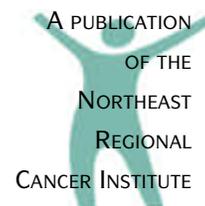


# In sights



A PUBLICATION  
OF THE  
NORTHEAST  
REGIONAL  
CANCER INSTITUTE  
WINTER 2005

.....  
*this*  
*issue...*

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## Raise Awareness Dress c.a.s.u.a.l.

**O**n Wednesday, March 30th businesses in Northeast Pennsylvania can dress **C.A.S.U.A.L.** for a good cause - the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute's 2nd Annual C.A.S.U.A.L. Day.

C.A.S.U.A.L. Day stands for Colorectal Cancer Awareness Saves Unlimited Adult Lives and raises awareness about screening for colorectal cancer. The event is held in memory of Helen Phillips, who fought a battle against colon cancer and died in the summer of 2002.

"With screening colorectal cancer can be prevented," said Marie Santilli, colon cancer survivor and C.A.S.U.A.L. Day 2005 spokesperson. "Early detection greatly increases the opportunity to successfully treat this disease."

Last year over 150 businesses in Northeast Pennsylvania participated in

C.A.S.U.A.L. Day. These businesses represented a six county area, which includes Lackawanna, Luzerne, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming counties.

"My hope is that even more businesses and individuals will participate in C.A.S.U.A.L. Day 2005," said Maura Phillips Staback, C.A.S.U.A.L. Day Committee Co-Chair and daughter of Helen Phillips.

All proceeds from C.A.S.U.A.L. Day support the Cancer Institute - *Targeted Colorectal Cancer Awareness Program (TCCAP)*. This community health initiative was developed to increase awareness about colorectal cancer and the benefits of screening.

Businesses and individuals can get involved in C.A.S.U.A.L. Day by contacting the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute.

## Marie Santilli's Personal Story

C.A.S.U.A.L. Day was developed to raise awareness for colon cancer screening. Marie Santilli is a survivor of colon cancer because of her physician's pro-active approach to screening.

Today, Marie Santilli is dedicated to speaking about the importance of colon cancer screening.



Through her personal experience Marie Santilli hopes that more individuals realize the importance of colon cancer screening and get screened early.

For Marie's personal story please visit [www.nrci.org/CasualDay2005.htm](http://www.nrci.org/CasualDay2005.htm) and download the C.A.S.U.A.L. Day fact sheet.



## PAC3 Regional Retreat Begins Implementation of Cancer Control Plan

**O**n February 16th a *Pennsylvania Cancer Control Consortium* (PAC3) Regional Retreat was held to forward the implementation of *The Pennsylvania Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan* in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Regional stakeholders were invited to the Retreat where the day's objectives included enhancing collaboration by increasing awareness of the work of cancer related service agencies; identifying how the *Plan* fits with the missions of local organizations; identifying priority goal efforts; and developing a regional resource inventory.

The implementation process was broken down into four areas of the *Plan*. Participants discussed cancer control based on prevention/healthy lifestyles, early detection/screening, treatment and care delivery, and quality of life and survivorship.



*Participants discussed and generated ideas for collaboration and ways to ease the burden of cancer in Northeastern Pennsylvania at the PAC3 Regional Retreat*

"The Retreat focused on what we, as regional cancer control service providers, can do to tie into the statewide plan," said Robert F. Durkin, President of the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute.

James Kane, Cancer Control Director of the American Cancer Society Northeast Region, added,

"The Retreat provided an opportunity for our organizations to increase awareness of the services and programs provided locally and discuss ways to collaborate to reduce the cancer burden in Northeastern Pennsylvania."

If you are interested in addressing cancer control in Northeastern Pennsylvania, or

would like more information about the *Pennsylvania Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan*, please contact the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute at (570) 941-7984 (Scranton) or (570) 970-6543 (Wilkes-Barre).

## Cancer Resources Available at Your Local Library

Do you want to know more about cancer, treatment choices, and area resources?

For reliable, up-to-date cancer information, go to your local library.

Through joint programs of the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute, the American Cancer Society, and the Area Health Education Center (AHEC), answers to your questions about cancer can be found in public libraries in Lackawanna,

Luzerne, Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming counties. Each library has current cancer information, including books, videos, brochures and booklets.

If you have questions or would like more information about the Library Project, please contact the Cancer Institute at (570) 941-7984 in Scranton or (570) 970-6543 in Wilkes-Barre or e-mail us at [education@cancernepa.org](mailto:education@cancernepa.org).



## What is Epidemiology Research?

*This is the first of a three part series which will focus on epidemiology research and clinical trial research as it relates to cancer.*

Cancer epidemiology research is a key program area of the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute. But what exactly is the meaning of cancer epidemiology?

In previous issues of *Insights*, we have defined cancer epidemiology as a study of the incidence, distribution and control of cancer. But even this definition can be confusing.

The term is perhaps best understood by getting a better understanding of what epidemiology is – and is not.

Whereas clinical medicine deals with health issues of separate individuals, epidemiological studies look at groups of people. For example in clinical medicine, a healthcare professional might ask, “What is wrong with this patient and how can it be treated?” Conversely, with epidemiological studies, the questions are directed at groups of people: “What is the leading cause of death in this community and how can it be prevented.”

Unlike clinical medicine, which is primarily concerned with people who get a specific disease, epidemiological studies are interested in those who do not get the disease, as well those who do.

While it would be logical to assume that cancer epidemiology studies the disease of cancer, its focus is actually much broader. Cancer epidemiology studies often look at precursors to cancer, as well as cancer prevention and overall health

In looking at patterns of the disease in a popu-

lation of people, epidemiologists ask the “four W’s”: Who?, When? Where? and Why?.

“Who” identifies which types of people are at higher risk of getting cancer? For example, personal habits such as physical exercise or tobacco use, or genetic characteristics such as blood groups might be influencing factors.

“When” looks at how the incidence of the disease changes over time. And “where” studies how the disease varies from one place to another.

The question of “why” studies why some groups of people are at higher risk of getting cancer than others. Factors such as lifestyle, the environment and genetic traits are analyzed.

Unlike some forms of research which are based on experiments, epidemiological studies observe and contrast.

Using the processes outlined above, epidemiologists seek to learn about the cause of a disease in order to introduce preventative strategies.

Interestingly, the epidemiologist does not need to fully understand the cause of cancer in order to develop preventative measures. Without knowing exactly how tobacco might cause cancer, epidemiologists have concluded that the risk of developing lung cancer is lower in populations that do not smoke tobacco products.

The results of cancer epidemiology studies provide a platform for research strategies and programs that address cancer-specific problem areas.

### **National Cancer Registrar’s Week – April 4th - 8th, 2005**

Cancer Registrars will celebrate their crucial role in cancer research, treatment and prevention during the annual National Cancer Registrars Week (NCRW) April 4-8. NCRW is sponsored by the National Cancer Registrars Association, to honor the importance of the Cancer Registrar.

Working in communities large and small, Cancer Registrars are the first link in capturing data on patients diagnosed with cancer. Cancer Registrars compile the patient-level data into registries that provide information for healthcare providers and health officials to use in monitoring and improving cancer treatment, conducting cancer research, and targeting cancer prevention and screening programs.

## Board of Directors Welcomed

Judge Terrence R. Nealon, chairman of the Board of the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute, announces the recent appointment of Joseph P. Bannon, MD, Honorable Michael A. Lombardo, W. Scott Lynett, Leah Nawrocki, RN, Barry J. Pernikoff, MD, and Carmella Sebastian, MD to the Board of Directors.

Joseph P. Bannon, MD, is a partner of Delta Medix, P.C. in Scranton. Prior to his current position, Dr. Bannon was an instructor of surgery at the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.



*Bannon*

He received his education at The University of Scranton and the Jefferson Medical College.

Honorable Michael A. Lombardo serves as the Mayor of the City of Pittston and is active with the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce, Greater Pittston Y.M.C.A., Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance, and the American Cancer Society.



*Lynett*

Mr. Lombardo is the Special Education Director at the Pittston Area School District. He received his Bachelor's degree in Psychology and his Masters in Education from Bucknell University.

W. Scott Lynett serves as Publisher of the *Citizens' Voice*.

He received his bachelors degree from Boston College, a law degree from Georgetown University Law Center, and received his masters in Business

Administration from Villanova University.

Currently, Mr. Lynett is involved The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Lackawanna County and is a member of the Board of Directors of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Bridge.

Leah Nawrocki, RN, serves as Manager of Oncology Services and Nurse Manager of Mercy Hospital in Scranton.



*Nawrocki*

She received her Bachelors and Masters degrees in Nursing from Wilkes University.

Barry J. Pernikoff, MD, has practiced at the Surgical Specialists of Wyoming Valley since 1990. Prior to this position, he served as Assistant Director of the Surgical Residency Program at St. Mary's Hospital in Connecticut.

Dr. Pernikoff received his undergraduate degrees from Ner Israel Rabbinical Seminary and Johns Hopkins University and his doctorate from Penn State University.



*Sebastian*

Carmella Sebastian, MD is the Vice President of Medical Affairs and Chief Medical Officer for First Priority Health and Blue Cross of NEPA since 2000 and has worked for Blue Cross for 12 years.

She received a bachelors degree from The University of Scranton, a masters degree from Kings College, and received her doctorate from the Medical College of Pennsylvania.

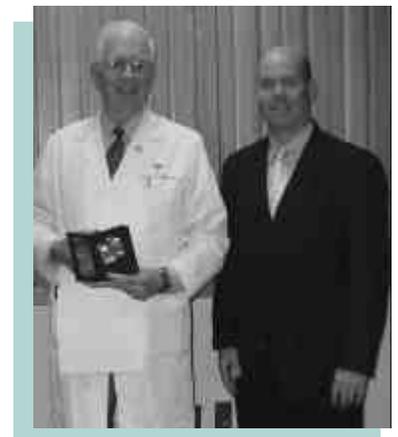
## Saluting Dedicated Board Members



*Presenting Dr. Charles J. Bannon with a gift is Dr. Samuel Lesko*

The Northeast Regional Cancer Institute is thankful for the dedication and commitment of the following Board of Directors whose terms were completed in 2005

**Charles J. Bannon, MD;**  
**Charles T. Curtin, MD;**  
**Monsignor Joseph G. Quinn,**  
**William W. Scranton, III; and**  
**Robert E. Wright, MD**



*Presenting Dr. Robert E. Wright with a gift is Robert Durkin*



## Cancer Institute Welcomes New Employees

Denise Yatko, RHIT, has joined the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute as Cancer Registrar. She is responsible for recording cancer diagnosis, treatment and outcomes at Mercy Hospital in Wilkes-Barre.



*Yatko*

Prior to this position Ms. Yatko worked in the Medical Records Department at Mercy Hospital in Wilkes-Barre. She

attended Franklin and Marshall College and graduated from the Office Assistant Program at Luzerne County Community College.

Ms. Yatko resides in Hanover Township with her family.

Meghan Trichilo has joined the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute as Community Outreach Coordinator. She is responsible for planning and implementing key components of education and outreach programs.



*Trichilo*

Prior to this position Ms. Trichilo served as Assistant Manager at Hematology & Oncology Associates in Dunmore. She received a bachelor's degree in Health Administration from The University of Scranton and is currently pursuing her master's degree.

Ms. Trichilo resides in the Dunmore area.

## *their own words*

This personal expression is published in the book, [Becoming a Bar Mitzvah](#) written by Arnine Cumsky Weiss. After her son, a cancer survivor, celebrated his Bar Mitzvah she looked into other stories surrounding this religious celebration and the accomplishments that made them so special.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** "IN their own words..." features a letter, story or poem written by a member of the Family of Survivors. We encourage **your** submissions because it is all about you and your experience with cancer...in **YOUR** own words. To share your story with our readers, please contact or send your submission to Kristin Hake, Community Relations Coordinator, Northeast Regional Cancer Institute, 334 Jefferson Ave., Scranton, PA 18510. Phone (570) 941-7984. Email hakek2@scranton.edu

My oldest son survived cancer. This little tidbit of information has come to define me in a way that nothing else does, as in "I'm a married mother of three, work as a freelance sign language interpreter, and my oldest son, who is now 21, has survived cancer."

With every other aspect of my life, I worked at it and strived for it. Yet this last role, the mother of a survivor, was assigned to me without my consent. We –yes, "we," the five of us- endured three years of chemotherapy, two bouts of hair loss, and a daunting uncertainty that if we didn't know where this disease came from in the first place, how do we know it won't come back?

Yet we have triumphed, emerging as a tighter unit, grateful to medical science and our doctors who worked in partnership with God.

For me, this has been the ultimate "when life gives you lemons...make lemonade" story. I had no control over a silent killer that threatened to take my boy, but we have all chosen to take back that control in our own way. Matthew, age 21, is a tall, strong young man who has channeled his energies into school, sports, and film making. And I am further enchanted with God's blessings and the miracle of life.

*-Written by Arnine Cumsky Weiss*



## **Allied Services Patient, Danielle Massetti, with her Story of Determination**

**F**ourteen year old Danielle Massetti came to Allied Rehab Hospital in Scranton on December 17th following a surgical incident that left her paralyzed from the waist down. But that is only a small part of a very special story.

In November of 1999, Danielle and her mother Judy noticed several bruises over her back and hips. Upon review and tests with Danielle’s pediatrician they were unable to find any clear answers, Danielle was sent to St. Christopher’s Hospital in Philadelphia.

At St. Christopher’s Hospital, Danielle was diagnosed with Ewing’s Sarcoma, bone cancer primarily of her spine. Since that day, Danielle has had over 100 surgeries and surgical procedures, several courses of chemo, and radiation therapy treatments at St. Christopher’s Hospital and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York to help rid her of the cancer and provide the physical capabilities to again become an active young girl.

Danielle entered Allied Rehab Hospital in Scranton on December 17th to help restore her strength, ability to walk and activities of daily living. Danielle has been receiving physical rehabilitation at the Allied Rehab Hospital. Asked what she hopes to achieve her answer was very quick, “I want to be able to walk again.”

The therapists work with Danielle to help her walk with the assistance of, the LiteGait, an assistance devise that

promotes the generation of normal walking patterns by controlling weight bearing, balance and posture during walking therapy. Danielle, says that her mother, Judy, read about the LiteGait and its wonderful capabilities when they were at Sloan-Kettering. They are thrilled to see that Allied Rehab has the equipment.

When asked what she feels she has accomplished so far at the Allied Rehab Hospital, Danielle noted how she can use the transfer board, and how she has really built-up her upper body strength. She said she is close to being able to lift herself with her transfers, and can walk with assisted devises.

When asked who has had the greatest impact on her rehabilitation at the Allied Rehab Hospital Danielle pointed to three people. Ann her Occupational Therapist, Leslie her Physical Therapist and Gloria her Occupational Therapy Aide. “Ann is such a sweetheart. She is always so nice and patient with me,” said Danielle. “Leslie knows how to push me to do more in rehab, and

knows when enough is enough. Gloria makes me laugh so much. I want to stay in touch with all of them when I go home.”

When Danielle was asked of her greatest achievement in her young life, she responded, “being here to tell my story. I am now cancer free for one-year.” Her aunt Carol sums up Danielle’s determination, “She’s the one who keeps us all going through this. She’s so strong and determined.”



*Danielle Massetti*

## **Mercy Hospital Cancer Center Awarded Gold Medal for Cancer Study Participation**

**M**ercy Hospital’s Cancer Center was recently awarded a Gold Medal at a meeting of the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project in Huntington Beach, CA. Mercy Hospital was recognized for its recruitment efforts for the Co-STAR study, open to women 65 years or older who are currently enrolled in the Study of Tamoxifen and Raloxifene (the STAR Breast Cancer Prevention Trial).

The Co-STAR Study, conducted by the Wake Forest University School of Medicine, compares the effects of Tamoxifen and Raloxifene on age-associated declines in memory and other cognitive abilities of women age 65 and older.

Vee Pauli, RD, CCRP, program coordinator for both the STAR and the Co-STAR trials at Mercy, is trained and certified at Wake Forest University Coordinating Center to perform cognitive testing for the study.

Dr. Martin Hyzinski serves as Principal Investigator for the study.



*Shown receiving the award are from left Leab Nawrocki, Administrative Director, Oncology Services at Mercy Scranton; Vee Pauli, R.D., Cancer Prevention Coordinator; and Martin Hyzinski, M.D.*



## “A Musical Variety Show” to benefit the Cancer Institute

Local Mid-Valley High graduate Jill Caines, now Jill Minor, returned to her hometown in Northeast Pennsylvania on March 12th to put on a cancer benefit variety show with her husband, Michael.

The couple met on the set of “Oklahoma” and come from a strong background in dance and musical talent. Jill has been dancing since she was 2 years old and Michael has been singing since first grade.

Jill and Michael Minor approached the Cancer Institute in January with the idea of putting on a Cancer Benefit show using their talents as the entertainment. The variety show complete with singing, dancing, and comedy, would be similar to a show the Minors put on in Michael’s home state of Iowa to raise money for his mother, Diane Minor, who passed away after a battle with cancer.

With the idea set, the Olyphant Lions Club offered to host a pasta dinner prior to the show. As family and friends made their way to the Mid-Valley



*Jayme D. Morano, Mayor of Olphant Borough (right) presented Michael and Jill Minor (left) with a Proclamation which honored them for their performance on March 12th.*

Secondary School auditorium, the Mid-Valley Mixed Chorus began the evening with select musical choices. After the chorus performance, Jill and Michael took the stage to provide their audience with an entertaining show.

“I am so excited I had the opportunity to perform with my husband for everyone in my hometown while also raising money to support the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute,” said Jill. “Both Michael and I are very dedicated to cancer awareness and prevention. We are happy to give back to the community through this cancer benefit show.”

Through pasta dinner and performance ticket sales, the event raised over \$5,000 to support the Cancer Institute. The money raised will go towards the research, education, and registry services that the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute has been providing for Northeastern Pennsylvania for nearly 14 years.

### **Thank You For Your Support**

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of cancer in  
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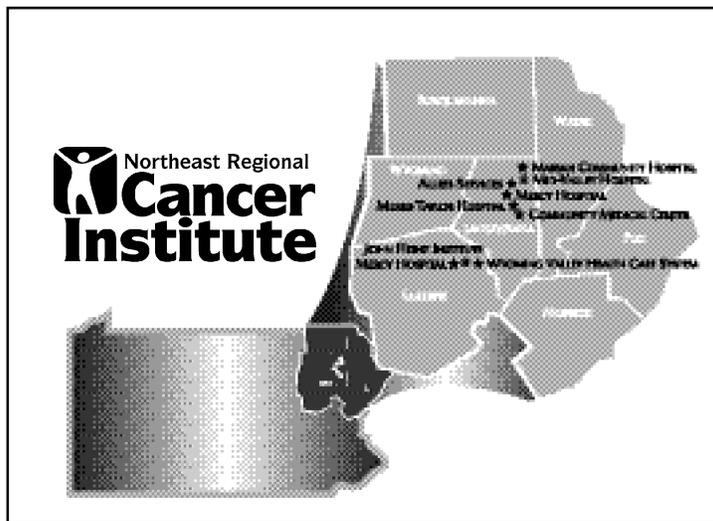
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The Northeast Regional Cancer Institute is a non-profit community-based agency working to ease the burden of cancer in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Focusing on research, education, and survivorship, the Cancer Institute invests all of its resources in this region.

Partnering with the Cancer Institute to achieve its goals are community leaders, volunteers, healthcare professionals, and a cooperative network of nine partner organizations in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

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