MRF CONVENE FIRST “ONE VOICE MELANOMA” MEETING: A REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

A shared desire to abolish the incidence of and mortality due to melanoma brought together thirty-seven representatives from 20 different melanoma organizations in Washington DC from March 31-April 2. Underwritten by the Melanoma Research Foundation, virtually all participants at the meeting had been impacted by melanoma on a personal level, driving them to take action against this disease on many fronts. Many of these organizations support critical awareness and education initiatives on a local level. However, few have had the resources to advocate actively for melanoma on a national level, especially as it relates to federal research funding, public policy, and the development of treatments and new agents.

The idea for this meeting was conceived by the Melanoma Research Foundation, which has increasingly recognized the potential advantage that could be wielded by a collective voice for melanoma.

The weekend meeting began with a reception for attendees hosted in Great Falls, Virginia at the home of Chad MacDonald of the Brenda MacDonald Melanoma Research Foundation. On Saturday morning former United States Senator Connie Mack from Florida, a melanoma survivor, set the tone for the meeting by lauding meeting participants for their vital contributions while urging them to join together in order to more effectively leverage their efforts.

Dr. Alan Geller, co-chair of the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention, described the potential for changing the landscape of melanoma detection and treatment. He emphasized the need to issue audience-appropriate messages and enlist the assistance of non-dermatologist health care providers. Dr. Steven Rosenberg from the National Cancer Institute related the exciting progress occurring within NCI in the area of immunotherapy for the treatment of malignant melanoma. Prospects for the development of additional melanoma interventions based on the accrual of genetic information were presented by Dr. Jeffrey Trent of the Translational Genomics Research Institute in Phoenix.

Ms. Paula Kim, of Translating Research Across Communities (TRAC) and Paula Kim Consulting, an experienced research advocate, shared examples of effective advocacy such as her work in pancreatic cancer, and stressed the important role that advocates take on in promoting research, particularly on Capitol Hill, and ensuring that the focus of research remains on the patient.

"Our challenge is to see that our voice is heard, but the only way that this will occur is if we speak with one voice."

–Senator Connie Mack

Following the presentations a series of workshops were held. One workshop focused on awareness, prevention, and early detection of melanoma. Education was identified as one of the most critical components of promoting prevention and early detection. There was particular concern regarding the fact that most medical and nursing students are not formally trained to perform skin examinations. It was also recognized that there are several non-medical professionals (e.g., hairdressers, chiropractors, lifeguards) who interact with people at risk for melanoma on a regular basis and should be targets of educational messages.

It was also highlighted that a straightforward, high impact message needs to be developed to inform the general public that melanoma can be fatal. The need to alter cultural perceptions that being tan is beautiful was cited by several of the groups. It was noted that, in addition to changing behaviors, effective legislation may eventually cause a shift in cultural attitudes toward sun safety.

(Continued on Page 2)
The second breakout session focused on research and advocacy. Based on the presentations by Drs. Rosenberg and Trent and Ms. Kim, the meeting participants recognized the critical importance of research and acknowledged that small organizations individually do not have the resources or influence to affect federal support of melanoma research. Each of the breakout groups ardently endorsed the need for individual foundations to join in creating a unified voice for melanoma.

In this regard, an effective melanoma advocacy coalition must have clearly identified collective goals and priorities. The group agreed that a coalition should focus on priorities that cannot or are not being sufficiently met by smaller organizations. In this regard, preliminary discussion identified advocating for increased federal funding for melanoma research as well as interfacing with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to facilitate the development and approval of melanoma treatments as critical areas of need. In addition, they discussed a review of policy and areas of science that are not financially specific but related to defining priorities.

It was reported that there were several models of coalitions that should be examined to gain a sense of understanding in order to determine the most efficient approach for melanoma advocacy. Adoption of a particular model should take into consideration the strengths and obstacles of group efforts. Several assets that would contribute to the success of a melanoma coalition would include the involvement of a significant number of committed foundations, appropriate financial resources including dedicated staff, well-defined structure and governance, the willingness of the Melanoma Research Foundation to act as a catalyst, and the participation of key individuals who have knowledge of and influence on the activities on Capitol Hill. Potential barriers to success included the limited time and resources of the individual organizations. Additionally, care must be taken to ensure that individual agendas and concerns are not permitted to interfere with coalition efforts.

Linda Pilkington, the Executive Director of the Melanoma Research Foundation, outlined the activities taken to date by the MRF in setting up meetings with key leadership at the National Cancer Institute and participating in the State of the Science Meeting hosted by NCI-NIH on melanoma. MRF has some key relationships already in place with public policy firms who have strong backgrounds in public process on Capitol Hill. The coalition would benefit greatly from the experience and skills of these people.

The majority of participants explicitly stated their interest in being part of a melanoma coalition and enthusiastically agreed to reconvene in order to advance its formation.

Participants will consult their Boards and consider potential priorities and structures for a melanoma coalition. They will also identify resources that may benefit the coalition, including financial resources and/or individuals who have relevant experience or skills. The Melanoma Research Foundation will encourage a continuing discussion of these issues and will work hard to facilitate the generation of a collective, effective voice against melanoma.

### Melanoma Organizations Attending the One Voice Meeting

- Ann’s Hope Foundation
- Bill Walter III Melanoma Research Foundation
- Brenda MacDonald Melanoma Research Foundation
- Charlie Guild Melanoma Foundation
- Collette Coyne Memorial Melanoma Foundation
- Foundation for Melanoma Research
- James A. Schlipmann Melanoma Cancer Foundation
- Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation
- Kate’s Foundation
- Melanoma Awareness
- Melanoma Hope Network
- Melanoma International Foundation
- Melanoma Research Foundation
- Melanoma Support
- Mollie Biggane Melanoma Fund
- Outrun the Sun, Inc.
- Teb’s Troops
- TGen Foundation
- The Shade Foundation
- William S. Graham Foundation for Melanoma Research
MRF was introduced to **Ed Long** of Capitol Associates during the One Voice meeting by Chad MacDonald of the Brenda MacDonald Melanoma Research Foundation. Ed was successful in getting the following language included in the Senate version of the Fiscal 2007 Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations bill under the NIH/National Cancer Institute’s section of the report:

"**Melanoma.** Melanoma is the fastest growing cancer in the United States and worldwide. The etiology of the disease is not well understood, and the average life span of patients with advanced melanoma is less than 1 year. Nevertheless, there is a shortage of melanoma researchers and a lack of effective drugs and treatments. Therefore, the Committee strongly urges the NCI to convene a panel of consumers, extramural and intramural scientists to develop a 5-year strategic plan for melanoma research and submit it to the Committee by July 1, 2007. The strategic plan should identify the current shortfalls and promise of melanoma research and recommended new directions and targets for future research. The plan should also explore the role of new and innovative technologies including shared biospecimen repositories; identify and validate melanoma-specific targets to design effective therapy; and identify opportunities for facilitating translational research in this area."

Ed worked with **Ellen Murray**, Minority Staff Director with **Senator Tom Harkin** (D-Iowa). We also thank **Senator Arlen Specter** and his Staff Director, **Bettilou Taylor**, who included this language in the report.
3RD ANNUAL HACKNSMACK KERRY DAVELINE MEMORIAL CELEBRITY OUTING

For additional photos of supporting celebrities, go to www.hacknsmack.com/celebrities.php

Lorenzo Neal (San Diego Chargers),
Gregory Itzin (24), Christopher Gorham (Out of Practice), Kevin E. West, (Co-host)

Entertainment provided by the BeachToys
(Mike Moynahan on right, also Co-host)

Kerry Daveline at his last USC vs Notre Dame game with Co-hosts Kevin West and Michael Moynahan.

Kerry’s Girls - Wife Mia, Skylar and Little Kerry

James Hyde (Passions) & Kevin E West (Co-Host-Actors Network)

George Ratliff, Durell Strouse (Pepsico), Lee Torti, Chris Calano (Pepsico)

John Spersud, Spencer Strauss, Tom White, Jaime Gomez (Nash Bridges)

Gregory Itzin taking a minute to sign autographs

Christopher Gorham - Only hole in one in history of tournament!
“LAPS FOR MELANOMA” – CAMDEN, OHIO

Congratulations to Shinya Michimi for his idea to raise money at the G&J Kartway on May 21 through the Ohio Valley Karting Association and in honor of Carolyn Marsh, the wife of a karter who is currently fighting melanoma. In addition to passing out awareness information to karters (who often spend much of the day in the sun), they filled out pledge forms designating an amount per lap or a donation. “This all started as a school project,” explained Shinya’s Mom, Kelly. “My son’s teacher assigned a project whereby the students had to either perform community service or some kind of fundraiser. Shinya belongs to a group that races go-karts. He remembered a very touching speech given by one of the adult karters who won 1st place in his class, about his wife, Carolyn Marsh. Shinya decided he wanted to do something for their family, something to help the cause and to show our group’s support.” Thank you, Shinya, and everyone participating for raising $273.55.

Shinya Michimi accepts a donation from a fellow karter.

$10,000 DONATION FROM THE MIKE GELTRUDE FOUNDATION – NUTLEY, NEW JERSEY

Dr. James Goydos, Cancer Institute of New Jersey, and Bill Marsch, MRF’s Program Director, participated in the Inaugural Benefit of the Mike Geltrude Foundation and gratefully accepted the Foundation’s donation of $10,000. Over 500 people attended the benefit. The Foundation has already kicked off a sun safety program for soccer and football and is working with the Superintendent of Schools. They have also been active in advocating for tanning salon laws in New Jersey.

OPERATION WARDOG – GIBBON, NEBRASK

Congratulations to Candi and Jim Warrington and Cheryl Hughes for another successful Operation Wardog fundraiser with family and friends. The event is in memory of the Warrington’s son, Jon. A highlight from this year’s event was Dave Coleman’s “Leap of Faith.” Dave uses his motorcycle jumps to then share his faith with those who come to watch his stunts.

Dave Coleman’s “Leap of Faith” at Operation Wardog.

4th ANNUAL “ART’S RIDE” – WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON

Congratulations to Karen Fuller and her team for another successful “Art’s Ride” which was held on May 17 in Walla Walla, Washington. "Art’s Ride " is a walk, run, bike ride event along the beautiful foothills of the Blue Mountains in memory of Art Fuller, who lost his battle to Melanoma at the age of 51. As reported by Karen, “The unpredictable spring weather held off and it was a gorgeous, rain free event.”

SUSAN FAZIO FOUNDATION FOR MELANOMA RESEARCH JOINS MRF’S RESEARCH TEAM – PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

We welcome the Fazio Family and their friends to our growing team of research supporters. The Foundation, established to fund melanoma research in memory of Susan Fazio, kicked off its fundraising efforts at a Happy Hour at Tom Hagen’s Tavern in Philadelphia on March 23 and will continue its fundraising at a September 15th fundraiser at Plymouth Country Club. Their goal is to fund a research grant in Susan Fazio’s memory.

Left to right, Chris, Mike, Cara (Mundell) and Joe Fazio at the Happy Hour in Philadelphia as a kick off for the Susan Fazio Foundation for Melanoma Research.

(Continued on Page 11)
The Solar Protective Factory (SPF®), a pioneer in the area of sun protective clothing, has selected MRF to receive a percentage of its sales of SPF® t-shirts (www.spftshirts.com). As stated by the company’s president, “SPF® believes in the same goals as MRF, and feels its contribution from the sales of SPF® t-shirts will help MRF reach its goal of finding a cure for melanoma.”

The Melanoma Research Foundation welcomes SPF® to its “MRF STORE,” and is grateful for the affiliation, which will not only raise money for research but will help to expand the public’s involvement in sun safety. MRF strongly urges everyone to utilize protective measures such as sun block and sun-protective clothing as a means to help decrease the rising incidences of melanoma and other skin cancers.

As an added benefit to MRF members and supporters, SPF® is offering an extra 17% discount (that’s in addition to the 17% discount offered when purchasing four or more shirts), when ordering on line from www.spftshirts.com. Simply type-in the following discount code, HS0017, when ordering. You’ll be on your way to a colorful and comfortable means of protecting yourself in the sun. This offer is valid for MRF until September 30, 2006.

With over 70 colors from which to choose, SPF® t-shirts offer the world’s largest selection of 100% cotton, premium quality pre-shrunk UV rated (UPF 40-50) shirts at truly affordable prices. Plus all of our shirts are UV tested and certified by the International UV Testing Laboratories according to US standards. MRF members and supporters will pay less than $9 for short-sleeve and less than $13 for long-sleeve t-shirts. No other sun-protective company comes close to providing great sun-protection apparel at affordable prices while helping us fund our projects.

You can now raise money to help MRF fund melanoma research without costing you a cent! Sounds too good to be true? Read on!

Rebate-A-Cause is the only online fundraising company that creates a free online shopping page branded for MRF. (We were the first organization to join this program.) There are hundreds of brand name retailers involved in the program. And, the items purchased through this program are the same price as purchased directly from the retailer’s online store. When you shop online through the MRF shopping page, MRF will receive a percentage of the purchase. (The percentage varies by retailer.)

**What is the Program?**

- Rebate-A-Cause (www.rebateacause.com) is an international organization that has developed an online shopping community of over 1,400 merchants.
- Shop through the private shopping page (www.rebateacause.com) that Rebate-A-Cause built for MRF, and each merchant listed will pay a portion of your purchase to our foundation, with no additional cost to you.

*What do you do?*

- Register Now (www.rebateacause.com) as an MRF Supporter on Rebate-A-Cause’s secure site.
- Each time you shop online, start by visiting our private shopping page (www.rebateacause.com)
- 100% of your rebate listed next to the merchant’s name (www.rebateacause.com) will be sent to the Melanoma Research Foundation through Rebate-A-Cause!

It’s a win-win situation. For you and for melanoma research. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT!
THANKS, STEVE AND GEORGE!

Steve Farrell, the first Miles for Melanoma marathoner in the New York City Marathon and principal of Farrell Communications in New Jersey, developed a new public service announcement, on behalf of one of his Virginia clients, to support MRF. The PSA is available for anyone to distribute locally. It is available on the MRF website (www.melanoma.org) for you to download and to give to local radio stations. Please contact the MRF Office if you require further guidance on getting this PSA on a local radio station.

Thanks as well to George Stott of Life Goal Advisors who airs the PSA on his weekly financial radio talk show. “Your Money, Your Life” is heard in the greater Philadelphia area on WNJC 1360 AM every Monday evening from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. George has also spoken about melanoma during his show. You can also go to WNJC 1360’s website to listen to the PSA.

CARLEY GROVE’S POEM SELECTED FOR PUBLICATION

Carley Grove, a 10 year old student at Rosy Mound Elementary in Michigan and the daughter of a melanoma survivor, had her poem, “Black,” elected for publication in Kaleidoscope 2006, a collection of student writings sponsored by the Michigan Reading Association. In its 15th year of publication, Kaleidoscope celebrates the talents of Michigan’s young people, from kindergarten to twelfth grade. Here is Carley’s winning poem

BLACK

Black is the color that lingers so high.
Black is the color of the midnight sky.
Black is the color over my head at night.
Black is the color that gives me a fright.
Black is the color of a deadly thief.
Black is melanoma. I HATE that beast.

Congratulations, Carley!

JOEL ZAKLIN & MICHAEL QUATTRO ELECTED NEW MRF TRUSTEES; JEAN SCHLIPMANN THANKED FOR BOARD SERVICE

Joel Zaklin, Vice President of Sales & Marketing at G&W Laboratories in South Plainfield, New Jersey, and Michael Quattro, Vice President, Marketing with Amylin Pharmaceuticals, Inc. in San Diego, were elected to the MRF Board of Trustees at its March meeting in San Francisco. Both trustees come with extensive marketing experiences in the pharmaceutical arena and are already involved in the redesign and updating of the MRF website and with redeveloping MRF materials.

Jean Schlipmann of the James A. Schlipmann Melanoma Cancer Foundation has been acknowledged for her services to the MRF Board over the past two years. Jean, through her Foundation, sponsored a two-year research grant.

DERMATOLOGY INTEREST GROUPS (DIG) EXPAND MILES FOR MELANOMA PARTICIPATION

In 2004 the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine Dermatology Interest Group (DIG) organized a Miles for Melanoma campaign for the Akron Road Runner Marathon in Akron, Ohio and repeated the program again in 2004. There were 20 runners running a total of 105 miles and raised over $3,000. The Vanderbilt University School of Medicine DIG organized a campaign for the Country Music Marathon and Half Marathon in Nashville the following year. Today, MRF is receiving support from DIGs on campuses across the United States, including University of California, San Francisco and Irvine, Columbia University, Ohio State University, University of Texas, Southwestern, University of Pennsylvania, Louisiana State University, Kansas University, and Case Western Reserve University, as well as from Vanderbilt and Northeastern Ohio Universities. We welcome this partnership and the commitment to raise $50,000 for melanoma research.

Bill Marsch, MRF Program Director (left), met in Philadelphia with representatives of DIG to discuss the expansion of the group’s Miles for Melanoma. From left to right, Kelly Werlinger (who recently passed away), Kristin Hudacek and Alex Eshaghian.

2006 GRANT PROPOSALS

MRF received 37 grant proposals at its deadline, July 5, for review for 2007 research grants. Of the 37 grants, ten were for the Established Investigator Award ($100,000 per year for a maximum of two years) and twenty-seven for the Career Development Award ($50,000 per year for a maximum of two years). Promotion for a Postdoctoral Fellowship Award, which will be MRF’s first, has been extended. Dr. Ruth Halaban from Yale University is chairing this year’s Research Grant Review Committee.

Following a peer-review of proposals, recommendations will be presented to the MRF Board at its December meeting for consideration of funding starting on January 1, 2007.

MILES FOR MELANOMA PROGRAM GROWS

To date in 2006 there have been 7 Miles for Melanoma completed in marathons across the United States. Completed marathons include:

- Laura Faith Giesecke (Orange County, California) – In Memory of Christine L. Giesecke
- Kristin Marcott (Boston) - In Honor of Harold Marcott
- Stefanie Lamarea (New Jersey) – In Honor of Phil Ricco
- The Weadick Family (Cincinnati) – In Honor of Jon Witte
- Case Western DIG (Cleveland)
- Vanderbilt University DIG (Nashville)
- MaryJo Lomax - University of California San Francisco DIG (San Francisco)

Upcoming Miles for Melanoma include:
- Rebecca Martel (Chicago) – In Honor of Laura
- Kim Filips (Detroit) – In Memory of Bob Babiarz
- David Denny (New York City) In Memory of Bob Ober
- Mollie Klurfeld (Chicago) - In Memory of Ian MacDonald

We are talking with many others about participating this coming Fall.

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In Memoriam: Tricia Elaine Black
April 24, 1976 — July 11, 2006

Our sweet, brave, strong Tricia Elaine Black passed away on July 11, 2006, surrounded by her immediate family. She was so many things to so many people — mother, wife, daughter, friend, confidante, and role model. She was also a source of inspiration to all of us.

Throughout her long and courageous struggle with melanoma, Teb never once lost hope, and the smile on her face never faded. That which she hoped for may have changed, and it may have been harder to find reasons to keep smiling, but she persevered through all of her challenges and was able to continue to see the bright side of life. Even in her darkest times, she continued to find strength and joy from Sam’s accomplishments, from Michael’s unwavering love and support, and from the moments of happiness and triumph, big and small, that occurred in the lives of her friends and loved ones.

She leaves behind a legacy in all of us — in those who knew her well and in those who came to know her only through her honest and moving descriptions of her journey on her blog. And, of course, through Teb’s Troops. Because of Teb and because of the generosity of so many, we have contributed tens of thousands of dollars and will continue to contribute tens of thousands more to melanoma research and education. Because of Teb, we hope that one day soon, a thirty-year-old woman who learns that she has stage IV melanoma, will know that there are treatments that will work, and that someday, another person, another parent, another spouse, who hears that same news will know that there is a cure for this beast. We will — no, we must — continue to wage this war on Teb’s behalf. In fighting this fight, in living our lives, in loving our loved ones, and in continuing to HOPE, we will honor and remember this brave and amazing woman.

Sweet and wonderful Teb, we will miss you with every ounce of our beings. But we will keep living, keep laughing, keep fighting, and keep loving as a tribute to you. You will never be forgotten, dear friend.

With hope, The Officers of Teb’s Troops

The Melanoma Research Foundation extends its condolences to Tricia Elaine Black’s family. In her name we are receiving financial support from Teb’s Troops which will be invested in our growing program of research.
MRF PARTICIPATES IN FIRST NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE SUMMIT

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) invited the MRF to participate in the first seminar on “Listening and Learning Together: Building a Bridge of Trust” (The Summit) on June 19 and 20, 2006 in Bethesda, Maryland.

Invited were many other foundations and groups interested in the functions of the NCI and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Tours of the NIH campus were provided and the services of the incredible NIH National Library of Medicine www.nlm.nih.gov were reviewed. This website links to a wealth of information.

The Summit was a forum to learn about the NCI’s current state of cancer research and to share experiences as advocates and survivors. There were 255 participants, more than half also survivors. There were a number of topics (see http://videocast.nih.gov) at one of the dozen or so sessions and an excellent dialogue with speakers at plenary and breakout sessions.

There were about 100 posters on the current activities of some of the participants. And everyone took the opportunity to view posters, to network and share the work that each is doing as advocates.

The research MRF does is the equal of a few, but way beyond most other organizations. Along with the American Cancer Society and Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, I gathered that MRF does the most significant research on cancer among those who attended the NCI Summit. As a personal comment, sharing with colleagues about the depth and quality of MRF’s melanoma research program made me feel that every hour people volunteer, every walk that’s walked, every dollar that’s raised, is invested in the one way we can cure melanoma, and that is to fund the research that MRF does!

In an effort to keep the momentum of the summit going, the Director (of NCI’s) Consumer Liaison Group (DCLG) has uploaded the entire proceedings, which can be viewed online at http://videocast.nih.gov under “Past Events” and “Conferences.” Please take a moment to review some of the material there, and share it with other volunteers and interested individuals.

The speakers’ PowerPoint presentations are available on The Summit website at www.palladianpartners.com/ncisummit2006/agenda.htm and you can see what other Foundations and participants are saying about the summit experience on the _NCI Listens and Learns_ website. Thereafter the DCLG will produce a summary from the June 19th “Town Hall” meeting, with questions and responses, and you can look for it on their website at http://dclg.cancer.gov.

At least one group has indicated that this coalition of cancer organizations should be continued to help work better with NCI and to share information on education, advocacy and research. Plans to hold future sessions regionally and at the NIH campus are being discussed.

Send questions and comments to Dave Schropfer, member of the MRF Board of Directors at: dave@schropfer.com.

MRF TO UNDERTAKE REDESIGN AND REDEVELOPMENT OF ITS WEBSITE

Under the direction of Dave Schropfer, a member of the MRF Board, requests for proposals to undertake a complete redesign and redevelopment of our website have been received and reviewed. It is anticipated that an agreement will be signed by the end of September and work on the website will begin immediately.

FUNDRAISING TRAINING MEETING FOR MRF VOLUNTEERS HELD IN CHICAGO

Almost 70 volunteers from 21 states from across the United States participated in an August 18-20 fundraising training meeting in Chicago. Included were 12 representatives from Dermatology Interest Groups from major US medical campuses. The weekend focused on the ways and means of increasing the fundraising and friend-raising potential of existing and planned events. Presentations by fundraising professionals as well as MRF volunteers targeted subjects such as walks/runs, golf events and dinners/social events, as well as recruiting volunteers and participants, developing committees and teams, creating materials, gaining media attention, sponsorship and gifts/services-in-kind, recognition and planning and budgeting. Jacquelyn Dominguez, Executive Director of the American Liver Foundation’s Illinois Chapter, was the keynote speaker. A recognition dinner emceed by Marshall Ramsey was held on Saturday night.
SYNCHRONICITY AND THE SYMPOSIUM

On July 16th my brother John called me from his home in New York City with news that a biopsy of a mole on his arm came back with the diagnosis of melanoma.

As you might imagine, July 16th was not a good day for me. But as fate would have it—and (I do believe in synchronicity) the following morning I had an appointment with my doctor for my yearly skin check.

Needless to say, I was no longer too worried about myself during the visit—I asked my doctor every question I could regarding melanoma. She gave me a lot of information and referred me to NYU Medical Center. Immediately I contacted a doctor there—and within one day my brother John was scheduled for his surgery.

I knew John would be in the best of hands, yet I still had the need to find out everything I could about the disease. Blessed or cursed with an analytical and obsessive nature, I frantically searched the internet for information.

And then, in another moment of synchronicity, my doctor called to let me know about a melanoma educational symposium sponsored by the Melanoma Research Foundation and UCI Medical Center. Originally I was going to be out of town, but I rearranged my schedule to attend. I thought it more than coincidence that my brother was having surgery on Friday and I had the opportunity to attend a conference with world renowned experts in the field on Saturday. Fate, synchronicity—call it what you will, I made sure I was there.

The conference held at The Westin Hotel in Costa Mesa California was extremely well planned and after the day was over I felt as if I had been given the “Cliff Notes” to a PhD in melanoma and the status of melanoma research. Topics of the day included etiology, prevention, early detection, surgical and biochemotherapy treatments, as well as updates on clinical trials and new treatments for melanoma. I cannot do justice to the vast amount of knowledge that was dispersed on clinical trials and new treatments for melanoma. I cannot

Everyone should have a yearly skin check and learn the ABCDE’s of detection.

Caught in the early stages, melanoma is quite curable. Once it enters the lymph system it becomes much more difficult to treat and there is a much greater risk of recurrence. Once melanoma has metastasized—the prognosis is grim.

Melanoma is in the “Cinderella Box,” which means that relative to the number of years of life lost to the disease—funding is very low.

There has been little change in the medical treatment for advanced melanoma over the last 30 years

More Clinical Trials are needed. Only 8% of patients participate in clinical trials.

Biochemotherapy is seen as the best treatment for advanced melanoma.

There is a growing pipeline of new drugs and a number of researchers believe they are on the verge of a breakthrough in the treatment of melanoma

With the rapid increase in melanoma rates—awareness of ways to prevent the disease and funding for a cure should increase.

While the subject matter was less than a happy one—the mood of the day was not one of fear and trepidation, but rather of optimism and hope. This difficult disease is a tough one to beat in its later stages—but the day left attendees with the belief that there was also a sense of promising new research and treatments on the horizon.

My attendance at this symposium has made me much more confident in my ability to help my brother through the maze of information on this complicated disease—and it has inspired me to help carry the message of prevention to others.

Thanks to the speakers at the symposium who included John Fruehauf M.D., Meenhard Herlyn, D.V.M., D.Sc., John Kirkwood, M.D., Sewa Lehga, M.D., Frank Meyskens, M.D., Janellen Smith, M.D., and Vernon Sondak, M.D.. And a special thanks to Dr. Elizabeth Steinberg who took the time to call and let me know about this valuable meeting.

I called my brother after the conference to let him know I have lots of information for him—and that he was going to get through this. And that there are a lot of brilliant and dedicated physicians, researchers and advocates out there working on helping him. Of this, I am sure.

Mary Fitzgerald Wattenberg

As I write this we are still awaiting the diagnosis and staging of my brothers melanoma. My prayer, of course, is that his cancer was caught in the earliest stage.
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISERS

(Continued from Page 5)

BILL WALTER III MELANOMA RESEARCH FUND SCORES AGAIN IN 7th ANNUAL 5K RUN/WALK – DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA

Congratulations and thanks to Bill & Pat Walter and their team for organizing the 7th annual Rayz Awareness 5K Run/Walk in Daytona Beach, Florida. Their foundation has been a long-term supporter of MRF’s research program, including co-sponsorship of our three Medical-Scientific Workshops and a Career Development Award.

Two smiling racers with Miss Florida 2006.

4th ANNUAL THOMAS W. BARNER MEMORIAL FUND BARBECUE ANOTHER SUCCESS (DESPITE THE WEATHER) – LOUNDONVILLE, NEW YORK

Annmarie Perechinsky and her volunteers can plan a great barbecue – but only if the weather would cooperate! It didn’t matter, however, because everyone had a great day. They raised $6,000, with support from Citizens Bank, an increase over the previous year.

A great time, great food and a great cause.

4th ANNUAL DOIN’ IT FOR DEB WALK AT AUGUSTANA COLLEGE – ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS

Over $10,000 was raised this year by friends of Deb Sandry at the annual walk at Augustana College. Doin’ It for Deb brings together a great group of volunteers who spend months in planning for this fundraiser. Congratulations to all of you!

The Volunteer Team at Augustana College.

TEB’S TROOPS JOIN MRF RESEARCH TEAM WITH GIFT IN MEMORY OF TRICIA

Thank you to family and friends of Tricia Elaine Black (Teb) for the $7,500 donation to support MRF’s mission. Cara Tindell, MRF’s Treasurer, accepted the check at an Indianapolis reception. Teb passed away on July 11. A memoriam appears in this newsletter.

Members of Teb’s Troops at the check presentation.

HAPPY HOUR FUNDRAISER FOR THE MELANOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION – CINCINNATI, OHIO

Thank you to Gary & Marge Fearn and Mary Jo & Kip Roe for organizing a happy hour fundraiser at the Clovernook Country Club on April 4 in honor of Scott Fearn and in memory of Cathleen Roe Eagan. Their efforts benefited MRF.

Gary Fearn, Mary Jo Roe, Scott Fearn, Marge Fearn and Kip Roe at their Cincinnati fundraiser.
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

October 5 – 5th Annual Wings of Hope Dinner
The Puck Building, New York City
Honoring the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation and the Rush Family

October 21 – Educational Symposium in Nashville
coordinated by Dr. Mark Kelley of Vanderbilt University

November 4 – Educational Symposium in Minneapolis
coordinated by Dr. Svetomir Markovic of the Mayo Clinic

Check the MRF website for more information.

UNIVERSITY ALUMNI DONOR OPTION
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READ ABOUT THE ONE VOICE MEETING IN THIS ISSUE.