

VOICES OF THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Great Lakes Division, Inc.



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

v.5, 2006

LOCAL AREA SPOTLIGHT

The Huron Valley Area Service Center is reaching out to their area's Latino population.

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OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Sign up as a Making Strides Against Breast Cancer team captain or participant by calling 800-ACS-2345 or visiting www.cancer.org/stridesonline.

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

Find local resources in your area: go to www.cancer.org, scroll down to "Find ACS In Your Community," and enter your zip code. The next page will show contact information for your local Society office. To the right, click on "Find More Local Resources," select specific categories, and click "go!"

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community focus

International organization supports Society, employees enjoy teamwork

Two Men and a Truck, which started as a family-owned moving business and has since grown to be an international organization, believes in giving back to the community. Employees are invited to participate with community-based organizations as they feel comfortable. The company maintains a list of associations for employees to choose from, but decided to pick one main organization to support.

“Hands down, it was the American Cancer Society,” said Brig Sorber, vice president of franchise operations and director of licensing. The Society was chosen because employees have a personal connection with the fight against cancer. Ten cents of every move is donated to the American Cancer Society. In 2006 alone, the company is expected to do about 400,000 moves. A nationwide donation is presented to the Society during the company’s annual meeting.

“Cancer attacks all people, it’s something that everyone can relate to. All of our franchises have been touched



by it,” said Brig. A major bonus for Two Men and a Truck is that franchises can work with their local Society offices in their communities while also being a part of the company’s nationwide commitment against cancer.

In memory of an employee who died of breast cancer, the company has established the Michelle Nelson Endowment Fund, which donated close to \$5,000 this year to the Great Lakes Division’s Camp Catch-A-Rainbow, a summer camp for kids with a personal cancer history.

They have also been a major supporter of Relay For Life. In Lansing, Michigan, their home office alone raised \$10,000 for the Relay For Life of Meridian Township this year. They have achieved this accomplishment by implementing fundraising techniques that could be duplicated in other companies: they charge employees a small fee to wear jeans on Fridays, collect donations at a community-wide Easter egg hunt, pull together change in their office, host a pancake breakfast, and run silent auctions on gifts given to the company. “Everybody here wants to help,” said Brig.

Two Men and a Truck also sponsored a Society golf fundraiser and eight Wall of Hope banners that were signed by employees at Relay For Life events. These banners will



travel with the Society during September for Celebration on the Hill 2006, where volunteers will discuss cancer issues with lawmakers in Washington DC. The banners’ signatures represent people who care about cancer in local communities.

While the Society gains dedicated volunteers and financial contributions from the company, employees have found that being involved with the Society is a bonding experience, as they do activities outside of work and family members get involved. “We do it as a team,” said Samantha Byrne, Two Men and a Truck’s assistant office administrator in Lansing and team captain for their Relay team. Samantha coordinates the home office’s Society events. “It brings us together,” she said.

The American Cancer Society is proud of its partnership with Two Men and a Truck, both within the Great Lakes Division and nationwide. We look forward to working with them and other organizations in our continued fight against cancer.

• local area spotlight

Huron Valley Area Service Center reaches out to local Latino population

The Latino population in Washtenaw County, located in southeastern Michigan, numbers nearly 6,000 people. For many of these Latinos, healthcare is difficult to access due to a lack of insurance or language barriers. Serving everyone with cancer needs equally is a key priority of the American Cancer Society. The Society shares this goal with Día de La Mujer Latina (Day of the Latina Woman), a non-profit organization that focuses on providing accessible health services and education to Latinos.

On the national level, the Society is a major financial contributor to Día de la Mujer Latina. “The American Cancer Society embraces and supports us,” Venus Gínes, a Society advocate, breast cancer survivor, and founder of the organization, said.

Locally, the Society’s Huron Valley Area Service Center partnered with Día de la Mujer Latina and other community-based organizations, businesses, and healthcare providers to bring the First Annual Health Fiesta to Michigan on July 16 at Ypsilanti High School. “ACS and all of the different organizations really want to touch the underserved and make sure they get all the information that everyone else gets,” Leah Hollier-Kerr, quality of life director at Huron Valley, said.

Dr. Lisa Newman, the medical director at the University of Michigan Breast Care Center and a Society board member, saw southeast Michigan as an area in need of a Health Fiesta and approached Venus about the event. Venus held the first Health Fiesta in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1997. To date, the event has been held in 22 cities across the United States and Puerto Rico.

In December 2005 Huron Valley staff met with Venus, Dr. Newman, and representatives from the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center to initiate plans for the event. They then met monthly with other local organization members to prepare for the event and sought input from local Latino community representatives.

At the Health Fiesta, Huron Valley staff provided all of the cancer-related information and resources. They passed out skin, colorectal, and cervical cancer materials at a resource table and put on two workshops to educate Latina women about breast cancer.

Other services provided at the event include blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, diabetes risk and nutrition assessments, and vaccinations. To ensure that the event’s environment mirrored the atmos-



phere of the signature Latino fiesta, the event also featured children’s activities, a raffle, food, and music.

There are plans to continue the event in the area with goals to increase community involvement and integrate eligible female participants into early cancer detection programs such as the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program.

The Great Lakes Division congratulates the Huron Valley Area Service Center, serving Livingston, Washtenaw, and Monroe Counties, for promoting cancer awareness in their local Latino community.

• survivorship and patient services

Around-the-clock services provide information and support to newly diagnosed patients

Hearing the words “you have cancer” can leave people feeling frightened, panicked, or uncertain. The American Cancer Society is here to help. As a national priority, the Society offers around-the-clock services, which include a nationwide helpline, 800-ACS-2345, and a comprehensive website, www.cancer.org. These services answer questions about cancer information and services, and provide support, hope, and comfort.

The availability of these services enables patients to be proactive in their health and find information that caters to their cancer experience. “The 24/7 services are giving newly diagnosed patients the confidence that they can find out information that they need on their own. They help them to know they are taking care of themselves,” Debbie Amey, the Society’s quality of life director for East Michigan, said. All calls to the Society’s helpline have been answered in person by a cancer information specialist at the



National Cancer Information Center (NCIC) since it opened in 1997. E-mail sent to the center is also answered by the specialists. People call for many reasons including inquiries about donations, questions about cancer issues, and smoking cessation. The NCIC is also home to the Society’s Quitline program, the number one telephone cessation program in the country.

To best meet the needs of the callers, the specialists are highly-trained and have several essential resources at their fingertips. One resource is the Cancer Information Database which contains an abundance of cancer-related information. This resource helps specialists talk callers through cancer risk factors, treatment options by stage, and what happens after treatment.

The Community Resource Database, which is available to both the specialists and on the Society’s website, is full of information about ongoing community programs and can be used to find specific resources, like prostheses or medical equipment, in any local community. Specialists can also put people directly in touch with their local office. To learn how to access this database on our website, see this month’s Resource Highlight (page 1).

On www.cancer.org, the public can access some of the same information available to the specialists at the NCIC. Through the website, people can find information at their own pace. “Cancer is not a nine to five dis-



ease,” Mollie Burchett, South Central Michigan’s quality of life director, said. “Cancer.org, like NCIC, makes the American Cancer Society accessible to every person 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, so it doesn’t matter when they have a question, they can get the answers.”

The website features a variety of message boards and hosts the Cancer Survivor’s Network, an online community that lets people affected by cancer communicate with others going through similar experiences. Cancer survivors and caregivers can participate in chat rooms and discussion groups, create their own web pages to tell their cancer stories, or read others’ stories. They can also share their favorite cancer resources by submitting it to the network’s resource library.

No matter who you are, we can help. With 800-ACS-2345 and www.cancer.org, the American Cancer Society can help patients or anyone else no matter their location or their time of need.

Researcher targets prostate cancer

After earning his medical degree and working at the John Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, Kenneth Pienta, MD, returned to his home state of Michigan in the mid-1990s, where he has since developed a prostate cancer research lab at the University of Michigan and treated patients with advanced diagnoses. “Basically what I do here is bench-to-bedside medicine,” he says. “This means that we want to make discoveries in the laboratory and translate them into treatments as fast as possible.”

In 2003, Pienta received a prestigious, five-year American Cancer Society Clinical Research Professor grant for his ongoing work related to the thrombin receptor, considered a molecular key to facilitating the spread of prostate cancer.

Now Pienta and his colleagues are striving to develop treatments that thwart the receptor’s influence in a cancer that is the second most common malignancy in men after skin cancer; an estimated 234,000 cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed this year. He currently serves as director of the urologic cancers program at the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor.

Q: What’s unique about prostate cancer’s development?

A: Unlike other cancers, prostate cancer can take up to 30 years to develop—it’s often a slow-growing disease. If a man lives long enough,

he’s going to get it. If you look at the prostate of an 80-year-old man, virtually 100 percent of the time he’ll have some cancer cells. But only one out of every six men will develop prostate cancer that may require treatment.

Of those one in six, we think somewhere between 80 to 90 percent will be cured or will live a long life and die of something else. But once the cancer develops and gets out of the prostate, it grows quickly and is likely to go to the bone. One of the big questions is how do we find the prostate cancers that are clinically important and need to be treated versus those that can be left alone.

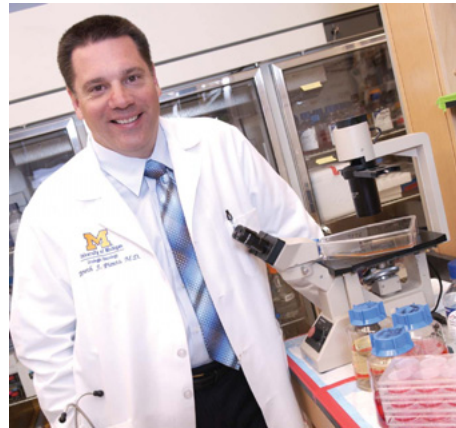
Q: What is the best way to catch it early?

A: The safest thing is to use the American Cancer Society guideline. (Go to www.cancer.org and search for “prostate cancer screening guidelines.”)

Q: Tell us more about your research in particular.

A: My lab is interested in understanding mechanisms in which prostate cancer spreads to the bone. It causes a special effect that rearranges the bone, causing pain and other problems like fractures.

If we can understand why and how cancer cells spread, or metastasize, we can interrupt that process. And we can develop targeted treatments. One molecular link we have identified is a thrombin receptor, located



on the cell’s surface, which influences the spread of prostate cancer.

Q: How does this receptor work?

A: First, a little background. The body recognizes when cells no longer work properly, automatically self-destructing those cells. But cancer cells have found a way to escape that self-destruct button.

The thrombin receptor, we believe, basically puts a shield over that self-destruct button so you can’t hit it. We’ve found that by blocking the thrombin receptor, it’s easier to kill the cancer cells with chemotherapy. We are looking at several potential treatments to inhibit that receptor.

Q: What breakthroughs do you project within the next 10 years?

A: I think that in 10 years, if we haven’t found a cure, we will at least have found a set of treatments.

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Prostate cancer booklet helps patients understand treatment options

The American Cancer Society, Great Lakes Division, is on the Michigan Cancer Consortium's team to effectively fight cancer and avoid duplicating efforts. One of the consortium's ten priorities focuses on prostate cancer, the second most common cancer for men in the United States.

To help Michiganders fight prostate cancer, an action committee was charged with meeting a measurable target. By 2006, they aspired to determine what men knew about prostate cancer and use that information to create valuable educational materials for residents.

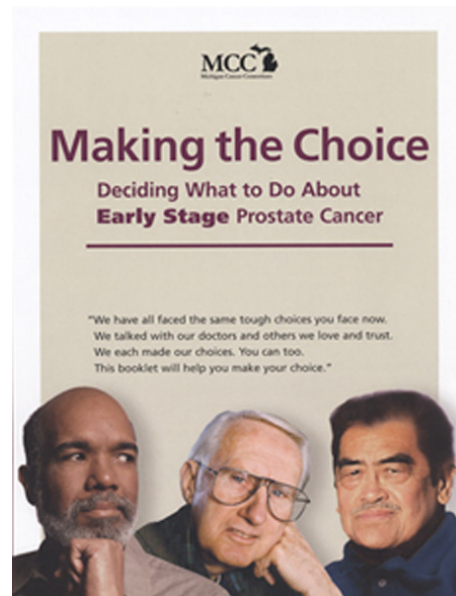
The group had their work cut out for them. Surveys showed that men knew little about prostate cancer and its treatment options, and that existing educational materials did not provide all the information a new patient would need to make informed decisions. Reading levels were too technical for the average person to understand and treatment side effects were described in vague verbal descriptions instead of numerical facts.

The committee was driven by these shortcomings to create a completely new booklet that would meet two objectives. One objective was to present comprehensible information so that newly diagnosed patients and their doctors can have interac-

tive and productive conversations. The other was to help patients understand that the decision to treat their prostate cancer with watchful waiting, surgery, or radiation is up to them, not their doctors.

The committee went right to the source by conducting focus groups of prostate cancer survivors and men with a history of prostate problems. They then shared a draft with more men and healthcare professionals. Literacy experts and graphic designers were brought on board to make sure that the information remained understandable.

In 2004, two years before their deadline, the group published a 25 page booklet called *Making the Choice: Deciding What to Do About Early Stage Prostate Cancer*. Their work, funded by the Michigan Department of Community Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, earned acceptance from healthcare professionals because of its unbiased information. "We hope that it will really help patients tell their physicians what they're the most concerned about and what they would like to accomplish and work through together," said Margaret Holmes-Rovner, professor of health services research at Michigan State University and member of the prostate cancer action committee.



The booklet was translated in Spanish and Arabic and distributed to all urologist and radiation oncologist offices in Michigan. Online (www.prostatecancerdecision.org) and audio CD versions are also available. Michigan residents can request copies for free on the website or by calling 800-249-0314.

Non-Michigan resident may order up to 20 booklets, one audio cassette, and one poster with the shipping and handling fee. Larger orders need to go through the Michigan Public Health Institute Cancer Control Services Program at 517-324-7300.

For more information about prostate cancer, visit www.cancer.org.

Update on Sharon Simmons: a Celebration on the Hill ambassador one month before the event

In May, VOICES highlighted Sharon Simmons, an advocacy volunteer from Fort Wayne, Indiana, who was part of the Society's first Celebration on the Hill event in 2002.

Celebration on the Hill is a nationwide advocacy event in which volunteers, called ambassadors, travel from each state to Washington DC to speak with legislators about cancer issues. Now, a month before Celebration on the Hill 2006, Sharon says she is ready to go back to Washington DC as an ambassador.

Sharon recently returned from Washington DC, where she was on a panel to determine how Congress will allocate funds for breast cancer medical research, after a nomination from Society staff.

This month she attended a Celebration on the Hill 2006 training, which was the first time that all Great Lakes Division ambassadors met each



other. It was also the first time that the three main talking points for the upcoming legislative meetings were revealed. Ambassadors will be asking lawmakers to:

- Reauthorize and expand the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.
- Increase research funding with at least 5% annual increases to the National Cancer Institute to sustain past progress.
- Sign the Congressional Cancer Promise to commit Congress to putting us back on track to eliminate suffering and death due to cancer by 2015.

The training also covered the Society strategy called "hook, line, and sinker" which teaches volunteers how to tell legislators their personal cancer stories in a concise, meaningful way. Volunteers practiced writing Letters to the Editor, speaking in groups as if they were meeting with legislators, talking with media, and learned logistics of the event. "It was completely upbeat, everybody was excited," Sharon said of the training.

She registered to attend an American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network event called "CAN Opener: The Rally" on September 19, the first night the ambassadors will be in

Washington DC. At the Rally, she will be able to mingle with her fellow ambassadors while enjoying appearances by Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, and former ABC News anchor, Sam Donaldson.

Before leaving for Celebration on the Hill, Sharon will be making a local legislative visit with a group of other volunteers to give her congressman an opportunity to sign the Congressional Cancer Promise. If she isn't able to get a signature then, she will ask him to sign it again during Celebration on the Hill. "I'm hoping that every single representative signs on to the Congressional Cancer Promise so that increased funding and the desire to have cancer eradicated isn't forgotten," she said.

Showing her enthusiasm, Sharon knows exactly how many days it will be until she can leave for her next Celebration on the Hill experience. "I think I'm not alone when I say we're ready to go now...not only to go, but to have a good time. It is a celebration; we don't want to forget that. We're celebrating survivorship."

Good luck to Sharon and the 234 other people traveling to Washington DC from the Great Lakes Division September 19-20 for Celebration on the Hill 2006! To learn more about the event, visit www.celebrationonthehill.org.