

MENDOCINO CANCER RESOURCE CENTER NEWS

ISSUE NO. 9

SUMMER 2002

Forward Motion

by Angela Knight

It's one of those rare days on the coast, warm enough to wear shorts without being mistaken for a tourist. Gerry Copland stands in the doorway of his home looking fit and comfortable in paint-spattered jeans, white T-shirt, tennis shoes and a faded Skunk Train cap. His yard and house are immaculate: well-tended lawn, yellow and purple pansies growing in the flowerbeds, pictures of his daughters and fishing buddies neatly fastened to the refrigerator. Nothing seems out of place. We walk out to the backyard and Gerry picks up a ball and throws it for Maggie, the family's aging cocker spaniel. Gerry has just come from helping a friend paint his house.

I can smell smoked fish from Gerry's smoker as I skim through a copy of his medical records. He has advanced melanoma. The words are there on the page, but it is hard to connect them with the healthy-looking 56-year-old man sitting across from me.

In addition to melanoma, Gerry has survived a dangerous staph infection and open-heart surgery, the loss of his mother to lung cancer when he was 27 and his father's death when Gerry was nine. "At the time you do it," he says. "You find the will-power and strength."

A fair-skinned man with freckles dotting his arms, Gerry tells me his motto is don't ever give up. As he talks he steeple his fingertips together in the shape of a pyramid, but his body seems ready to jump out of the chair and do something.

He is a family man and a self-admitted, but reformed, "Type A" personality. Although he regrets not spending more time with his family when his daughters were growing up, he feels it was important to make a living. Sometimes he worked seven days a week. We talk a lot about his wife Pam and their daughters. His pride in the way his daughters have turned out, in his wife's strength through his illness, is immense. He is concerned about what will happen to his wife, what his daughters' futures will look like. "The thing that I worry about the most is my family," Gerry says.

He says his oldest daughter is religious, but "You ask yourself to believe and yet why is there such suffering and pain?"

When he was first diagnosed with melanoma, his doctor told him "there's no cure." That was five years ago. He is careful to credit his friends and family, his quick healing ability, a positive attitude and the support of a loving community for helping him to continue to beat the odds.

It seems like just about everyone in Fort Bragg knows Gerry or has heard about him. As a volunteer fireman and a basketball coach for middle school girls, he has given quite a bit back to the community. When his friends found out Gerry's insurance wouldn't cover \$10,000 worth of medical bills, they put together a huge fundraiser, complete with raffle and barbecue. Gerry was in the hospital at the time and could not attend, but he was delighted when his friends called. "It was magic. I wish I could have been there."

Gerry was diagnosed with melanoma in early 1997 after a suspicious mole on his shoulder turned out to be cancerous. According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), melanoma or cancer of the skin accounts for approximately 4% of all skin cancer cases, but it causes "79% of skin cancer deaths." ACS estimates there will be 53,600 new cases of melanoma this year in the United States; approximately 7,400 people are expected to die from it.

Gerry is currently taking oral chemotherapy drugs—drugs which are expected to cause fatigue, but they don't seem to be slowing him down. He gets up at 5:00 in the morning to work out at the local health club and hunts and fishes when he has the time. "I've never taken a nap in my life," he says.

The toughest part of this experience for Gerry has been trying to figure out the best treatment for his disease. He's tried a variety of options: a clinical trial, chemotherapy, an expensive vitamin regimen, eating well, exercise. He's also looked into alternative therapies, including a six-week program that includes intravenous infusions of high dose vitamins to boost the immune system. The question he always has to ask himself with any treatment is "Are you doing the right thing?"

He also wonders how and why he developed melanoma: Was it environmental—in the water, in the air? One too many sunburns as a child? He remembers a strange thought occurred to him many years ago when he was outside working in his garden. He had just heard about the Chernobyl incident and he wondered if any of the fall-out had reached Northern California. Now that question doesn't seem so strange to him.



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*Not So
Bad is
Not Good
Enough*

By Sara O'Donnell

In September of last year, I had a conversation with MCRC advisory board member Barbara Brenner about the state of the many national corporate fundraising events that have emerged on the scene in the last ten years. We ended up discussing the Avon 3-Day Walk in particular, because this office receives many calls every year with questions about the credibility of the Walk: Where does the money go? Has it made a difference in the breast cancer epidemic? These calls are from women who are contemplating walking or are being asked to donate to the Avon Walk: women who want to make a difference in the fight against breast cancer. We feel a responsibility to these women who are our friends and neighbors. We want to see a change in the way the money is raised. We want them to be a part of deciding how the funds are allocated to research and community programs.

From this conversation in Mendocino to similar ones in Seattle, Minneapolis, New York and Florida, a coalition was born—Follow the Money: An Alliance for Accountability in Breast Cancer. The organizational members of the alliance are the Mendocino Cancer Resource Center, Breast Cancer Action in San Francisco (BCA), The Breast Resource Center of Santa Barbara, Women's Cancer Resource Center in Minneapolis, Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition, New York State Breast Cancer Network, Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition, After Breast Cancer Surgery, The Mautner Project for Lesbians with Cancer and

the Florida Breast Cancer Resource Network.

"We appreciate that Avon has raised a tremendous amount of awareness and money on behalf of breast cancer," says Brenner, executive director of BCA, "but we'd like the company to be more responsible in the way it raises and spends the money. Avon's credibility is on the line."

In 1993, Avon Products, Inc., which bills itself as "the company for women," launched the Avon Breast Cancer Crusade, a cause-marketing initiative to fund breast cancer research and access to care. The crusade has thus far netted about \$165 million through a number of initiatives, including the Avon Breast Cancer 3-Day fund-raising walks, which will take place in 13 cities across the country this year.

Because Avon does not underwrite the costs of the walks, more than 40 cents of each dollar raised by participants in the Avon 3-Day walks is used to stage and market the events, with less than 60 cents of every dollar actually reaching breast cancer programs and research. Funds distributed to breast cancer research, meanwhile, are directed to institutions already well funded by the pharmaceutical industry and U.S. government. The Follow the Money Alliance is urging Avon to underwrite the cost of its fundraising events, to fund research into the causes of breast cancer, and—instead of draining the resources of the communities in which the walks are held—to implement local advisory boards to determine the most effective use of the funds raised in each region.


After presenting its concerns to Avon executives in a private meeting last fall, the Alliance failed to receive any indication that the company would implement changes in its fund-raising and distribution practices. Therefore, Follow the Money recently launched a public education campaign urging consumers

to let Avon executives know they share the Alliance's concerns. You can pick up a post card addressed to Andrea Jung, CEO of Avon Products, Inc. at the MCRC office or call us at 707.937.3833 and we will send you one.

To paraphrase one Alliance member: "Women are dying of breast cancer and running out of time. We have to decide how best we can help, how each penny can make the biggest difference, cause the least amount of waste, do the most good."

Not so bad is simply not good enough anymore.

Editor's Note: Avon recently announced it may discontinue its three-day walks in 2003.



**MENDOCINO
CANCER RESOURCE
CENTER**

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Mission Statement: The Mendocino Cancer Resource Center serves our communities by providing information, support and advocacy for those faced with cancer.

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Sandra Steingraber, cancer survivor, biologist and well-known author, has written a new book, *Having Faith: An Ecologist's Journey to Motherhood*. The book chronicles Sandra's pregnancy with her oldest child Faith, told from the emotional perspective of becoming a new mother at the age of 39.

Steingraber writes, "As my thirty-ninth birthday approaches, all physical evidence of my own birth vanishes. I no longer have a navel. The space it once occupied is now a flat, purply, translucent disk the size of a silver dollar. A porthole made of skin. It is so thin, I feel I should be able to peer through it and see what is going on in there. It looks like the round window on a front-loading washing machine, Jeff teases. If I tap on it, the baby kicks back, but doing so makes me queasy."

Her writing style alternates between lyrical descriptions of pregnancy and motherhood and hard scientific data concerning the environmental hazards threatening children—"from the industrial poisons found in amniotic fluid to the toxic contamination of breast milk."

Because the book is located in the parenting section of bookstores, it might be tempting to view it as a pregnancy journal. However, Steingraber asks hard-hitting environmental questions such as "How do toxic chemicals cross the tough sponge of the placenta? How do they find their way into the amniotic fluid? How do they enter the milk-making globes in the back of the breast? What are the effects for the child of these earliest encounters with synthetic chemicals?" The answers she supplies are disturbing for new parents as well as anyone who is concerned about the health of future generations.

The conclusion Steingraber comes to is that "protecting the ecosystem inside my body required protecting the one outside ... If the world's environment is contaminated, so too is the ecosystem of a mother's body. If a mother's body is contaminated, so too is the child who inhabits it."

In a recent telephone interview, I talked with Steingraber about *Having Faith*.

Q: Your new book, *Having Faith*, is in the parenting section at the local bookstore. How would you describe it?

A: I think it's a real hybrid, so it can go in a variety of places. I'm not displeased it's in the parenting section because my intended audience is parents. Although my topic is the ecology of pregnancy and childbirth and environmental stress our children face at the very earliest stages of their lives, I think the people who stand to be most mobilized by it are parents and people who hope to be parents. I think it would be overlooked if it was placed in the science section or the environment section.

Q: Rather than a parenting book, it seems to be a call to action for parents.

Q & A with Sandra Steingraber

by Angela Knight

A: Parents have a lot of responsibility and the primary one is the safety and protection of our children. Parents need to know about car seat recalls and they also needed to know

about mercury in the food chain. I hope parents find the book useful and inspiring. Certainly I have a much longer track record as an ecologist than I do as a parent. I was a scientist first. I came to parenting late in the game; I've only been at it for three years now. The lessons I learned as an ecologist have inspired me toward a new ecological parenting. I think in the same way that Mothers Against Drunk Drivers did so much to make the roads a safer place for all of us, Mothers Against Carcinogens and Birth Defect Causing Chemicals might be a good social movement. I think it has already started. There is a renaissance right now in children's environmental health and pediatricians and midwives and lactation consultants and parents are all getting involved.

Q: What do you mean by "ecological parenting?"

A: First and foremost it's an awareness that our internal physiology and that of our children exists in a kind of exquisite communion with the larger ecological world. So whatever contaminants and toxicants are in the air, food and water, those molecules rearrange themselves and weave themselves into our own bodies. When it comes to our children, whose bodies are growing so rapidly and who breathe more air and drink more water and eat more food pound for pound than adults, those very earliest exposures to toxic chemicals form more important risks for them than for adults. An exposure to a neurotoxicant like mercury can permanently change the brain structure of a five or six month old fetus.

Q: You use the term "breast-milk induced cancers" in the book. What does that mean?

A: Breast milk is absolutely the best food for infants, far better than its inferior pretender formula, but it is also true that it is the most contaminated human food on the planet because it is loaded with fat-soluble toxicants that concentrated and moved up the food chain. Because breast milk is one level higher than cow's milk on the food chain, breast-fed children receive higher body burdens of toxic chemicals than formula-fed kids. Happily we haven't yet compromised breast milk to the point where it is a more harmful food than formula, so breast is still best. Because there are cancer-causing chemicals in breast milk we don't know if there are breast-milk induced cancers in children with these higher body burdens of toxic chemicals. As far as I know, we haven't done any long-term studies to look at adult cancers in kids who were breastfed. We don't know what the long-term risks are.

Q: Are childhood cancers increasing?

A: The data shows that pediatric cancers are rising, especially in the last two decades. They're rising more rapidly than adult cancers.

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**PROCLAMATION
OF THE
MENDOCINO COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**Recognizing the Mendocino Cancer Resource
Center as the Agency which has made a Significant/
Valuable Contribution to Public Health, 2001**

WHEREAS, the provision of information, support and advocacy for those faced with cancer is the guiding mission of; and

WHEREAS, the Mendocino Cancer Resource Center acts as an access point for support, counseling, education, and organizing efforts related to cancer in our communities; and

WHEREAS, the Mendocino Cancer Resource Center advocates for a holistic approach to care in support of cancer patients, and provides practical and emotional support from the onset of a diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, the Mendocino Cancer Resource Center is a leader in educating the community about potential causes of cancer, thus, taking prevention principles to the general population; and

WHEREAS, the Mendocino Cancer Resource Center provides valuable healing and counseling services that alleviate the physical and emotional strain associated with cancer; and

WHEREAS, the Mendocino Cancer Resource Center is an oasis in Mendocino County for those suffering with cancer and it's effects.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors hereby proclaims the Mendocino Cancer Resource Center as the recipient of the seventh annual Significant/Valuable Contributor to Public Health in the Agency Category Award.

Dated: *April 2, 2002*

J. David Colfax
J. David Colfax, Chairman



*We couldn't have done it without the help of our
generous volunteers, donors and sponsors. Thank you!*

Take My Hand

by Nancy Johnson

I often think back to December 1990. I was a healthy active 39-year-old woman. I had a baseline mammogram at 35 and was planning on going back for another one when I turned 40. I had no lump, no symptoms, and no family history of breast cancer. For some reason I decided not to wait until I was 40 to have another mammogram. Funny how these things happen. This mammogram showed numerous clusters of microcalcifications—the suspicious kind; I was told I needed a biopsy. There I sat in the surgeon's office on a cold, rainy day in December awaiting my biopsy results. "You have breast cancer" was all I heard and my life changed in an instant.

"Do you have any questions?" was the next thing I heard. I had already forgotten the treatment options I was to consider before making a decision about what I wanted to do about this cancer inside me. My surgeon was incredibly compassionate. I know she must have explained everything very well, but all I heard was my heart pounding. She offered to call my partner to come get me and suggested we come back in for another consultation.

How thankful I am for my life partner Janet. Perhaps it is her calmness and gentleness that caused me to wonder, "How do women with no support cope with this devastating news?" I found out I was only one of 186,000 women diagnosed with breast cancer that year. How many of them were alone, afraid, confused?

I thought accepting my cancer diagnosis would be my biggest hurdle. I never imagined the resources I needed to make an informed decision about my treatment were not available in our small rural town of Ukiah. There were no local support groups or resource centers to help me find my way through the confusing medical maze. After about a month of searching the Internet, phone calls to resource centers in the Bay Area and hours of stressful consideration, I decided to have a bilateral mastectomy. I also made a decision that after I completed my treatment I was going to help establish resources in my community to help women with cancer.

Challenge often brings forth gifts. One of mine was to develop a passion for offering support, advocacy and information to women with cancer. About a year after my surgery, I started a women's cancer support group I continue to facilitate today. I helped develop the Breast Health Advisory Coalition of Inland Mendocino County to promote awareness of the need for support services for women with cancer.

I was introduced to Sara O'Donnell, MCRC's executive director, in 1995, shortly after MCRC was established. I became a member of MCRC's advisory board and helped create The Women's Cancer Advocacy Network (WeCAN!) in 1996. WeCAN! is a group of trained volunteer advocates who

help support and guide women through the cancer screening, diagnostic and treatment process. For the past six years, I have been the WeCAN! volunteer coordinator for the inland valley area, operating a mini-resource center out of my home.

The demand for cancer support services has steadily increased over the years and the time has come for MCRC to establish a physical presence in Ukiah. A grant to fund this expansion was submitted in March to the California Endowment. If funding is received, an office and resource library will be established in Ukiah and I will be hired as a full-time program coordinator. Outreach, education and support for people with cancer, cancer survivors and the circle of family and friends who support them will expand and strengthen.

I recently attended a consultation planning training sponsored by MCRC in San Francisco. Consultation Planning is a tool to help patients organize and present their questions and concerns to a physician. This training will assist all of us, as advocates, to help someone diagnosed with cancer achieve the clarity necessary to make informed decisions about his or her treatment.

I remember looking around the room at the other people who attended the training from UCSF Breast Care Center, Charlotte Maxwell Clinic, Ethnic Health Institute and Sutter Medical Center, just to name a few. I looked at Sara, my mentor, and thought how inspired I am by the work she and the MCRC board of directors do for people with cancer on the coast. I am excited that the expansion of MCRC's services inland will allow me to continue the work I love to do full-time!

I know as I sit here writing this article, there is a woman in a doctor's office somewhere who just heard, "You have breast cancer." I want to say to her, "Take my hand; let me help you find your way."

Nancy Johnson is a breast cancer survivor and the inland coordinator for The Women's Cancer Advocacy Network. She will be the program coordinator for MCRC's inland office. Nancy lives with her partner Janet in Ukiah, California.



Sara O'Donnell and Nancy Johnson

Thank you for the generous gifts and support we have received. This list reflects contributions from January 2 to December 15, 2001.

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CANCER SUPPORT GROUPS

~North Coast~

Mendocino Coast Cancer Support Group

Meets the first and third Wednesday of each month from 12:00 to 1:15 p.m. at the Mendocino Cancer Resource Center, 45040 Calpella Street in Mendocino. Facilitated by Rena Blauner, LCSW. Call 937.3833 for more information.

Advanced Disease Support Group

Meets Monday from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. This is a professionally facilitated support group. Call 937.3833 for more information.

Grief Group

Meets every Thursday evening 6:15 to 7:45 at the Fort Bragg Presbyterian Church Fireside room, 366 S. Sanderson Way. For more information contact Marty Johnson, MFCC, at 964.6164 or Kathy Branam, RN at 961.4617.

Living Well With Health Challenges

Wednesday and Thursday from 10:00 to 12:00 p.m. at St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church meeting hall, 201 E. Fir Street, Fort Bragg. For more information contact Gayle Heiss at 937.5240.

~South Coast~

Point Arena Cancer Support Group

Meets every 4th Wednesday at the Gualala Country Inn's parlor. For more information call Cora at 884.3660 or write to P.O. Box 92, Point Arena, California 95468.

~Inland~

Ukiah Women's Cancer Support Group

Meets the first and third Thursday of the month from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the MCAVN office, 148 Clara St., Ukiah. Call 467.3828 for more information.

Ukiah Prostate Cancer Support Group

Meets the first Wednesday of the month from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the First American Title Company conference room (upstairs), 551 S. Orchard St., Ukiah. Call Charley Myers at 485.0493 or the American Cancer Society at 462.7642 ext.3 for more information. This group is open to men, families, caregivers and concerned friends.

All groups are offered to participants free of charge.

Continued from Page 7

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All our Courage & Breath

Emily Whittlesey

Angel Fund

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Church of Mendocino

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Patty Chance

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Judy Stavely-Kelly

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Eileen Meinke

Michael O'Conner & all

cancer survivor/patients

Michelle O'Connor

Sara O'Donnell

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Norma Watkins

Barbra Wiener

Dorothy Pollard

Loma Chance

Nancy Puder

Kathryn Pease

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Patricia Gliinski

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Charlie & Beth Reed

Norma Rhoads

Bruce Graves

Mervyn Ridinger

Fred & Mavis Moore

Jane Allen Rissi

Sarajane Cebula

Tony Rose

Kathleen & Rod Cameron

Liz Helenchild

Joshua M. Rosenblum

Q & A with Sandra Steingraber

Continued from page 3

Q: What is it going to take to start addressing the problem?

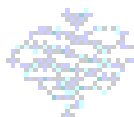
A: It's already starting. The environmental health movement, with its focus on children, is in the early stages but it has a lot of momentum. It's kind of like the Civil Rights Movement before the Alabama bus boycott. The movement doesn't have its Martin Luther King, Jr. yet. There are a lot of different groups organized around these issues. There is a Children's Health and Environmental Network, Association for Birth Defects, and then there are the old clubs, such as the 4-H Club and PTA. I have had a lot of interest from groups like the PTA and LaLeche League. It may be a little underreported by the media but it seems like it has grown a lot.

We ended our conversation with a discussion about parenting (she recently gave birth to her second child, Elijah) and what Steingraber might be focusing on next. As a parent, she is concerned with playground equipment treated with arsenic and the early onset of puberty in girls. Both subjects continue Steingraber's public debate regarding the effects of toxic chemicals on human life and the work of her patron saint, ecologist Rachel Carson.

Sandra Steingraber, Ph.D. is on the faculty at Cornell University and is the author of Living Downstream: An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment (1997). Called "the New Rachel Carson" in a 1999 Sierra magazine story, last fall she received the Rachel Carson Leadership Award from Chatham College, Carson's alma mater



MCRC and The Center for Ethics and Toxics (CETOS) are partnering to bring Sandra Steingraber to the Mendocino Coast this year as a guest speaker. Please contact MCRC for date, time and location.



MENDOCINO CANCER RESOURCE CENTER SERVICES

Providing direct and support services for those who are living with cancer and their families and friends through the following programs:

Angel Fund

A fund to provide financial assistance to help clients meet cancer-related practical needs.

Consultation Planning

A program to help patients articulate, organize, prioritize and present their questions and concerns in preparation for an upcoming meeting with a medical provider.

Gentle Hands Healing

Program offering massages by volunteer professional body workers.

Individual/Family Counseling Referral Program

A program offering six counseling sessions with a professional therapist.

Men's Outreach Project

A program offering services to men who have cancer, have survived cancer, and/or may have loved ones with cancer.

Peer Advocacy Network

Connecting men and women with similar diagnoses and treatment plans to offer emotional and practical support.

WeCAN!

A group of trained advocates who help support and guide women through cancer screening, diagnostic and treatment services. On the coast, please contact MCRC at 937.3833. Inland, call 467.3828.

All Services are Free of Charge

Forward Motion

Continued from page 1

Gerry is a 38-year veteran of the railroad. He started on his 18th birthday, May 10, 1963, missing senior skip day in the process. Gerry worked his way up from roundhouse brakeman to steam engineer and finally to instructor, supervising the training of other engineers. "It was a great job, very rewarding," he says. Although he spent the last years on the job ferrying passengers on the Skunk Train, he says, quite honestly, that he enjoyed moving freight more than people.

Around April of 1997, Gerry met Marilyn Azevedo on one of his countless days on the train. Marilyn is the mother of Andy, the popular 19-year-old Petaluma boy who died from melanoma in 1991, and the author of *Defending Andy*. Before Gerry was diagnosed with melanoma, he had avidly followed Andy's struggle with cancer in the local newspaper.

As Marilyn tells the story, when Gerry found out the couple he had been chatting with on the train were Andy's parents "he just started crying." It turns out Gerry had been diagnosed with melanoma only a short while before he met Marilyn and her husband. Friendship quickly blossomed between the Coplands and the Azevedos, with Marilyn helping Gerry research treatment options and navigate his way through medical reports.

"Since we met him there is not one holiday that he doesn't call me," Marilyn says. "He's the kind of person everybody wants for a friend."

Gerry in turn calls Marilyn his "rock."

When I asked him what he might say to someone who was recently diagnosed with cancer, Gerry tells me he would encourage him or her to develop a positive attitude, create a good support group, be aggressive about treatment and learn as much as you can about cancer. He also feels strongly about regular check ups, especially for men who tend to avoid trips to the doctor, and protecting children from the sun. Gerry wonders what his life might be like if his own cancer had been diagnosed sooner.

Since he was diagnosed with melanoma, Gerry has worked hard at enjoying life. He went to Hawaii a couple of years ago and took a cruise with his family to Mexico for a week. He went flying in a small plane for the first time. He sits on the bluff and watches the sunset. Future plans include taking a trip to the East Coast in the fall, riding a special steam train in Colorado and doing some out-of-state deer hunting. Although Gerry has always been an avid hunter, he tells me he may not have the heart to shoot a deer anymore. One of his favorite activities is to feed the seven quail that come into his yard every day.

He plans to paint his own house soon and work in his garden. He will continue to "slow down and enjoy the moment," advice he gives to his fishing buddies. He's not giving up on finding a treatment for his disease.

"I've had a good life," Gerry says. "I've just learned now to slow down."

CHECK THEM OUT!

Along with the hundreds of books, audio and video tapes available in the MCRC library, we have added the following new selections:



Betty Crocker's Living with Cancer Cookbook

By Kris Ghosh, M.D., Linda Carson, M.D. and Elyse Cohen, M.S., L.N.
Published by Hungry Minds

"This book will be of great assistance to patients and families undergoing cancer treatment."

—Barrie R. Cassileth, Ph.D., Chief, Integrative Medicine Service, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center



Having Faith: An Ecologist's Journey to Motherhood

By Sandra Steingraber
Published by Perseus Publishing

"[Steingraber] issues a wake-up call in the tradition of Rachel Carson ... excellent ... highly recommended."

—Library Journal, STARRED review

"A terrifying tale of pregnancy and birth that sounds the alarm about the growing dangers of environmental toxins to parents and their babies ... A convincing case that the increasing numbers of babies born with barriers to optimal development are a consequence of environmental insults. Should send parents and would-be parents to the barricades ... Mov[es] gracefully between hard science and tender personal anecdotes."

—Kirkus Reviews

FACTS ABOUT MELANOMA:

- Melanoma is increasing faster than any other type of cancer —from the American Cancer Society.
- In the United States, men and women get melanoma at about the same rates—from Melanoma Prevention Detection and Treatment
- Where do most melanomas occur on the body?
In men, the trunk is the most common site; in women, it is the legs—from *International Journal of Cancer*
- Melanoma incidence is increasing 3% to 6% annually. It is the most common cancer in women between the ages of 25 and 29, and is second only to breast cancer in those who are 30 to 34—from The Skin Cancer Foundation

Molto Grazie!

By Chris Hand

Chris Hand was the winner of MCRC's 2001 raffle: a trip for two to Italy.

PISA:

Betty and I arrive at Pisa airport after dark, travel weary but entranced as the taxi winds through impossibly narrow streets to deliver us to our hotel.

In the morning, we tour the Campo dei Miracoli, which is a block away from the hotel. It is a beautiful green square surrounding the Duomo, Baptistery and Leaning Tower of Pisa. It is pleasant to walk around famous buildings from the 11th and 13th centuries, and see these incredible works of art flanked by a long row of tacky tourist stands selling all manner of souvenirs: leaning towers and dish towels.

BARGA:

Barga is the quintessential northern village. Our apartment is in a town building on the middle floor: tiled floors, large kitchen, three bedrooms and a sweeping view of the hills. We unpack and then buy some vital provisions, including an inky bottle of Brunello. The owner of the store is so helpful that he leaves his store unattended and carries our groceries back to the apartment for us!

We spend the afternoon exploring Barga, which is a series of tiny cobblestone streets that climb up to the Duomo. At the Duomo we are treated to expansive views of the area, including the rust-colored rooftops of the town, the hills around it and the mountains of the Garfagnana.

FLORENCE

Florence is a bit of a shock after our quiet day in Barga; it's noisy, crowded, smelly, big city and beautiful.

We visit the wedding-cake shaped Duomo, with Brunelleschi's magnificent dome, Giotto's Campanile and Ghiberti's storytelling doors on the Baptistery.

Our goal today is to visit the Uffizi Gallery, the Accademia and Santa Maria Novello Church. Once into the Uffizi we view Botticellis, Raphaels, Michaelangelos, Caravaggios, Leonardos and Titians.

CHIANTI REGION

We drive winding roads through cypress trees, grapevines, and Tuscan-rust buildings and estates to Greve and its charming triangular square where we have lunch.

Our next stop is Castellina in Chianti. We stroll through quaint medieval squares and photograph the crenellated towers, taste several wines and buy a few bottles including vin santo, a famous Tuscan dessert wine for dunking biscotti. Castellina is high up on a hill so the views are expansive and lovely as the sun sets through the cypress trees.

LUCCA

We enter the walled city of Lucca and find ourselves in a warren of lovely old streets and buildings very much like Venice or Florence. Cars, pedestrians, bicycles, scooters, baby strollers all compete for travel space on the streets.

We wander around, viewing the Cattedrale di San Martino with its 12th century line of baby columns, the ornate wedding-cake facade of St. Michele, the town hall with trees growing on the top.

SIENA AND THE SOUTH

Our first stop is Volterra via the autostrada. We sample some pannini in the car as green lush hills dotted with crumbly stone houses pass by. Volterra is situated high on a hill above a cruel devastated landscape of mined out hills and exhausted soil.

We arrive in busy Siena by late afternoon and walk through town to our hotel, make a reservation for dinner and out to experience the evening passeggiata. The crowds! Narrow streets, noise of scooters and conversations as all Siena strolls the main streets arm and arm: kids, older couples, new parents, singles, all window shopping, flirting, greeting each other, catching up on today's local news, or just enjoying the passing parade.

We find the famous Piazza Del Campo. It is like walking into a postcard. A full moon lights the famous Palazzo Pubblico perfectly—a deep navy blue night. Il Campo is hands down the most beautiful piazza in Italy.

I would love to stay here.

GOODBYE ITALY:

We are spending our last day in Barga just being one of the locals; we walk up to the Duomo again and etch the view into our memories, stop by the snack bar, make a gelato stop and have a lovely dinner in one of Barga's nicest restaurants.

Molto Grazie to all who made this experience possible!



Chris Hand and Betty Mahedy

Mendocino Cancer Resource Center ~ Seventh Benefit Raffle ~

YOU could win one of **THREE** fantastic trips for two:

1st Grand prize - Six nights for two in southwestern France AND five nights in Barcelona, Spain, offered October 2002

2nd Grand prize - One week for two on Kauai with first class accommodations generously provided by marc resorts hawaii. Offered November 2002-March 2003. Air transportation provided by Fort Bragg Travel.

3rd Grand prize - Five nights for two at Mendocino's luxurious Brewery Gulch Inn. Offered November 2002-March 2003.

Drawing will be held **July 12, 2002** You need not be present to win. Some restrictions may apply.

Tickets may be purchased:

In Mendocino at Sallie Mac, or the Mendocino Cancer Resource Center at 45040 Calpella Street.

In Fort Bragg at Harvest Market.

Order by mail: MCRC, PO Box 50, Mendocino, CA 95460

Credit Card Orders: 707.937.3833 or 800.449.6483

Fax: 707.937.1143

Order online: www.mendocancerctr.org

Ticket Prices:

1 for \$10 • 3 for \$25 • 6 for \$50 • 12 for \$100 • 25 for \$200 • 50 for \$400 • 75 for \$500

~ Bulletin Board ~

What's Happening?

July 12 — Seventh Annual MCRC Raffle Trip for Two!
Drawing. See Page 11 for details.

September 21 — MCRC's 3rd Annual Big River Run. Time to run or walk with your neighbors, friends and family along beautiful Big River. Grab a pledge sheet and start training. The run is a benefit for MCRC and 100% of the proceeds stay in Mendocino County.



September 27 — A benefit performance of the play "Wit" at 8:00 p.m. at the Helen Schoeni Theatre in Mendocino. This performance is dedicated in memory of Mary Bradish, MCRC's founding board president, who died of ovarian cancer in May of 2000. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased through the Mendocino Theatre Company box office 707.937.4477.

Time of Remembrance is a community-wide cancer memorial ceremony sponsored by MCRC. This is a time to remember loved ones that have died of cancer. If you would like to include a name to be read during the ceremony or need further information about this special event, please contact MCRC.

Educational forums and panel discussions on **Traditional Chinese Medicine**, the use of herbs and acupuncture in cancer care and to support the immune system. Local and Bay area practitioners will present two forums. There will be an open forum for the public and a forum designed specifically for medical practitioners. MCRC is partnering with Corners of the Mouth, a natural food collective in Mendocino, to sponsor these community forums. Location, dates and times to be announced.

And Watch For These Upcoming Speakers

Lung cancer, tobacco and smoking cessation and clinical trials are just a few of the topics that **Carolyn Clary-Macy**, UCSF oncology nurse, will cover in an upcoming educational forum.

Executive Director of the California Cancer Registry Region 6, **Mignon Dryden**, plans to present a look at cancer statistics in Mendocino County and Northern California, how data is gathered and what it means.

MCRC is presently scheduling dates for other nationally known speakers. If you would like information about upcoming events, contact MCRC at 937.3833 or 1.800.449.6483, or visit our web site at www.mendocancerctr.org.

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