Life. Between the bake sales, the raffles, the hand-made bracelets, and "banjer pick-n" the team raised \$5945. The team's 24 members consisted of PCI employees as well as some spouses who put in many hours outside of work. The team was lead by our very dedicated, fearless leaders, Susan Miller and Mary Zuch.

Great job, team!!!



Co-captains, Mary Zuch (left) and Susan Miller, pose proudly with a well-earned "Silver"

Go, Girls!!!



Great job, Dr. Ellis— we love you and are very proud of you!!!

Our very own Dr. Ellis spoke at the Survivor's Dinner...

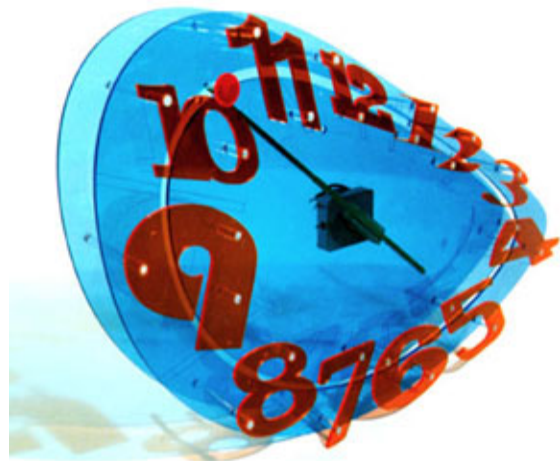
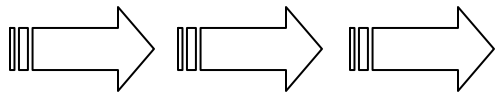
With a whole lot of heart and sincerity, plus just the right amount of humor, Dr. Ellis shared his personal battle with melanoma and its rigorous treatment and how that all led him towards his life's mission of working with cancer patients. His experience as a cancer patient himself coupled with his many years as an oncologist has allowed Dr. Ellis to come up with a formula for survivor mentality or as he put it, "Here is how you can learn to be a survivor".....

- Allow good things to happen to you
 - an example of this would be to really feel the love of your family or the support of your friends
- Turn the cancer experience into a "positive"
 - quite a few people do this by volunteering in a related group and others tell their story
- Find yourself in the experience
 - the jolt of encountering cancer helps many get off the "merry-go-round" allowing them the opportunity of a very close view of themselves. This can even change the person's view of the world as well as themselves.

The talk was short, but powerful, and very well received.



FAST FORWARD IN SLOW MOTION



Do you remember the day you were told you had cancer? Time seemed to stand still. I was told November 18th at 4:00 PM, right before the week of Thanksgiving. So everyone was gone or working shorter shifts and I didn't know where to go next.

Finally the Wednesday before Thanksgiving I spoke to my primary care doctor, who did a referral to a surgeon. A week later off to see him and while I was with him things kept zipping in and around my head - time was flying and I couldn't catch up! He wanted to do surgery in 4 days....."Oh My God, that soon?" How will I be ready? Then wait, as I was leaving he wants more tests. It took almost a month to get those tests done and the surgery rescheduled. During this time I felt like my life was moving "*Fast Forward in Slow Motion.*" All this info and tests thrown at you at once and you are expected to make quick decisions, but when you're not with your medical team time stands still and you're second-guessing every decision. You replay each decision in slow motion wondering if this is the right one, until it's over - the cancer has been dealt with and you can begin to see the future again.

"*Fast Forward In Slow Motion*" is how I answer when someone asks how things are going. They don't want to hear bad, and if you say good they look at you like you're lying. This way they simply look at me like they don't have a clue. And let's face it, most of the people in our lives don't. So next time someone asks, "How are you doing?" Just smile and say, "*I'm moving Fast Forward In Slow Motion, thanks for asking.*"

Teresa Esper



Survivorship Humor



Perception...

There once was a Man named Luke who woke up one morning, looked in the mirror, and noticed He had only three hairs on his head.

"Well," He said, "I think I'll braid my hair today." So He did and He had a wonderful day.

The next day He woke up, looked in the mirror and saw that He had only two hairs on his head.

"H-M-M, " He said, "I think I'll part my hair down the middle today." So He did and He had a grand day.

The next day He woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that He had only one hair on his head.

"Well," He said, "Today I'm going to wear my hair in a pony tail." So He did and He had a fun, fun day.

The next day He woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that there wasn't a single hair on his head.

YEAH !" He exclaimed, "I don't have to comb my hair today!"

Perception is everything.

Top 11 Ways to Know You are a Cancer Survivor

11. Your alarm clock goes off at 6:00 am and you're glad to hear it.
10. April 15th is still a great day.
9. Your mother-in-law invites you to lunch and you just say "NO."
8. You're back in the family rotation to take out the garbage.
7. When you no longer have an urge to choke the person who says, "all you need to beat cancer is the right attitude"
6. When your dental floss runs out and you buy 1000 yards.
5. When you use your toothbrush to brush your teeth and not to comb your hair.
4. You have a chance to buy additional life insurance but you buy a convertible instead.
3. Your doctor tells you to lose weight and do something about your cholesterol and you actually listen.
2. When your biggest annual celebration is again your birthday, not the day you were diagnosed.
1. When you use your Visa card more than your insurance card.



I Love Your Haircut!

Hi. My name is Mary Ellen. I am 48 years old. I am a patient of Dr. Ellis'. I received chemo from November 16, 2005 through February 22, 2006. I had recurrent cancer of the breast.

My first diagnosis happened in November 2000. I had intraductal in situ carcinoma. The treatment at that time for me was mastectomy of my left breast and reconstruction. I was given a clean bill of health and was sent on my way to live a long life. Fast forward, five years later, I received the good news of a clear mammogram of my right breast. Yippee! Cancer free for 5 years, I can give blood again. (Cancer patients cannot give blood until they are 5 years cancer free.)

One day, I felt a teeny tiny bump on my left breast near my sternum. I thought nothing of it at first. Then I kept feeling it, hoping it would go away, but it didn't. It couldn't be cancer, I had a mastectomy. Wrong. I had my left implant replaced thinking it was a leak. But the plastic surgeon did a biopsy of the lump, sent it away and I received the call from him saying, "Mary, I have bad news". As you all know, these are the worst words you can hear. I was cooking dinner for my 2 boys, ages 7 and 12, so I couldn't fall apart. I fell apart at the surgeon's office the next day after hearing invasive grade 3 cancer. WHAT!!!! This isn't fair, I had my cancer already, this isn't supposed to happen!

Well it did.

Things happen for a reason. At the time of my first cancer, I was only months into dealing with my husband leaving me for another woman. Needless to say, I had some self-esteem issues going on at that time. I was 42 years old, with 2 children, ages 2 and 7. Who is going to want me after having part of my womanhood removed? Not having to deal with chemo that time was a blessing. The thought of losing my hair at that time was too much to take in. I felt my hair was my best feature.

When diagnosed this time, I was ready for chemo. If the doctors didn't recommend it I was going to insist. Dr. Ellis(isn't he the best) wasn't about to take any chances with me. He gave me the "Big Guns". I was given dose dense chemo, meaning every two weeks for 8 sessions. I started ASAP. I was not the best patient. I suffer terribly from anxiety and I was a mess. The week of chemo was dreadful, followed by 'I think I'll live', to the next week of being knocked down again. What a ride it was. Thinking of PCI, or, even seeing a red drink was enough to send me to the bathroom retching. Susan, my nurse, realized I needed more help with a fabulous drug called Ativan. I received it during my chemo treatments, so I would sleep through them, to help my anxiety. (I secretly believe she gave it to me to keep me quiet, I tend to get a case of the jabber jaws when I am nervous.)

Anyway, on to the hair... Every morning I would get up and brush my hair. I had long hair at the time. I would brush it and it would still be firmly attached, until one day after my second treatment. When I brushed, a clump came out. I thought to myself, today is the day. I had arranged with my partner Richard, that when my hair started coming out, he would shave it. He came over, I braided it, he cut the braid off, and proceeded to shave it off with an electric shaver. I received my first buzz cut. I became GI Mary. After washing my buzz cut several times and drying my head with a towel, more hair kept coming out until I had bald spots. Richard then shaved all the hair off with a razor and shaving cream. What a strange sensation! My head was cold and it was shiny. I had a hard time keeping myself from rubbing it.

Not having hair is very liberating; there is never a bad hair day. Jump in the shower and go, no more fussing about “does it look good?”. The worst part is losing the eyebrows and eyelashes. I referred to myself as looking like a plucked chicken. I did have some fun with my bald head though, doing impressions such as Mr. Clean, Yul Brenner, and Kojak. Who loves ya baby!

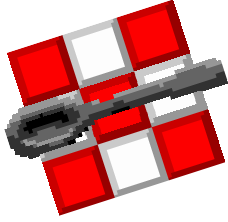
At first I didn't want to be seen hairless, but as time went on I became very comfortable and proud of my baldness. It happened gradually. I would wear something all the time, hat or scarf. I bought a wig, wearing it only 2 times. Then at home I stopped wearing anything unless my head was cold. People would visit or the door bell would ring and I'd go without. Then I started going to the grocery store, or out to eat scarf-less. I would wear a scarf when I went out with my children. They didn't like people looking at me. One day, Richard told me and my children, “Your bald head is your badge of courage and you are still beautiful”. Well, that was enough for me and the kids. I started going everywhere ‘topless’ after that. And as another of my chemo buddies has written, you become very approachable. It brings out the compassion in people; people that if you had hair would have never spoken to you.

There is a special beauty that women get when they go through chemo. Your skin becomes very smooth. You are translucent. Your eyes become the focus of your face without the hair detracting from them. Eyes show the true beauty of a woman because they show all the emotions. Eyes are truly the mirrors of the soul. It took me 6 years after my divorce and 2 bouts of cancer to realize, as the song says, you are beautiful just the way you are.



Three months have passed since my last session. I have eyebrows, eyelashes, and hair that almost needs a trim over the ears. Instead of hearing, “Are you going through treatment?”, I hear “ I love your haircut!, I wish I had the nerve to cut it that short”. I just smile and say “Thank You!”

Mary Ellen Chisolm



Healthy Diet Checklist

(www.cancernutritioninfo.com)



Before you decide to include any nutrition supplement or any special 'superfood', consider these points:

1. Are you eating 8 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables every day?
2. Are you eating at least 3 servings of whole grains every day?
3. Are you eating beans like lentils, navy beans, kidney beans, and chick peas? You should eat these at least 3-5 times weekly.
4. Are you eating a large variety of minimally processed plant foods? The major plant foods you should be eating are vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and legumes (beans). To eat a large variety of these foods, you need to try new foods. Focus on increasing more of these foods:

Dark green leafy vegetables: Kale, chard, mustard greens, collard greens, dandelion greens, etc.

Cruciferous vegetables: broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, radishes, cabbage, turnips, watercress, bok choy, kale, chard, beet greens, arugula, daikon, kohlrabi

Dark & Purple-Red Berries: blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, dark red cherries, raspberries; You can eat frozen fruit too!

Citrus fruit: oranges, lemons, limes, tangerines, grapefruit

Whole grains: barley, oats, wheat, quinoa, rye, amaranth, and many others

Legumes: legumes are beans and include things like navy beans, great northern beans, lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans, black beans, etc.

Please see our section Recipes, Tips, and Hints for ideas on how to eat more of these foods.

5. Are you focusing on eating healthy fats such as nuts, seeds, avocados, olives/olive oil, canola oil, flax seeds, and fish?





6. Are you eating too many processed foods that contain unhealthy fats and sugar?

7. Do you cook with a wide variety of fresh spices and herbs? Spices and herbs (oregano, thyme, sage, garlic, rosemary, etc.) have many disease fighting properties. If you're a 'salt & pepper' kind of person, learn to love spices! (Also turmeric, cumin, ginger to name a few more.)

8. Are you getting in healthy probiotic and prebiotic foods such as yogurt every day? These are the foods that aid digestion, protect against infections and allergies, and may even improve immune function! Please see our article, “ What Are Prebiotics and Probiotics?”, to learn more about these nutrition powerhouse foods.

9. Are you drinking enough water? The best way to tell how much water you need is the color of your urine. If your urine is a pale straw color, you are getting enough water. If your urine is any darker than this, you need more water every day!

10. Are you getting enough exercise every week? Exercise has two functions. Regular exercise helps prevent cancer, and even after diagnosis, individuals who exercise do better! They appear to have less fatigue and to feel better during cancer treatment. Second, exercise will help you stay at a healthy weight. Being over-weight increases the risk of several types of cancer so exercising to stay fit and trim will help keep you healthy.

Happy, healthy eating for a lifetime! Look for a weekly healthy recipe in the waiting room to help you with some new food ideas.

Lynne



Cancer Survival and Lifestyle Changes. . . .

Living in the Moment

I often hear our patients speak of their experience with cancer as an opportunity or a “gift”. They are usually referring to the way they have begun to rethink what is really important to them and to make lifestyle changes. The truth that life is lived moment to moment becomes crystal clear.

As they continue on the path of healing, there are valuable “tools” that will support their journey and their new found awareness. Such things as mindfulness meditation, yoga, breathwork, and tai chi are all designed to help us focus on conscious living.

Mindfulness meditation encourages focusing on the present moment and accepting what is, the way it is, right now. This can be a challenging concept due to the fact that we tend to

past and hoping for the future. Both of these exercises require a lot of energy, most of it wasted. Acceptance of what is occurring in our life situation brings with it an inner peace which enables us to connect with our own sources of healing energy. Surviving catastrophic illness requires us to be an active participant in our own healing plan and being able to visualize spiritual health and physical healing is very powerful.

There are many books written on the different styles of meditation including mindfulness, my favorite is *Full Catastrophe Living* by Jon Kabat-Zinn, the author of *Wherever You Go There You Are*. We are planning to offer a weekly meditation group for patients in each PCI clinic soon.

~Kathy

“Knead To Know...”



Redefining Cancer Survivors

The National Cancer Institute defines cancer survivorship as living with, through, and beyond a cancer diagnosis. "Living with" cancer refers to the experience of receiving a cancer diagnosis and any treatment that may follow. "Living through" cancer refers to the stage following treatment, and "living beyond" cancer refers to post-treatment and long-term survivorship. Many people also support expanding the definition of cancer survivor to include family members, friends, and caregivers, whose lives are also affected by the diagnosis of a loved one.

Today, an estimated 10 million Americans are living with a history of cancer. They face numerous challenges at diagnosis, throughout treatment and beyond. A diagnosis of cancer will often affect a person's physical, emotional, spiritual and economic well being. It disrupts every day life and the lives of their family and caregivers. Physical symptoms may include pain, fatigue, nausea, hair loss, and others, depending on the type of treatment. Emotional stressors often include anger, depression, fear and anxiety. Spiritually, some survivors struggle and say that their faith has been tested. Financially, a cancer diagnosis brings even more burdens. The cost of health care and the potential loss of income due to work limitations are both very real concerns impacting the cancer survivor.

At times, all of these social and economic stressors seem like too much to bear. However, the effects of cancer on an individual are not always negative. Fortunately, cancer survivors today are living longer and more active lives than ever before. Cancer often provides opportunities for people to find renewed meaning in their lives, to build stronger connections with loved ones, and to foster a commitment to "give back" to others who have similar experiences. In many cases, a survivor's spirituality helps them to understand the meaning of their cancer experience and embrace life with a renewed vigor and sense of purpose.

Improvements in screening practices, early detection, cancer treatment and improved cancer care in general are allowing more and more people to live "beyond" cancer each year. Sunday, June 4th, is National Cancer Survivor Day. If you are a cancer survivor, plan to celebrate life on that day and every day!

Jenny Faulkner of the PCI Clinical Trials Group

Some content obtained from *A National Action Plan for Cancer Survivorship* presented by the Centers for Disease Control

ORGANIC FOOD RESOURCES IN OUR AREA

There are several grocery stores in the area that are now stocking organic produce along with canned and frozen goods. Almost all of them are carrying organic milk. We did a computer search and came up with a few other sources you might like to investigate. If you try any of these or have some other suggestions, please let us know so that we can share with other interested patients and families.

—**Ellwood Thompson's Natural Market** (www.ellwoodthompson.com). They are in Richmond at 4 N. Thompson street and the phone # is 804-359-7525

—**Good Foods Grocery** (www.goodfoodsgrocery.com). They have two sites in Richmond. One is in the Stony Point Shopping Center @ 3062 Stony Point Road 804-320-6767 and the other is at the Gayton Crossing Shopping Center @ 1312 Gaskins Road 804-740-3518.

—**Sacred Grounds** (www.energizeyourspirit.com) in Williamsburg has organic tea and coffee, they are @ 6927 Richmond Road 757-220-8494

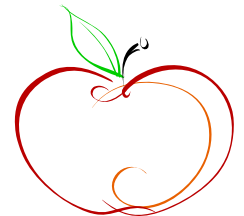
—**Medik's Market & Café** in Newport News (www.mediksmarket.com) has all natural products including food and clothing. They are opening their new location in June @ 702 Mariner's Row, Suite 104 757-262-0711.

—**Organic Food Depot** (www.organicfooddepot.com). 3 locations in Va Beach:

-Holland Rd. Store 4301 Commuter Dr., #105 757-467-8999

-Shore Drive Store 4640 Shore Dr., #103 757-460-2610

-Pungo Farm 1488 Sandbridge Rd (no phone number listed)



—**The Heritage Store** (www.heritagestore.com). They are also in Virginia Beach 314 Laskin Rd 757-428-0100

—**Quail Cove Natural and Organic Foods**—Local Harvest (www.quailcovefarms.com/4.html). This one is on the Eastern Shore @ 12435 Machipongo Lane in Machipongo. By phone you can call Bill Jardine @ 757-678-7783

—**Whaleyville Farms** (www.whaleyvillefarms.com). They are in Suffolk @ 6132 Whaleyville Blvd. 757-986-2355.

—**Full Quiver Farm** (www.fullquiverfarm.com). They are in Suffolk @ 2801 Manning Road. 757-539-5324

—A website you could check out is www.localharvest.org

—**Williamsburg Farmers Market** (www.williamsburgfarmersmarket.com)

@ Historic Williamsburg

Williamsburg, VA 23187

OPEN-AIR/SEASONAL Saturday

—**Trader Joe's** (www.traderjoes.com) 12551 Jefferson Ave, Suite 179 Newport News, VA 757-890-0235

Although we are unable to recommend many of these from our personal experience, we hope you might find the list useful. It is by no means complete, just some places we have read about or been told about that are in our general area.

PCI Integrative Medicine Staff

Food For Thought from Mary's Corner

Our greatest glory consists not of never falling, but in rising every time we fall.
—Oliver Goldsmith

He said come to the edge. I said I can't—I'm afraid. He said come to the edge. I said I can't- I'll fall off. He said finally, COME TO THE EDGE. And I went to the edge and He pushed me. And, I flew! —Guillaume Apollinaire

Just because you're miserable doesn't mean you can't enjoy life.
—Anonymous

The best way out is through. —Robert Frost

When faced with a mountain, I will not quit! I will keep on striving until I climb over, find a pass through a tunnel underneath, or simply turn the mountain into a gold mine... —Found in a book by Robert Schuller

Work like you don't need the money, love like you've never been hurt, and dance like no one is watching. —Satchel Paige

The highest reward for a person's toil is not what they get for it, but what they become by it. —John Ruskin

Don't ever save anything for a special occasion. Being alive IS the special occasion. —
Unknown

The PCI Integrative Services Team has enjoyed preparing this newsletter for you. If you have any comments please feel free to let any one of us know your thoughts. We would love any suggestions or ideas you may have to make this newsletter better.

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Kathy Shore CMT - Massage Therapy

Check us out next issue to find out about our 2 new team members!

Our "Garden" is growing!!!

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