Dr. Larry Norton doesn’t like the term breast cancer awareness. “We all are aware of breast cancer. Now is the time for breast cancer eradication,” he told a sold-out audience at Cancer Support Team’s 11th annual Gayle K. Lee Women’s Health Awareness Luncheon on October 15th at the Westchester Country Club. Dr. Norton is the Deputy Physician-in-Chief for Breast Cancer Programs at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and Medical Director of the newly-established Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center. Dr. Norton described the goal of the Breast Center as one of “…trying to redefine how the business of breast and other cancers is managed.”

In an interactive lecture—where audience participation and questions were encouraged, Dr. Norton clearly explained that advances in biological science are dramatically changing ideas about how to approach and even eliminate cancer. He stated that in the 19th century, scientists saw cancer as a disease of cell division and thus it was important to get rid of the cancer. As a consequence of this thinking, the radical mastectomy became the treatment of choice for breast cancer. With more understanding of cell biology, the thinking now is that cancer is a problem of “cell movement” where cells break loose and move within the body to another location. In light of this, and in an effort to control or eliminate cancers, scientists are now targeting medications to blood vessels, white cells or other body substances that help cells rapidly grow. Dr. Norton also discussed the importance of lifestyle changes that help prevent cancer and its recurrence. He especially focused on the importance of regular exercise. “It doesn’t matter how much you eat, but how much you eat in relationship to how much you exercise,” he emphasized.

Many thanks to our Honorary Co-Chairs, Mary Jane Arrigoni and Morgan Sullivan-Walsh, Luncheon Co-Chairs and Planning Committee and our supporters for their help in making our Luncheon such a successful educational program.
Greetings From the Executive Director

There was good news—and confusing news—over the last few months in the world of cancer research. An article in Medscape Medical News (www.medscape.com) discussed findings from the American Society of Clinical Oncology annual report that highlighted 15 recent studies that resulted in “major advances” in the way cancer is understood or that had a significant affect on patient care.

The confusing news for many of us relates to the new recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force that most women should not begin regular screening for breast cancer until age 50, not 40, and that women between ages 50 and 74 should have bi-annual mammograms. The Task Force found that the benefits of screening women in their 40’s, for example, were outweighed by the possibility of unnecessary tests and treatment for these women and the anxiety that often accompanies the wait for the results.

Around the same time, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommended that women undergo their first pap smear, the test that detects cervical cancer, at 21 rather than 18 and have the screening test every other year, rather than every year. Studies showed that the risk of cervical cancer was low in women in their 20’s and therefore the annual test was unnecessary.

For so many women who grew up following the advice that annual mammograms and pap smears were an important part of “taking control” of their health and ensuring that they do everything they can to detect cancer in its earliest stages, these new recommendations feel like the world is turned upside down. An article in The NY Times describing the public’s response to the new recommendations, quoted a number of women who said they would continue getting their yearly mammogram as long as their insurance continued to cover it. Another article described the reluctance of physicians to change the recommendations. According to Dr. Carolyn Runowicz, director of the Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Connecticut (and the speaker at Cancer Support Team’s 2007 Women’s Health Awareness Luncheon), “My patients tell me they can live with a little anxiety and distress but they can’t live with a little cancer.” (The NY Times, 11/18/09)

So it seems the jury is still out on the recommendations. In a press release that can be found on ACS’ website (www.cancer.org), (Continued on page 7)
Over the summer, Team CST, composed of Cancer Support Team staff members and their family members and friends, swim at the New York Athletic Club and Lake Isle Country Club to help support Swim Across America of Long Island Sound’s (SAALIS) efforts to raise funds for cancer research and services. Since 1997, CST has been a beneficiary as SAALIS’ many dedicated volunteers annually organize a Long Island Sound swimming event as well as pool swims in support of CST, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and New York Presbyterian’s Children’s Hospital. Through lots of hard work and an expansion of its pool swimming events, in 2009 SAALIS raised $872,000 for its beneficiaries.

The idea of creating Team CST slowly developed last winter as one of our nurses, Katie Shields decided to overcome her fear of swimming. Along with her determination and weekly swimming lessons, Katie set a goal of joining SAALIS as a pool swimmer and asked her colleagues and friends to join her. The rest, as they say, is history. On July 12th under a sunny sky and with family and friends cheering her on, Katie swam a half mile, smiling the whole way. In describing her experience, Katie said, “I can wholeheartedly say that I had a sense of sheer accomplishment, having overcome a fear of the water. I sensed within myself a total life change and received a wonderful health benefit. Now swimming 72 laps is a ‘cinch,’ as is jumping in the deep end of the pool. My next goal is to swim the mile in the Sound next summer for Swim Across America!”

Says CST Team Captain, Judy Delehanty, a social worker at CST, “We decided to swim to help support CST during difficult economic times, but the experience became much more than that. Rather than just fundraisers, we became a dedicated team of athletes who took our swimming very seriously and we developed great spirit and camaraderie.”

We thank all of the members of Team CST: Kaitlyn Bush, Helen Cuccia, Judy Delehanty, Judith Dobrof, Rosalie Matsuoka, Julie Meade, Tommy Meade, Jamie Schwarzfeld and Katie Shields. As always, we are indebted to Tony Sibio, 2009 SAALIS Chairman and to the many swimmers, boaters and volunteers who give their continuing support to our free services for those affected by cancer.

For more information on how you can participate and donate, log onto www.swimacrossamerica.org/long_island.
**2009 Gayle K. Lee Luncheon**

At the 2009 Luncheon, in photo right, Dr. Diane LoRusso with CST Advisory Board member Harriet Huber.

Bottom photo, Mrs. Jane Cecil (l.) with CST Board President Dr. Arnold Wald (r.) and wife Betty.

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**New Resource Available for Cancer Survivors**

Lawrence Hospital Center in Bronxville recently opened its Cancer Survivorship Program staffed by Shirley Stagner, MSN, RN, ONP. Lawrence is one of the few community hospitals in the country to have developed a survivorship program. Most programs reside only in major cancer centers even though almost twelve million people across the U.S. have had a cancer diagnosis, completed therapy and are ready to move on, according to Ms. Stagner.

Through the Survivorship Program, Ms. Stagner will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the patient, including physical and emotional status, and collaborate with the patient’s oncologist and other health care providers. Based on the results, the patient may be referred to specialists who have precise experience with particular areas of physical symptom management. Ms Stagner will refer patients in need of home visits by nurses, counseling, case management and related supportive services to Cancer Support Team and other community-based organizations.

Judith Dobrof, DSW, CST’s Executive Director, and a member of the Executive Committee for Cancer Survivorship—which guides and supports the Program, sees it as an essential resource for those facing post-treatment challenges. “Many of the people whom CST serves experience residual physical and emotional after-effects and the Survivorship Program is a great resource for them.”

For more information on the program or to schedule an appointment, contact Ms. Stagner at 914-787-4115.

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**CST’s Ovarian Support Group**

Members of CST’s Ovarian Cancer Support Group with Judith Dobrof, Executive Director (on left) and co-leaders Patty Vaughn (4th from left) and Bonnie Markey (2nd from right), wearing blue ribbons to commemorate Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month in September.

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******Save the Date****

Sunday, June 6th, 10 until noon

A Celebration of Survivors Day

Gilda’s Club
80 Maple Avenue, White Plains

Sponsored by the Cancer Coalition of Westchester

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**Memorial Donations**

Cancer Support Team wishes to acknowledge the generosity of the families of the following people who have designated CST for memorial donations:

- George Berridge
- Emily Mansfield
- Ray Serina

- Brenda Stahl
- Dana Versot
- Noreen Gilson Walshin

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For more information about CST Services call 914•777•2777
I know that while on chemotherapy and radiation, my immune system will be compromised. What should I do to detect infection, and what extra precautions can I take relative to foods I eat and places I go in order to minimize my exposure to infection?

Among our readers are the nurses at Cancer Support Team and the following is their response:

The first step to take if you suspect infection is to immediately take your temperature. Some of the signs of infection are chills, a sore throat, and an earache. If your temperature is 100.5 or higher, call your oncologist, day or night. Seven to 14 days following chemotherapy, a person is more prone to infection as the white blood count is low, a condition known as neutropenia.

Hand washing is one of the best ways to prevent infection. Carry a hand sanitizer and use it frequently. It is not advisable to eat food from a salad bar. However, well washed salads prepared at home are safe. Foods should be cooked thoroughly, especially meats and fish. Avoid sushi. Fruits that can be peeled are acceptable, such as pears, apples, oranges and bananas. Of course, stay away from anyone who has an infection or is recovering from an infection.

In our next newsletter, we would like your comments on the following:

I am a woman in my 30’s with breast cancer. What are some of the organizations and resources that are especially helpful to people my age?

Please send your responses to Judith Dobrof, DSW:

mail: 875 Mamaroneck Ave, Suite 204, Mamaroneck, NY 10543
email: jdobrof@cancersupportteam.org
fax: 914-777-2780

We will not publish your name with your response. And, please feel free to send us questions that you would like us to pose to our readers. Thanks!

Barbara Melamed Library

The Barbara Melamed Memorial Library, honoring the memory of Barbara Melamed, a former CST social worker and cancer survivor, offers CST patients and caregivers oncology related books, videos and a variety of other educational materials. Library materials can be borrowed. Please feel free to stop by and browse.
Grants Support CST Services and Efforts to Raise Consumer Awareness of its Programs

Cancer Support Team received a $30,000 grant payable over two years from the Westchester Community Foundation to support its case management program. The program assists individuals in obtaining government benefits and community resources and offers practical help in conjunction with CST’s nursing and social work services. Kristina Rodriguez, CST’s case manager, educates patients and families about the kinds of benefits, resources and community services that are available and also assists them in obtaining the services they need to cope with a cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment. Ms. Rodriguez is fluent in Spanish and therefore can reach out to the growing Spanish speaking community in Westchester affected by cancer.

In addition, CST received a $10,000 grant from the United Way of Westchester and Putnam to support its financial assistance program directed to those needing help to pay for transportation costs associated with cancer treatments. Over the last year, in collaboration with the Westchester Division of the American Cancer Society, CST co-led a task force focused on the transportation needs of people with cancer. CST and ACS are the only two oncology organizations in Westchester that not only provide financial assistance for transportation, but also offer volunteer drivers who transport patients to their treatment appointments. The two organizations will continue working together and through the task force to identify strategies to help those with cancer with their transportation needs.

On another front, State Senator Suzi Oppenheimer and Assemblyman George Latimer were instrumental in facilitating grant support for CST’s project to update its outreach materials. This is the next phase of an ongoing effort to ensure that information about CST is up-to-date, user-friendly and easily understandable.

“Because all of our services are provided free of charge, these grants are vitally important and greatly benefit patients and families,” says Executive Director, Judith Dobrof, DSW. Heartfelt thanks to the Westchester Community Foundation, United Way and to Senator Oppenheimer and Assemblyman Latimer for their commitment to helping cancer patients and their families throughout Westchester.

CST Welcomes New Business Administrator Julie Meade

In May, Julie Meade joined CST as its new Business Administrator. Julie is responsible for a variety of financial and operational aspects of CST and will assist with special projects. Julie has over ten years of experience at GE Commercial Finance, most recently as its Senior VP of Media, Communications and Entertainment. She also brings a wealth of volunteer experience in the non-profit sector as a volunteer and in leadership positions in a variety of organizations including The Bereavement Center of Westchester, the Bronxville PTA, the Junior League of Bronxville and Heartsong, Inc. Julie has a BA from Duke University and an MBA from The Darden Graduate School of Business Administration.

Of her new position, Julie says, “I am thrilled to be joining CST. I’ve known the organization for several years and the work CST does is so wonderful. I feel honored to be part of such an amazing organization.” We welcome Julie and are very pleased that she has joined the Team.

Acknowledgements

Cancer Support Team services are offered without charge to all patients and their families, regardless of ability to pay. CST programs are funded through community contributions, memorials, fundraising events and through grants from local corporations and foundations. For their generous grants in 2009, CST would like to acknowledge:

Lin and Susie Chen Foundation
The Community Fund of Bronxville, Eastchester, Tuckahoe
Agatha Durland Foundation
Josephine Lawrence Hopkins Foundation
Hudson Valley National Foundation
MAXX Management
MBIA
Miles of Hope Breast Cancer Foundation
New York State Department of Health
OSI Pharmaceutical Foundation
Rye Presbyterian Church
Scarsdale Women’s Club
Sole Ryeders & Friends Fund
St. John’s Episcopal Church
Swim Across America
United Way of Westchester and Putnam
Westchester Community Foundation
Please Help Us Help Those with Cancer

W

ith the turbulence in the economy over this past year, many people are unable to give as much to their favorite charities as in the past. One way to continue providing support, but not touch your current assets, is through a bequest—in other words, a cashless gift. You do not have to be an oldster or even especially affluent. In fact, research demonstrates that almost half of bequest donors are under age 55 and over half had incomes of $75,000 or less.

CST relies on your generosity to support our mission of enhancing the quality of life of individuals and families affected by cancer, who live in the local communities of lower Westchester. A bequest is a simple way to support Cancer Support Team. As you discuss your estate plans with your lawyer or financial advisor, you could consider including the following simple language in your will: “I give and bequeath to Cancer Support Team, Inc. $_____ (or ______ percent of my total estate).”

For more information on bequests, please contact Judith Dobrof, DSW at 914-777-2777, ext. 15 or at jdobrof@cancersupportteam.org.

Greetings… (con’t)

Otis Brawley, MD, ACS’ Chief Medical Officer, acknowledges the limitations of mammography, but recommends, for example, that women between ages 40-49 continue receiving annual mammograms. In addition, he calls for further research that will enhance the accuracy of mammography.

Certainly, women—and men—who are concerned about being screened for particular types of cancer, should talk with their physicians about the benefits and risks, as well as the effectiveness, of specific screening tests. ACS’ website has up-to-date information and recommendations that may help sort out the present controversies. Over time, with more research, the recommendations may change—or they may stay the same.
****Save the Date****

Cancer Support Team 2010 Benefit Gala
— CARING FOR OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY —
An Elegant Evening at The New York Botanical Garden, Thursday, May 13, 2010

Honoring
Dick Davidson, Denis McCauley, Chris Powers and Michael Rivituso of Swim Across America with The Wald Lee Vision Award
and
The Community Fund of Bronxville, Eastchester, Tuckahoe with The Barbara Melamed Memorial Award

For more information and underwriting opportunities, please call 914-777-2777 or email jdobrof@cancersupportteam.org

Please update our Mailing and Email Lists… We like to keep our supporters up-to-date on CST happenings and at the same time be cost-effective. Please let us know of a change of address or if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter. We can save on postage and paper by emailing you notices of upcoming events and programs. Call us at 914-777-2777 or send your email address to us at cst@cancersupportteam.org.