

# VOICES OF THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Great Lakes Division, Inc.



Sharing Stories of Hope, Progress, and Answers Across Indiana and Michigan

v.18, April 2008

## LOCAL AREA SPOTLIGHT

The East Michigan Area Service Center is working with congregations to promote healthy living through Body & Soul. Read more in this month's local area spotlight.

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## OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Relay For Life, the American Cancer Society's signature event, is a time to celebrate those who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost to the disease, and get inspired to fight back – all right in your community.

During the event, participants come together at fairgrounds, parks, and schools to walk or run laps to raise money for research and programs of your American Cancer Society.

This year, 330 Relays will take place in Michigan and Indiana, and it's not too late to get involved! To find out how you can celebrate, remember, and fight back at a Relay near you, visit [www.RelayForLife.org](http://www.RelayForLife.org).

## RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

The American Cancer Society's online bookstore offers several resources to help ease the cancer journey for patients and caregivers. Read more in this month's resource highlight.

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## • community focus and volunteerism

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### Western Michigan University hockey team hosts inaugural Hockey Cares event

When Jim Culhane of Kalamazoo, Michigan, went to see a hockey game in Toronto last spring, he had no idea that what he would see would have such an impact. Sitting there with his brother, Jim watched as the burly hockey players filled Ricoh Coliseum with pink lace and tape on their sticks. “That visual stuck with me throughout summer and the more I thought about [it], I wanted to get involved,” said Jim.

And that’s exactly what he did. Jim is the head coach for the Bronco hockey team of Western Michigan University (WMU), and last October, WMU and ACS Colleges Against Cancer founded Hockey Cares. “[Hockey Cares] is an event that we have coordinated with the hockey program to raise money for our local chapter of the American Cancer Society,” said Jim. “We want to show that here in southwest Michigan, with all our corporate sponsors, our fans, and the hockey community, we are real caring and vibrant, and we want to do something for the community.”



The four-day Hockey Cares event started Thursday, February 7, at Lawson Ice Arena in Kalamazoo. The entire community was invited to skate with the Bronco players, purchase luminaria, and learn about the American Cancer Society. On February 8, the Bronco Hockey team took on the Lake Superior State University Lakers and the championship game took place February 9. Throughout the event, luminaria were sold in the lobby, along with pink lapel ribbons and special custom-made hockey pucks.

Saturday, February 9, was the Hockey Cares special game night. The arena was lit up with luminaria to remember loved ones lost to cancer and to honor those battling cancer and survivors of cancer. All the Bronco players wore pink lace and tape on their black uniforms, and pink stickers on their helmets. They also had custom-made pink and purple hockey sticks with cancer ribbons on them. The custom-made hockey sticks were individually signed by the players and are currently being auctioned off online.

The Bronco synchronized skating team performed before the game and then took to the stands to collect donations while handing out 3,500 pink Hockey Cares t-shirts to fans. Even “Puck Boy,” the team mascot, was sporting a giant cancer ribbon. All the while, a Hockey Cares youth



tournament was also taking place, ending with the championship game on Sunday. “Every kid playing in the youth tournament [got] the pink laces and pink tape,” said Jim. “Part of the entry fee for the tournament will also come back to the Hockey Cares program.”

Even though there was no real expectation in the fundraising aspect as this was the first year, the event was a success, raising almost \$8,000 for the American Cancer Society. Jim said Hockey Cares will be an annual event.

“Everybody at some point in their life is impacted in some way by the disease. For me personally, this [is] a way to do something to battle the disease.”

To get involved with Colleges Against Cancer, call your American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.

Pictured: Luminaria surrounding the Lawson Ice Arena (top right); Coach Jim Culhane and the Bronco team (bottom left)

## • community focus and volunteerism

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### American Cancer Society celebrates volunteers for their important role in the fight against cancer

More than three million volunteers work for the American Cancer Society nationwide, performing a wide range of activities that mobilize and empower communities to prevent cancer, save lives, and diminish suffering. In the Great Lakes Division, 180,000 volunteers give their time and talent to fight back against the disease.

During National Volunteer Week (April 27 – May 3), ACS acknowledges and celebrates these very important individuals at the local, state, and national level, who devote their time and effort to bring about a positive change.

National Volunteer Week began in 1974 when President Richard Nixon signed an executive order establishing the week as an annual celebration of volunteering. It is sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation and Hands On Network.

The American Cancer Society is the nation's largest volunteer health organization, relying on dedicated volunteers to help in our



mission to end cancer by impacting communities through their personal commitment. Volunteers contribute to the fight against cancer through a variety of roles, efforts, and ACS programs, including:

- Assisting with signature community events like Relay For Life and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer through fundraising in communities across the country
- Providing free rides for cancer patients to and from cancer treatments with the Road to Recovery program
- Working with state and federal legislators to make cancer a priority through the ACS Cancer Action Network and get cancer-related laws passed
- Serving on a variety of task forces and special event committees and assisting with various office duties
- Volunteers who are survivors provide one-on-one support, understanding, and hope to patients who just found out they have cancer through programs such as Reach to Recovery and Man to Man
- Helping women with treatment-related side effects by teaching them skills to restore their self image through the Look Good... Feel Better program

It is clear that volunteers actively participate in many roles at all levels of the Society. Because of the time and talents of our volunteers, people facing cancer are getting information, day-to-day help, and the emotional support they need from the American Cancer Society to help them through every step of their cancer journey. They are also helping to raise funds and awareness, to fight back against the disease. The cornerstone of the American Cancer Society is our volunteers. They are our most valuable asset.

Thank you to all our dedicated volunteers for giving your time, expertise, and resources that bring hope to those touched by cancer. You are fighting cancer in our community and your support truly makes a difference.

The American Cancer Society listens, shares, heals, and nurtures a spirit of hope and a culture of caring through volunteerism. To learn more about how you can save lives while fulfilling your own through volunteering, contact your American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit [www.cancer.org/volunteer](http://www.cancer.org/volunteer).

## • local area spotlight

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### East Michigan Area Service Center works with congregations to promote healthy living in Flint

What you eat can influence your risk of cancer and other diseases. That's why the American Cancer Society is working with churches in Flint, Michigan to promote healthy lifestyles through Body & Soul, a health and wellness program designed for African American churches. The program, which has been proven to work in churches regardless of congregation size, helps churches establish their Health Ministries.

"Everyone you come across, they have a tendency to get high blood pressure, to get diabetes, but African Americans are more likely to die from it," said Shuntai Beaugard, ACS Community Representative at the East Michigan Area Service Center. "I wanted to hone in more on those that were uninsured, underinsured, and the Body & Soul churches."

One challenge for these populations in Flint is that health is not a top priority. For many, finding a job or even food comes before focusing on health. Those who would try to focus on their health face the challenge of accessing healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables.

"We find that in urban areas, there aren't very many grocery stores and there are a lot of corner stores, which have little to no fruits and vegetables, and it's high priced," said Shuntai. "If people aren't able to get it right there

in the community, they won't eat it."

Improving access to healthy foods is a top priority for Body & Soul churches. With the help of the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI), New St. James Memorial Church established a farmer's market to make fresh produce available to members of their congregations. MPHI also trained seven Flint churches on how to start their own farmer's markets and provided grant money to purchase fruits and vegetables wholesale or from a farmer's market to resell at the churches. Remaining produce is given to a senior citizen home in the community.

Other Flint churches are working in unique ways to promote Body & Soul activities. New Beginnings Ministry held a fashion show based on fruits and vegetables, giving church members a chance to learn about products some may have never heard about. The New Life Tabernacle Church of God in Christ, under the leadership of superintendent Quintin L. Marshall, Sr., is building a new church that will include elements for better health, such as a fitness center and track, and also plans to work with ACS to host a family day at the local YMCA.



Shuntai emphasized that networking and community outreach are essential to the ongoing success of Body & Soul. The program has helped build trust in the community and allowed community members to see ACS in a different light. Many are excited about getting involved in advocacy and ACS programs such as Relay For Life and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer.

"Your whole body can be affected by lifestyle and the way you eat," said Shuntai. "[ACS] not only concentrates on cancer, we concentrate on the whole person."

To learn more about Body & Soul, contact Voncile Brown-Miller, Director of Disparity Programs, at (248) 663-3400.

Pictured: Body & Soul luncheon

## • survivorship and patient services

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### Young colorectal cancer survivor dedicates time and talents to the fight against cancer

Paula Ries was only 30 years old when she was diagnosed with late stage colon cancer in June 2006. “The thought ‘cancer’ never came to my mind,” said the Indiana resident. “How could I possibly have cancer? I was young, had no family history, and didn’t feel that bad.”

After several months of chemotherapy her tumor shrank and was surgically removed. The doctors told Paula that there was no longer evidence of the disease. “Now I feel I am truly ready to take on the world,” she said.

As a cancer survivor, Paula has been intensely involved, dedicating her time and efforts in every way she can to help in the fight against cancer. She has been an advocate from the beginning. While battling with the disease, she was busy writing letters to legislators. She has also attended Indiana Lobby Day and is a member

of the ACS Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN). “It’s made me really want to fight for other people, to get them screened so they never have to go through what I went through because it’s a largely preventable disease,” she said.

Paula is also an active member of the Colorectal Cancer Awareness Network (CRAN), utilizing her talents to spread the word. She recently designed a “Captain Colon” costume for the Ohio Valley Colorectal Surgeons, who are associated with CRAN. “In my previous life I was a costume designer. I was really happy with how it turned out because I’ve never made a mascot costume before,” she laughed. “Once my pug gets to her full growth she’s going to get a polyp costume made and become the Polyp Pug!”

Paula’s CRAN group is involved in big events every March, in conjunction with Colorectal Cancer awareness month.

Captain Colon was at this year’s “Flush out Colon Cancer” event. “My local CRAN group is probably the biggest thing that I look forward to, as the people involved with it are so passionate about helping others,” she said.

Paula is also involved in colorectal activities outside of ACS. She

has worked with the Colon Club, a non-profit organization founded by young colorectal cancer survivors, keen to teach the world that anyone can get colon cancer. They dedicated a line of toilet paper to Paula called Wipe Out Colorectal Cancer, with messages and facts about colorectal cancer printed directly on the paper. “That’s my biggest accomplishment in life. I’ve got toilet paper dedicated to me!” Paula laughed. She was also Miss April in the 2008 Colon Club Colondar, a calendar of colon cancer survivors.

Paula wants young adults to be knowledgeable of their family history. “Definitely check to see if you have a family history [of colorectal cancer]. And if there’s a family history, whenever that person was diagnosed, you need to go back 10 years from that and that’s basically when you need to get screened,” suggested Paula. “Also be aware of the changes in your body, it could save your life.”

If you would like to know more about the signs, symptoms, and screening guidelines for colorectal cancer, call your American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit [www.cancer.org/colon](http://www.cancer.org/colon).

Pictured: Paula Ries and “Captain Colon”, the costume she designed



## • survivorship and patient services

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### Survivor's children help spread the message of early detection

When a woman receives a call reminding her to get a mammogram, she's not expecting the person on the other end to be a teenager. But Cody and Tatijana Marsee, the 16- and 14-year-old children of Indiana resident Tonya Marsee, know how valuable getting screened can be...it saved their mother's life.

"It was at a yearly check-up [that] I discovered I had a lump and later found out it was thyroid cancer," explained Tonya. "If I had not [gone] for my screenings, I might not be here."

It was as a cancer survivor that Tonya was introduced to the American Cancer Society, which impacted her immensely.

"Right from the beginning I knew I wanted to get heavily involved [with ACS]," said Tonya. "I don't want anyone to go through what I did, not knowing about ACS when I was going through cancer. I want to get out to

the public and make people aware of the different programs ACS offers."

Tonya is now the co-chair for the Relay For Life of Ripley County and a member of the Survivor Cultivation Committee. Her dedication to the fight against cancer is shared by her family. Cody and Tatijana have been co-captains of the Milan Elementary school Relay team for the past two years, and this year they are on the committee helping with activities.

"Volunteering has been a very rewarding experience, and my family has really jumped on board right from the beginning," said Tonya.

While working on mission delivery goals for her Relay team, Tonya had the idea to ask Cody and Tatijana to make Tell A Friend calls.

Tell A Friend is a program designed to help increase breast cancer screening and early detection through regular mammograms. Volunteer callers contact five acquaintances to encourage them to get a mammogram. Cody and Tatijana were more than willing to spread the word about the importance of yearly mammograms, knowing their calls may help save others.

To think of teenagers asking grown women to get their mammograms is a very humbling thought and a reminder that anyone can make Tell A Friend calls. Many women who are age 40 or older have never had a mammogram, and many are not following the ACS recommendations to get one every year. Tell A Friend is a great way to remind those women in your life that need a little encouragement.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer in the United States, and finding it early is the best way to control it. Mammograms can find cancer several years before a woman or her physician find it using other screening methods. As Tonya would say, just do it. "It may be uncomfortable, but at least you are alive. It only takes a few minutes once a year."

If you want to learn more about breast cancer or becoming a Tell A Friend volunteer, call your American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.



Pictured: The Marsee family

### Indiana family fights back through Cancer Prevention Studies

As a volunteer for the American Cancer Society for more than 40 years, Indiana resident Mary Margaret Moorhead has witnessed great strides in the fight against cancer.

At a time when cancer information was difficult to find, Mary Margaret volunteered to participate in Cancer Prevention Study 2 (CPS-2), an ongoing study designed to study a wide range of exposures that may affect cancer risk. She is one of the 1.2 million participants in CPS-2 who have contributed to research that has furthered our understanding of cancer.

“People didn’t want to talk about it back then,” recalled Mary Margaret. “Most people didn’t believe very strongly in a cancer prevention study because they didn’t realize how much we were affected by our environment, our health and nutrition habits – even our heredity.”

The American Cancer Society began conducting large-scale behavioral studies in the 1950s. Large groups of individuals are recruited and then followed over time to assess their health outcomes and determine how those outcomes are related to exposure data, such as lifestyle.

“A lot of hospitals and doctors did not have tumor registries, nor did they give you that information if they had it,” said Mary Margaret, who also

recruited cancer patients to be a part of CPS-2. “We were often limited to people we knew so it was difficult to find those willing to discuss their health problems.”

Mary Margaret realized that CPS-2 was going to provide valuable cancer information, but she didn’t realize just how big of an impact it would have. “There weren’t many survivors in my day and now there are thousands,” she said. “That’s real proof that we have made a difference.”

Mary Margaret’s dedication to the fight against cancer is shared by her son, Rob Moorhead.

“My involvement with the American Cancer Society has really been the inspiration of my mother and following her example,” said Rob, who often accompanied his mother to her ACS volunteer activities as a youth.

Now principal of South Dearborn High School, Rob is heavily involved in the Relay For Life of Dearborn and Ohio Counties. The event was chosen as one of the six CPS-3 sites in the Great Lakes Division, and Rob will follow his mother’s lead by signing up for the study.

“Anything we can do as volunteers and individuals to find a cure for this disease that takes so many lives is a good thing,” said Rob.



Participating in research studies allows people to contribute to a better understanding of disease prevention. For CPS-3, this means a once in a lifetime opportunity to contribute to knowledge that will reduce the burden of cancer for this and future generations.

“It is fitting that Rob continues our family’s involvement,” said Mary Margaret. “My generation took part in CPS-2, which has been quite valuable in learning more about cancer. Now it is his generation’s turn to continue the study of cancer prevention with the hope that someday we can conquer this horrible disease.”

To learn more about CPS-3 and to find an enrollment site near you, visit [www.cancer.org/cps3](http://www.cancer.org/cps3).

Pictured: Mary Margaret Moorhead

### ACS study links insurance status to cancer outcomes

A new American Cancer Society study in the March issue of the *Lancet Oncology* is the first to use national data from the National Cancer Database (NCDB) to investigate the link between insurance status and stage of diagnosis for a large number of cancer sites.

The National Cancer Database, a hospital based registry sponsored by the American College of Surgeons and the American Cancer Society, is the only national registry that collects information on patient insurance status.

The ACS report has found that the uninsured are less likely to get the recommended cancer screening tests, are more likely to be diagnosed with cancer at more advanced stages, and have lower survival rates than those with private insurance for several cancers.

Although advances in prevention, early detection, and treatment of

cancer have resulted in an almost 14 percent drop in the death rates from all cancers combined from 1991 to 2004 in the U.S., not everyone in America has benefited equally from this progress. The evidence suggests that some of these differences are related to lack of access to health care, particularly the lack of insurance or inadequate insurance, which appears to be a critical obstacle in receiving appropriate health care services.

“The findings of this major study are critical, not only for the 47 million Americans who have no health insurance, but also for our nation,” said Dr. John R. Seffrin, chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society.

“The fact is, too many cancer patients are being diagnosed too late, when treatment is harder, more expensive, and has less chance of saving lives. We must begin to remove the barriers that stand in the way of early diagnosis and timely access to medical care if we are to give all cancer patients an equal chance in the fight.”

#### Some of the report findings:

- Among individuals under age 65, those aged 18 to 24 have the highest probability of being uninsured.
- The probability of being uninsured varies inversely by income.

- More than half (53.6 percent) of uninsured individuals aged 18 to 64 years have no usual source of health care.
- The uninsured are more likely to report that costs issues caused them to delay care, not receive care, and not obtain prescription drugs.
- For all cancer sites combined, patients who were uninsured were 1.6 times as likely to die in five years as those with private insurance.

“This report clearly indicates that insurance and cost-related barriers are critical to address if we want to ensure that all Americans are able to share in the progress we have achieved by having access to high-quality cancer prevention, detection, and treatment services,” said Dr. Otis Brawley, chief medical officer of the Society.

In 2007, ACS launched the Access to Care campaign, a national initiative dedicated to raising awareness about the troubles of uninsured and underinsured people in the U.S. The campaign encourages people to get involved in finding ways to fix the problem and make access to care a national priority. For more information, visit [www.cancer.org/access](http://www.cancer.org/access).



### New colorectal screening guidelines released

In March, the American Cancer Society released the first-ever joint consensus guidelines for the early detection and prevention of colorectal cancer. Since the Society issued its first formal colon cancer screening guidelines in 1980, they have been periodically updated to reflect changes in technology and practice.

In the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of technologies available for colorectal cancer screening, resulting in changing patterns of the use of different tests.

The experts who analyzed the data to provide these new guidelines have added two new tests to the list of recommendations: stool DNA (sDNA) and CT colonography (CTC), also known as virtual colonoscopy.



The new guidelines also emphasize the options and differences in screening methods because the use of screening has been low due to the availability of certain screenings in parts of the country, insurance issues, lack of understanding, and patient preference.

The guidelines also make a significant distinction about tests used to screen for colorectal cancer by sorting the available tests into two major groups:

- Tests that are used to detect cancer early, and
- Tests that have the potential to prevent colorectal cancer by detecting precancerous polyps.

The expert panel also had the strong opinion that colorectal cancer prevention should be the primary goal of screening. “This is the first time that a guideline from the American Cancer Society will express a strong preference for tests that can identify both polyps and cancer and lead to cancer prevention,” said David A. Lieberman, M.D., on behalf of the U.S. Multi Society Task Force on Colorectal Cancer. “We strongly feel that this will help consumers make decisions that can, quite literally, save lives.”

ACS Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr. Len Lichtenfeld emphasized the importance of action. “The words in

this report do have meaning, but they only exist on paper. To make them do something for you, you need to do something for yourself,” he said. “I hope I live to see the day when everyone who needs to be screened for this disease takes advantage of that opportunity.”

Your doctor should assist you in making an informed decision about the appropriate colorectal screening method by discussing the advantages, limitations, and risks of each test. Also understand that preferences and availability of resources, both financial and technological, play a role in which screening test is chosen. As Dr. Len says, “The best test for you is the one you get and the one you are most comfortable with.”

The new guidelines were updated through a collaborative process between the American Cancer Society, the U.S. Multi Society Task Force on Colorectal Cancer, and the American College of Radiology. They represent the most current scientific evidence and expert opinions available and offer practical guidance and new options to help physicians and individuals make informed decisions about colorectal cancer screening.

For more information on the new screening guidelines, call 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

### Michigan Celebration at the State Capitol offers advocates a chance to fight back

MeLissa Olson of Gaylord is beginning to prepare for Michigan Celebration at the State Capitol. An ACS volunteer for approximately 10 years and a survivor of thyroid cancer for 17 years, MeLissa also lost her mother-in-law to cancer.

“I initially went to Relay For Life events as a survivor,” said MeLissa. “I lost my mother-in-law, Elizabeth Brady Olson, and I knew I wanted to make a difference.”

One way that MeLissa is able to make a difference is through advocacy. This May, she will be attending her third Celebration at the State Capitol event. She believes the event is empowering and that attending Lobby Day helps make the fight against cancer more urgent to lawmakers.

“I really enjoy taking part in Lobby Day. To me, it’s a chance to be part of something bigger,” explained MeLissa.

“I realize that I may never raise the most money as part of Relay For Life. But I can make a difference because I do have a voice. I can let my lawmakers know that in Gaylord there are people there who do care about cancer. They pay attention.”

Each year, your American Cancer Society brings together volunteers from across Michigan to learn about the latest legislative issues affecting cancer patients and their families,

and encourage state legislators to make cancer a number one priority.

This year, volunteers will be asking Michigan legislators to support a statewide smokefree air law and to fund the Healthy Michigan Fund. Smokefree air is something that MeLissa feels passionately about.

“I lost my father to lung disease, and I’m a Road to Recovery driver. A few years ago, I transported a woman who worked at a bar. As a worker, she didn’t have a choice, she had to work and keep her job. It’s important that we speak up for those hospitality workers,” said MeLissa, referring to those who are involuntarily exposed to secondhand smoke.

Celebration at the State Capitol gives MeLissa and other volunteers the opportunity to make their voices heard.

“I send e-mails and I send letters. But once a year, because they see my face, I’m able to have a more personal relationship with my legislators.”

Celebration at the State Capitol 2008 is scheduled, rain or shine, for May 13. The deadline for registration is May 3. This is your chance to fight back through advocacy by speaking



with your lawmaker about important cancer-related issues.

We hope to see you there! Visit [www.acsgld.org/micelebration](http://www.acsgld.org/micelebration) to register today.

Pictured: Volunteers at Michigan Celebration at the State Capitol

• resource highlight

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**QuickFACTS books offer practical cancer information**

One of our priorities here at the American Cancer Society is to support better decision making by providing high-quality, timely, and understandable information to help ease the cancer journey for patients and caregivers. The new *QuickFACTS* series of paperback books provides another resource to help achieve that goal by providing a comprehensive, quick read about a growing list of cancer subjects.

The newest addition to the series is *QuickFACTS Bone Metastasis*, which provides sound, up-to-date, evidence-

based information for people with bone metastasis and their loved ones. The book provides comprehensive coverage of bone metastasis, as well as critical questions for patients to ask their health care team. It also includes the latest patient treatment guidelines and a bone metastasis glossary to educate and empower patients from the beginning of their diagnosis.

*QuickFACTS Bone Metastasis* is the fourth book in the series, which currently also includes books on prostate cancer, lung cancer, and

other ACS publications, such as *Informed Decisions* and *The Great American Eat-Right Cookbook*. The books are grouped by category, including Health, Cooking, Specific Cancers, Caregivers, Survivor, Family, and For Children, to help you find resources quickly and easily.

For more information about the *QuickFACTS* series or to purchase one of the *QuickFACTS* titles, visit [www.cancer.org/bookstore](http://www.cancer.org/bookstore) or call us toll-free at 1-800-ACS-2345.

colon cancer. Each book offers readers a step-by-step approach to dealing with a cancer diagnosis, as well as practical advice for coping with the effects of treatment. Each book also includes additional resources relevant to each diagnosis and highlighted cover tabs to allow quick reference to specific topics. The series is expected to grow to include as many as 20 titles to provide cancer patients with a quick and trusted resource for cancer information while focusing on quality of life.

All four of the *QuickFACTS* books are available online in the ACS Bookstore, where you will also find

