MRF FUNDING
ONE MILLION DOLLARS
IN MELANOMA RESEARCH
THIS YEAR

Randy Lomax, Chair of the MRF Board, has announced that $1,000,000 will be invested in melanoma research in 2008. “We thank Dr. Ruth Halaban, Chair of the Grant Review Committee and her associates, for their work in reviewing a record number of grant applications.” A total of thirteen Career Development Awards ($50,000 per year for a maximum of two years) were awarded, including five first-year and eight second-year grants. There was also a $50,000 donor-designated grant from the Sohn Foundation. Three first-year Established Investigator Awards ($100,000 per year for a maximum of two years) were awarded.

NEW 2008 GRANTS

Established Investigator Awards to:
- **Dr. Edward DeFabo** – The George Washington University (Washington DC)
- **Dr. Boris C. Bastian** – University of California, San Francisco
- **Dr. Patrick Hwu** – MD Anderson Cancer Center (Houston)

Career Development Awards to:
- **Dr. Paul Antony** – University of Maryland (Baltimore)
- **Dr. Susanne Schlisio** – Dan Farber Cancer Institute (Boston)
- **Dr. Soheil Dadras** – Stanford University (Palo Alto)
- **Dr. Karen Taraszka Hastings** – University of Arizona
- **Dr. William Kim** – The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Live4Life Foundation Donor Designated Grant:
- **Dr. Jedd Wolchok** – Sloan Kettering Institute for Cancer Research (New York)
The Second-Year Grants:

Dr. Alexander Krupnick – Washington University (St. Louis)
Dr. Arati Sharma – The Pennsylvania College of Medicine (Hershey)
Dr. Angela Hess – Bloomsburg University (Pennsylvania)
Dr. Jonathan Lee – UMDNJ/Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (New Brunswick)
Dr. Gregory Lesinski – The Ohio State University
Dr. Victoria Crotzer – Indiana School of Medicine
Dr. Kevin Brown – The Translational Genomics Research Institute (Phoenix)
Dr. Xiaowe Xu – University of Pennsylvania

A description of all new grants, along with the naming of each grant, will be included in the second quarter issue of the Newsletter.

If you or your family is interested in sponsoring a grant in 2009, please contact Linda Pilkington, MRF’s Executive Director at 1-800-MRF-1290.

HELP US NAME OUR MRF NEWSLETTER

From its first issue, our newsletter to the melanoma community, friends and donors, has simply been called “NEWSLETTER.” It’s time for a change! And we invite you to help us make the change.

Hopefully, with your help, we can find a name that captures our vision of finding new, effective treatments, a cure for melanoma, and which reflects the mission of the MRF to impact melanoma research, education and advocacy.

Please complete and forward your suggestion (or suggestions) to the MRF by using this coupon.

To the MRF,
Please consider the following for a new name for the MRF’s Newsletter (please print):

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Your name and address:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Email: ________________________________________________________________

Send to: Name the Newsletter
Melanoma Research Foundation
170 Township Line Road, Building B
Hilllsborough, NJ 08844

Or email responses to newsletter@melanoma.org
Sixth Annual Wings Of Hope For Melanoma Gala

“Congratulations to Dr. Paul Chapman.”

The Melanoma Research Foundation held its Sixth Annual Wings Of Hope For Melanoma Gala on Wednesday, October 3, 2007, at the Puck Building’s Skylight Ballroom in New York City. More than 300 guests joined us in honoring Paul B. Chapman, MD, with the 2007 Wings of Hope for Melanoma Humanitarian Award. Dr. Chapman is a Member and Attending Physician, Melanoma and Sarcoma Service at the Sloan Kettering Institute for Cancer Research and a member of the MRF’s Scientific Advisory Committee. The event was co-chaired by Bonnie Chajet, Shelley C. Chapman, and James D. Johnson.

The Wings of Hope Gala featured an exciting live auction, with a signed guitar from Bruce Springsteen! The evening also featured an elaborate silent auction with jewelry, sports memorabilia, trips, hotel stays, and much, much more! The event raised more than $300,000 for the Melanoma Research Foundation.


Special thanks to the evening’s food and beverage sponsors, including Barna, Butter, Carmine’s, Grandaisy Bakery, Ivy Bakery, Piccolo Venezia, Planet Thailand 212, Bonterra Vineyards, Brooklyn Brewery, Classic Malts of Scotland, Don Sebastiani & Sons, Fetzer Vineyards, Johnny Walker, Ketel One Vodka, Nando Winery, and Veuve Clicquot Champagne.
The incidence of melanoma has been growing rapidly, with almost three times the number of new cases this year (2007) as compared to 1973. Increased sun exposure remains a significant risk factor.

How Sun Exposure Relates to Melanoma

Melanosome compartments, found within melanocytes, release pigments during prolonged exposure to sunlight which produce the tanning response of skin. Melanocytes live in harmony with the keratinocyte, a cell that acts to repress melanocyte proliferation. Pigments released from the melanocytes are taken up by the keratinocyte, and act as an umbrella to protect the keratinocyte from sunburn-related damage. In fair skinned people, lack of tanning leaves the keratinocyte at increased risk of sun damage and death. Thus, bad sunburns lead to the loss of keratinocytes, releasing the melanocyte to divide and acquire DNA mutations that can result in melanoma.

Preventing Excess Sun Exposure

Development of new sun block products such as Anthelios SX includes agents that block both UV A and UV B rays (Mexoryl SX, avobenzone (UVA) and octocrylene (UVB & UVA). In combination with an increased awareness of the dangers of excess sun exposure, these new products should help stem the tide by offering improved protection for the keratinocyte and melanocyte. A penny of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

New Therapeutic Strategies Derive From Elemental Melanoma Research

Successful treatments of melanoma have been hampered by the unique biology of this cancer. Fortunately, research to further understand how melanoma cells differ from normal tissues in the body has led to the discovery of potential new avenues of attack. One promising strategy relates to the excess production of free radicals by melanomas, and another exciting therapeutic strategy relates to blockade of the blood supply required for melanoma growth.

Turning excess production of free radicals into melanoma Achilles’ heel

Melanocyte transformation into cancer has been found to be associated with significant structural alterations in the melanosome. In addition to pigment production, melanosomes also protect the cell by soaking up free radicals caused by sunlight and the cellular metabolism of glucose. In melanoma, the disrupted and disorganized melanosome structure reverses this process. Melanosomes found in melanoma actually produce free radicals, such as hydrogen peroxide, furthering DNA damage. Additionally, melanosomes activate stress genes that prevent cell death, which may cause melanomas to become resistant to chemotherapy.

Fortunately, it is possible to use these free radicals as an Achilles’ heel. Free radicals are neutralized by scavengers such as glutathione that can help convert reactive hydrogen peroxide to water. Melanomas depend more on glutathione than normal tissues because of the increased production of radicals by the altered melanosomes. A new strategy is to treat patients with medicines that deplete the glutathione, leading to a selective build up of free radicals in the melanomas that exceed their scavenging capacity, resulting in melanoma cell death. Drugs that deplete glutathione, or interfere with its function, include ATN224, arsenic trioxide and disulfiram.

Our group at UC Irvine is currently evaluating these agents in clinical trials to determine if this strategy will pay off.
Targeting angiogenesis to block tumor growth

Cancer growth depends on an increased supply of nutrients. As tumors grow, new progeny cells find themselves farther from the blood stream and their oxygen supply. An oxygen sensor in cancer cells turns on the production of growth-factor molecules that can “call” the local blood vessels and ask for help. One such growth factor is Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor, or VEGF. This factor binds to the resting blood vessels in the vicinity, causing them to sprout new feeders that increase oxygen and nutrient supply, supporting further tumor expansion. Formation of new vessels is known as angiogenesis, a process essential for tumor growth and spread. Tumors that are proficient at turning on the “sprinkler system” grow faster and are more likely to spread effectively to distant soils.

Dr. Judah Folkman from Harvard has championed the notion of attacking tumor vascular supply for the past three decades. Melanoma is relatively unique among cancers in its ability to form vessel-like structures that may aid its own vascular supply. First described by Dr. Mary Hendrix at Northwestern, the “vasculogenic mimicry” exhibited by melanoma may potentially be exploited therapeutically. In addition to forming vascular-like structures, melanomas also express high levels of vascular endothelial growth factor receptor (VEGFR) and are highly angiogenic. That melanoma cells express the receptor for VEGF suggests that they may be activating their own vessel behavior patterns.

New agents have recently been designed to block angiogenesis and are entering widespread use for various types of cancer. The first successful anti-angiogenesis agent was Avastin, an antibody that binds to VEGF, preventing it from stimulating vessel sprouting. Genentech is currently sponsoring a trial, the BEAM study, to evaluate the benefit of Avastin in combination with carboplatin plus Taxol for melanoma. This study is still in its early phases, so the success of Avastin in melanoma is not yet known. Another approach to attacking angiogenesis is to block the function of receptors for VEGF. This is particularly interesting for melanoma in that both the tumor vessels and the tumor cells express these receptors. Axitinib is an oral small molecule developed by Pfizer that was studied in melanoma patients who had metastatic disease. Preliminary results from this Phase II clinical trial indicate that axitinib could benefit some patients, and results for this study will be reported at the American Society of Clinical Oncology meeting in Chicago this summer.

While melanoma has been a difficult opponent, by taking a chapter from the ancient Chinese general, Sun Tzu, we are coming to know our enemy. Knowledge derived from melanoma research has opened new doors that may ultimately lead to both improved preventative strategies and better treatment outcomes for patients with melanoma.

SUSAN FAZIO FOUNDATION FOR MELANOMA RESEARCH COMMITS TO SECOND $100,000 RESEARCH GRANT

The MRF Board expresses appreciation to the Susan Fazio Foundation for Melanoma Research for its second year of supporting MRF-sponsored research with a $100,000 grant. The grant to be funded will be announced in the next Newsletter.

The Foundation raises its funds primarily through a silent auction and award gala at the Plymouth Country Club in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania. It is organized by members of the Fazio Family and their friends to support the Foundation’s mission.

Thank you to everyone supporting the Susan Fazio Foundation for Melanoma Research and especially the Fazio Family – Joe Fazio, who serves as Secretary of the MRF Board, Chris and Michael Fazio, and Cara Mundell.
Thank You

Melanoma Research Foundation Thanks YOU

“Expressing our continuing appreciation for your involvement”.

“KELLY’S DREAM “
Thank you to the Kelly Elizabeth Gibson Foundation for Melanoma Awareness and Research and to Dale & Paul Gibson for the $25,000 grant to sponsor a 2008 scientist in Kelly’s memory. The Somerville, New Jersey foundation has been active in promoting awareness and raising money for research.

MICHAEL GELTRUDE FOUNDATION
We are excited with the growing partnership of the MRF with John and Dan Geltrude and for their continuing financial support of research in memory of their father, Michael Geltrude. Their Foundation is also committed to melanoma awareness and prevention. Last Fall they held a special, auditorium filled program in Toms River, New Jersey, to get the message across to high school students.

CARL OSTERLOF FOUNDATION
For the second year we extend our appreciation to the Carl Osterlof Foundation of River Edge, New Jersey, for their donation of $10,000 to help fund a MRF-sponsored researcher. The money was raised in an annual golf tournament in Carl Osterlof’s memory by family and friends. We especially thank Jane Daly, Joan Osterlof and Steve Farrell.

MATCHING GIFT COMPANIES
The gifts of many donors to the MRF are matched each year by their employers. In 2007 we received matching gifts from the following and express our continuing appreciation for their involvement and support of employee participation in MRF events, programs and services:

Abbott Laboratories Employee Giving Campaign
ADP Inc.
Aetna Foundation, Inc. & Partners in Community Giving
AIG Matching Grants Program
AllianceBernstein
American Express Company & Foundation Ameriprise Financial
Aon Foundation
Bank of America Foundation
Cashin Company
CMH Homes, Inc.
Community Solutions Fund
Dillon Yarn Corp.
Dominion Foundation
eBay Foundation
Freddie Mac Foundation
Gannett Foundation
Gap Inc. Giving Campaign
Genentech
GlaxoSmithKlein Foundation
Global Impact
GMAC ResCap
Goldman, Sachs & Co. Matching Gifts
Grange Insurance Companies
Hewlett Packard
HSBC Philanthropic Programs
Illinois Tool Works Foundation
John Hancock Financial Services, Inc.
Matching Gift Programs
Johnson & Johnson
JPMorgan Chase Bank
Juniper Networks Company
Kimberly Clark
Kraft Foods Matching Program
Lab Safety Supply, Inc.
Levi Strauss
Merck Partnership for Giving
Merill Lynch & Co Foundation, Inc.
Microsoft
Minerals Technology Inc.
Morgan Stanley
Network for Good
NJ Natural Gas
NJR
Provident Life and Accident Insurance Company
Prudential Foundation Matching Gifts
Quest Diagnostics Matching Gifts Program
RBC Dain Rauscher Foundation
RBS Greenwich Capital
Renaissance Technologies, LLC
State of Washington
Time Inc.
United Health Group
Wachovia Foundation Matching Gifts Program
Washington Mutual Matching Gift Program
Wellpoint Associate Giving Campaign

We also say “THANK YOU” to:
The Gawel Family for the 1st Annual Paul’s Buick Bash/Buick Performance Group Picnic which raised money in honor of Paul Gawel’s 50th Birthday. … Cubellis, a firm of architects, interior designers and engineers in Boston, Massachusetts, which organized a social event and raised money in memory of Sarah Pauli and Lucien Caron. … The Norman Jaskol Family who raised melanoma awareness among the boating community and raises funds for the MRF at Lake Lanier, Georgia.

2008 BEGINS STRONG!
Our first fundraiser in the new year was organized by Chris Knoerr in Chicago on January 5. Chris has been doing an event at a Chicago Bulls basketball game in memory of her brother, Robert Hansen, for the past five years. Thanks, Chris.

Chris’ event in Chicago was followed by Erinn McCarthy (Oak...
Ridge, New Jersey) who ran as a Miles for Melanoma Team member in the Walt Disney World Marathon on January 13. Erinn reported that her time was 4 hours, 45 minutes and 59 seconds. “The weather was ok; a muggy day with cloud cover until 9-10 am which helped. Once the sun came out it was brutal; hot and no wind. Around mile 20 I was having some bad joint pain. I stretched, walked and kept up my optimism to finish.” Congratulations to Erinn.

And then on January 26 Tara Joyce and Rebecca Carter held their annual Black Ribbon Ball in Lima, Ohio. A photo and details will be in the next Newsletter.

2007 COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING -

Because there were so many community events reported in 2007, we could not include them all in our last Newsletter. We thank community volunteers who helped us raise money for melanoma research in 2007 including the following:

Congratulations to Cate Ryan who ran as a Miles for Melanoma Team Member in the September 9th Volksbank Marathon in Muenster, Germany (located in North Rhein Westfalia). Cate ran in memory of her mom, Dolores Ryan. Her time was 4 hours, 23 minutes. … Welcome and congratulations to a new fundraiser – The Chris Kutter Memorial Golf Tournament which was held at the Canyon Creek Country Club in Richardson, Texas. A special thank you to Chris Chambless and his team. … Sandy Madzia and her family welcomed 75 guests to her “Mexican Fiesta” and in addition to great food, raised money for research in memory of George Madzia. … Miles for Mike (Revers), a 5K walk/run in Washington, Missouri. We thank Beth Revers and her team for a great first-year event. … Karen Dolge ran in the Boston Marathon under the Miles for Melanoma banner. “The weather wasn’t the best at all,” states Karen. “I was soggy from the start, but that didn’t dampen my spirits!” … We also welcome Kirstin Travers who organized the first “Balmoral Turkey Trot” for about 70 family members and friends over the Thanksgiving weekend in Virginia. We look forward to having the “trot” as an annual fundraiser. … If anyone is interested in doing a bowling event, we can connect you with Tara Clarke from Horsham, Pennsylvania who learned how to organize a great event. The event was for the Mara Howard Fund with proceeds also coming to the MRF. … We welcome Jan Cox and thank her and her team of volunteers for organizing the first Gary D. Cox Memorial Golf Tournament at the Rancho Mirage Country Club (Rancho Mirage, California). What a tremendous golf tournament! … We thank as well Karen Fuller for the 20.2 miles “Art’s Ride” in Walla Walla, Washington, Peg Boyle and her family for the 2nd Annual Tom Butler Golf Tournament, Coreen Johnson for the Randy G. Johnson Golf Memorial in Port Orchard, Washington, and Jamie Richardson, Hillary Richardson and Heather Rewiski for their Ohio event, The Big Mur. … Jean Weadick and her family and friends in Cincinnati were busy with a number of fundraisers, including a wine tasting and two different runs. Thanks, Jean…. We appreciate the efforts of Pete Chia-maps and his team for organizing the Golf Outing in Memory of Nick Poplawski at the Fresh Meadow Golf Course in Hillside, Illinois. … Wow, what a great day of golf at the
## Grassroots Events

### GET INVOLVED!

You are invited to get involved in fundraising events in your community as a participant, sponsor or volunteer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2</td>
<td>UCSF’s Dermatology Interest Group (Tiffanie Scharschmidt) Napa Valley Marathon (California)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 29</td>
<td>Melodies for Melanoma (Centerville, Ohio)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 29</td>
<td>3rd Annual Phillips R. Geraghty Memorial Golf Tournament (New Orleans, Louisiana)</td>
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<td>April 7</td>
<td>Golf Tournament in Memory of Jon Lewis at the Glen Eagles Country Club (North Dallas/Plano, Texas)</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
<td>Miles for Melanoma by the Sanders Sisters in the Nature’s Path Whidbey Island Marathon/Half-Marathon (Whidbey Island, Washington)</td>
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<td>April 19</td>
<td>2nd Annual Gary D. Cox Golf Tournament at Rancho Mirage Country Club (Rancho Mirage, California)</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>5th Annual Hack n’ Smack, Kerry Daveline Memorial Celebrity Golf Tournament at El Caballero Country Club (Tazlina, California)</td>
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<td>April 21</td>
<td>Karen Dolge’s Miles for Melanoma in the Boston Marathon (Boston)</td>
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<td>May 3</td>
<td>KENTucky Derby Fundraiser (Dewey Beach, Delaware)</td>
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<td>May 5</td>
<td>Bottle King Spring Gala (West Orange, New Jersey)</td>
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<td>May 10</td>
<td>6th Annual Doin’ It for Deb at Augustana College (Rock Island, Illinois)</td>
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<td>May 10</td>
<td>3rd Annual TEB’s Troops “Call to Arms” (Indianapolis, Indiana)</td>
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<td>May 10</td>
<td>Miles for Melanoma in Memory of Mark Bartulis (Laverne, California)</td>
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<td>May 17</td>
<td>Operation Wardog in Memory of S.Sgt. Jon Warrington, USMC and 6th Annual Raffle (Gibbon, Nebraska)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 18</td>
<td>Linda A. Transou Melanoma March at Maybury State Park (Northville, Michigan)</td>
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<td>May 18</td>
<td>Katie’s Black Ribbon Run in the Cleveland Marathon (Ohio)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 18</td>
<td>Joe Falso Memorial Golf Tournament at the Chardonnay Golf Club (Napa Valley, California)</td>
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<td>May 31</td>
<td>(Tentative Date) Miles for Melanoma sponsored by Full Spectrum Dermatology (Fullerton, California)</td>
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<td>June 4</td>
<td>Miles for Melanoma for Leo Hart in the Peachtree Road Race (Atlanta, Georgia)</td>
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<td>June 14</td>
<td>Block the Sun Run (Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 21</td>
<td>Golf Tournament in Memory of Nick Poplawski at the Fresh Meadow Golf Club (Hillside, Illinois)</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 4</td>
<td>Annual Don Aronow Golf Outing at the Fresh Meadow</td>
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<td>July 20</td>
<td>Chicago 5K - Tebs Troops (Chicago)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 1</td>
<td>2nd Annual Run from the Sun Memphis (Tennessee)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 3</td>
<td>TwinsDays 5K (Twinsburg, Ohio)</td>
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<td>Aug 11</td>
<td>Magic for Melanoma (Orange County, California)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 11</td>
<td>Annual Don Aronow Golf Outing at the Fresh Meadow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 30</td>
<td>Annual Fundraiser in Memory of George Madzia (Adena, Ohio)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 6</td>
<td>3rd Annual Black Ribbon Benefit (Westerville, Ohio)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 14</td>
<td>1st Annual Miles for Melanoma of Delaware Walk at Rockford Park (Wilmington, Delaware)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 21</td>
<td>New Jersey Miles for Melanoma Run/Walk (Morristown, New Jersey)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>KDB Melanoma Walk at Kensington Metro Park (Milford, Michigan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 25</td>
<td>Greg’s Event, A Beach Run/Walk in Memory of Greg Conrad at Siesta Key Beach (Sarasota, Florida)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 7</td>
<td>Susan Fazio Melanoma Research Foundation Gala at the Plymouth Meeting Golf Club (Plymouth, Pennsylvania)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 23</td>
<td>TEAM M4M in the Philadelphia Marathon (Team from Washington DC area)</td>
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Go to our website www.melanoma.org for information for all events.

Although not written explicitly for the melanoma community, “It’s Not About the Hair” will resonate with anyone who has been diagnosed with cancer. (And just for the record, the author did have a melanoma diagnosed at such an early stage that she never talks about it.) Jarvis contends that, when friends and family ask “Will you lose your hair?”, they are really asking “Will you die?” In this book, she uses her own experiences as a cancer patient undergoing surgery, chemotherapy and radiation to encourage open dialogue about cancer and our fears of death—and to make us laugh.

The Right Reverend Debra Jarvis is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and works as an outpatient oncology chaplain for the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance. She also worked for many years as a hospice spiritual counselor. Recently, Jarvis was diagnosed with and treated for Stage II breast cancer. This book evolved from the funny, straightforward and poignant emails she used to keep her friends and family fully informed about her cancer journey.

You don’t have to be religious to enjoy or benefit from this book, but you probably do need a sense of humor—for a reverend, Jarvis is quite irreverent. She frequently talks with God, whom she visualizes as a cross between Mr. Miyagi (from The Karate Kid) and Martha Stewart (from her pre-felon days)—a persona that she labels Mr. Martha Miyagi. She muses: “I think your religion is simply the basket in which you carry your spirituality. So maybe you carry your spirituality in a Jewish basket, a Buddhist basket, an Islamic basket, a Christian basket, or a basket without a name. Whatever. The important thing is that you don’t get more hooked on the basket than the contents.”

Her irreverence also extends to cancer with a big C. When a friend, relative, or patient tells her that he/she has cancer, Jarvis’ response is almost always: “That totally sucks!”

Jarvis describes herself as a graduate of the Shit Happens School of Cause and Effect, who nevertheless got caught up in trying to figure out what she did wrong to cause her cancer, from too many protein bars, to skipping lunch, to the stress of getting fired from a job. Seeking to put the question to rest, Jarvis recounts: “So I meditated and went deep within and asked my heart, what caused my cancer? My heart answered, ‘Shit happens’."

Finally, here’s what Jarvis says she learned from her experiences as a cancer patient: “Probably the most astounding thing to discover was that only a small part of the cancer experience is about medicine. Most of it is about feelings and faith, and losing and finding your identity, and discovering strength and flexibility you never knew you had. It’s also about looking at life and staring death in the eye. It’s about realizing the most valuable things in life are not things at all, but relationships. It’s about laughing in the face of uncertainty and having the courage to ask for more chocolate and less broccoli. And, if you haven’t figured it out by now, it’s about realizing that cancer is the best excuse for getting out of practically anything…”

Her irreverence also extends to cancer with a big C. When a friend, relative, or patient tells her that he/she has cancer, Jarvis’ response is almost always: “That totally sucks!”

I’ve read this book twice and I give it as a gift to friends and family who are struggling with cancer—either their own or that of a loved one. Without taking away from how serious cancer really is, this book provides a little compassion and comic relief from the fearful intensity that surrounds the cancer experience.
Nutritional Health in Cancer Survivorship
Focus: Melanoma

Sarah Washburn MS, RD, CD Nutrition Services, Seattle Cancer Care Alliance was a speaker at the November 2 symposium in Seattle, Washington. The following is an outline of her presentation.

PREVENTION

Although UV radiation—mainly over-exposure to sunlight—is thought to be a major cause of melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers, dietary factors have been investigated as potential causes as well. The 2007 publication, “Food, Nutrition, Physical Activity, and the Prevention of Cancer – a Global Perspective,” an Expert Panel from the World Cancer Research Fund and the American Institute for Cancer Research, concludes that arsenic in water is a probable cause of skin cancer. Unfortunately, there is no clear evidence to declare that other dietary factors, such as foods containing beta-carotene, lycopene, vitamin E, vitamin C, zinc, soluble fiber, omega-3 fatty acids or foods such as non-starchy vegetables, potatoes, fruit, fish, eggs, tea or alcohol, either increase or decrease risk for melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers.

However, the report (which can be found at www.wcrf.org) does make the following eight recommendations for the prevention of all cancers. (Cancer survivors are urged to follow the recommendations for cancer prevention.)

• Be as lean as possible within the normal range of body weight
• Maintain a healthy body weight through childhood and adulthood
• Avoid weight gain and increase in waist size throughout adulthood
• Be physically active as part of everyday life
• Be moderately active (equivalent to brisk walking) at least 30 minutes daily.
• As fitness improves, increase to at least 60 minutes of moderate or at least 30 minutes of vigorous activity daily
• Limit sedentary habits such as watching TV
• Limit consumption of energy-dense foods / Avoid sugary drinks
• Limit foods that are more than 225 to 275 kcal per 100 gm or 3 oz (read labels)
• Consume “fast foods” sparingly, if at all
• Eat mostly foods of plant origin
• Eat at least 14 oz of a variety of non-starchy vegetables and fruits daily
• Eat relatively unprocessed grains and/or legumes with every meal
• Limit intake of red meat (beef, pork, lamb and goat) and avoid processed meats
• Preservation methods include smoking, curing or salting or addition of chemical preservatives
• Eat less than 500 gm or 18 oz of red meat weekly, very little if any to be processed
• Limit alcoholic drinks
• Drink no more than 2 drinks daily for men and 1 drink daily for women (1 drink = 5 oz wine, 12 oz beer, 1.5 oz liquor)
• Limit consumption of salt / Avoid moldy grains and legumes
• Avoid salt-preserved, salted or salty foods
• Limit consumption of processed foods with added salt to ensure intake of less than 2400 mg of sodium daily
• Do not eat moldy grains or legumes
• Aim to meet nutritional needs through diet alone
• Dietary supplements are not recommended for cancer prevention
SURVIVORSHIP

Once diagnosed and treated for melanoma, there may be lingering side effects associated with treatment that can be minimized by adjusting your diet.

FATIGUE

Fatigue is one of the most common side effects of cancer and cancer treatment—and fatigue has been reported in cancer survivors up to 10 years after diagnosis and treatment. Although exercise is one of the most effective treatments for fatigue, certain dietary changes may help alleviate the extent of fatigue as well:

• Drink plenty of water
• Eat breakfast
• Eat small frequent meals and snacks that contain protein, rather than large meals
• Eat iron-rich foods

Eat foods that have anti-inflammatory properties (including salmon, halibut, greens and walnuts) and limit foods that may increase inflammation such as foods containing trans fats (hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated vegetable oils). Recent reports suggest that fatigue may be associated with an inflammatory response (Bower 2007).

WEIGHT LOSS

Unintentional weight loss after cancer treatment can lead to decreased quality of life, functional status and survival. It is important to notify your doctor if you continue to lose weight unintentionally.

Try to eat nutrient dense foods such as hearty soups and stews, peanut butter (or other nut butters), avocados, dried fruit, roasted or sautéed vegetables, yogurt, cheeses, smoothies, casseroles and pasta dishes with sauces.

Most importantly, find healthy foods that taste good to you.

BONE LOSS

Many cancer treatments result in accelerated bone loss which can increase your risk for osteoporosis.

Daily weight-bearing exercise, calcium and vitamin D are important to help preserve bone health. If bone loss is detected by a bone density study, 1,500 of calcium and 800 units of vitamin D from food and/or supplementation are recommended to help decrease the risk for further bone loss.

Calcium sources include most dairy product, greens, almonds, legumes and calcium-fortified foods such as soy milk and juices. Remember to shake all calcium-fortified liquids as the calcium often settles to the bottom of the container.

It may be difficult to get sufficient vitamin D from your diet. Therefore, a multivitamin/mineral that contains ~400 units of vitamin D and/or a calcium supplement that contains vitamin D can be considered to meet your requirements.

Nutrition advice can be difficult to incorporate into your lifestyle. You may benefit from consulting a Registered Dietitian who can provide recommendations that are tailored to your medical situation and your food preferences. And, consider taking a cooking class to expand your exposure to new food.
“This is a T-shirt illustration I did for a young lady in high school. Her senior project was to promote sun safety. One thing I have discovered with my work with students is that they don’t get seriousness about melanoma (and I pray they never have to). This was created to appeal to one thing that drives kids into tanning beds in the first place – vanity. If the shirts get one kid to think about protecting themselves for any reason, then it was worth the time and the effort.”

– Marshall Ramsey