Fighting Cancer Finding Hope

75 years, thousands of survivors

SWEDISH CANCER INSTITUTE
ON THE COVER

Before Greg Fox came to the Swedish Cancer Institute, he was told to put his affairs in order and prepare for the end. But once here, he was able, instead, to make a new beginning.

Like Greg’s story, which begins on page 6, every tale of fighting cancer is a personal one. Each one is poignant. It is impossible to tell all their stories here, but as the Swedish Cancer Institute celebrates 75 years and thousands of survivors, we thought we would share just a few.

Donations to Swedish help fund cancer research, purchase new technology and provide expert care. For information on how you can help, contact the Swedish Medical Center Foundation at 206-386-2738.
When you work in health care, you have the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of others. That’s why I became a physician years ago. And it continues to be what motivates me today.

I recently celebrated my first six months as president and CEO of Swedish, and it has been wonderful to see the impact this organization has on the community. On any given day, we serve as many as 600 individuals in our hospitals, and several hundred more in our emergency rooms and outpatient clinics.

People come to Swedish from all walks of life, usually because they’re facing serious medical issues. As a nonprofit, it’s our job to be here when they need us. And when you give to Swedish, you make it possible for us to do just that. Your support helps to ensure that everyone who comes through our doors has access to the latest, most advanced health care available.

As a health-care administrator, my job is to support physicians, nurses and other staff so they, in turn, can provide the best care to patients. It has been a privilege getting to know the people who work at Swedish, and everyday I see more reasons why they are recognized both locally and nationally. This year, many of our physicians were again named as local top doctors in Seattle magazine, and our endocrinology program was recognized as one of the best in the nation by U.S. News & World Report.

Perhaps most gratifying of all is hearing from our patients. They are the real heroes. In this issue of FORUM, you’ll get a chance to meet some of them and read their inspiring stories. Our feature article is about cancer survivors who were treated at Swedish Cancer Institute, which was established in 1932 as the first radiation-cancer-treatment center West of the Mississippi. We have been on the leading edge of the field ever since, turning cancer patients into cancer survivors for 75 years.

Our work in the area of cancer care is just one way Swedish is making a difference. It’s what our nonprofit mission is all about. On behalf of Swedish Administration and the Board of Trustees, thank you for sharing our commitment to quality health care for our community and region.

All the best,

Rod Hochman, M.D.
President and CEO
Welcome to Swedish Medical Center’s FORUM magazine. This publication is designed to provide you with the latest information about Swedish services and events, health-care and medical topics, and the activities of the Swedish Medical Center Foundation and its supporters. FORUM is published as a community service by Swedish Medical Center. Any questions or comments may be addressed to Janet Simmelink, editor, Swedish Medical Center, 747 Broadway, Seattle, WA 98122-4307.
Swedish Moves Forward with Issaquah Hospital

Swedish received good news on June 1 when the Department of Health (DOH) granted Swedish approval to build a 175-bed hospital in Issaquah. This is only the third time in 24 years that the state has approved construction of a new hospital.

With the community growing as fast as it is, there’s a clear need for a local hospital. The number of people coming to Swedish’s Emergency Room and Specialty Center, which opened in Issaquah in 2005, is a good indication of just how critical the need is. This year, it’s estimated that the Issaquah campus will have more than 60,000 patient visits, including 20,000 ER visits — far more than originally projected.

The new hospital, which will open sometime in 2012, will meet the needs of East King County, save precious time for ambulances and give residents of the Issaquah area access to a hospital that’s closer to home. While multiple Issaquah locations are currently being looked at, the goal is to locate the new hospital at a site with easy access to Interstate 90.

Swedish’s Issaquah hospital will provide comprehensive care, including:
- Obstetrics
- Surgery
- Pediatrics
- General medical care
- Emergency medicine

The new hospital campus will be built in three phases. Starting with 80 beds in phase one, phase two will add 40 beds, and phase three will add 55 beds.

Though other hospitals are appealing the state’s decision to allow a hospital in Issaquah, Swedish is moving forward with the planning process to avoid any delay in meeting the community need.

Swedish Kicks Off an “Epic Adventure”

The move to an electronic medical record system — one of the largest initiatives ever launched by Swedish — is now well under way. Known as “Epic” (after its Wisconsin-based software development firm), the new clinical information system is up and running at Swedish’s Cherry Hill campus. It is also being rolled out at primary- and specialty-care clinics and will go live at the First Hill, Ballard and Issaquah campuses in March 2008.

Swedish’s new system is one of the best in the country, featuring a robust set of applications. This will allow Swedish to continue to deliver the highest quality care by helping doctors, nurses and support staff:
- Find critical information about a patient quickly
- Share information easily
- Clearly read notes and prescriptions

Other key benefits of Epic are improved patient safety through a single electronic health record and state-of-the-art security of patient information.

Staff work in the Epic Command Center at the Cherry Hill campus during the April Go-Live. There was extensive around-the-clock support from staff to help with the launch of the new system.
Swedish Physicians Make “Top Docs” List

More than 130 Swedish-affiliated physicians were named “Top Doctors” in the September 2007 issue of Seattle magazine. The annual list, which is in its seventh year, includes a total of 372 physicians who were nominated by their peers.

Swedish-affiliated physician Arvinder S. Mokha, M.D., an allergist with the Polyclinic, appeared on the cover of the magazine (pictured) and was profiled in the issue.

The “Top Doctors” list is determined through a comprehensive, controlled survey. More than 11,000 surveys were sent earlier in the year to physicians around the Puget Sound region. The physicians who were nominated most frequently made the list.

This just in: Physicians aren’t the only ones making “best of” lists. Swedish has been ranked among the top 50 endocrinology programs in the country in U.S. News & World Report’s Best Hospitals list.

Swedish Cancer Institute to Purchase Innovative New Technology

Over its 75-year history, the Swedish Cancer Institute (SCI) has always been an early adopter of the most progressive technologies and treatments. In keeping with that long tradition, Swedish recently signed a contract to buy an innovative proton beam radiotherapy system that provides highly targeted radiation therapy to fight cancer.

The SCI plans to be the first program in the Pacific Northwest to offer this therapy, and will partner with other area hospitals and providers so this technology will be a true community resource. The target date to begin using this new system is December 2010.

Considered the latest generation of proton beam radiotherapy equipment, the Clinatron 250™ costs $22 million and is being purchased from Still Rivers Systems based in Littleton, Mass.

Proton beams differ from conventional X-ray (or photon) delivery systems because proton particles come to rest after the delivery of a radiation dose to the patient’s tumor. As a result, normal tissues that otherwise would be in the path of the radiation beam are not harmed. Proton beam radiation therapy is ideally suited for tumors in close proximity to critical structures. Protons are currently used in treating cancers of the prostate, eye, brain, head and neck, spine, breast and esophagus.

“With protons it’s possible to precisely concentrate the radiation damage inside the tumor so radiation oncologists can use higher, more effective doses,” said Albert B. Einstein Jr., M.D., executive director of the Swedish Cancer Institute. “Proton beam radiation therapy will be an ideal complement to the array of other cancer-fighting tools already available to area residents.”
In 1932, the Swedish Board of Trustees made a momentous decision. Although it was the period of the Great Depression, they allocated funds for the purchase of a 1-million volt X-ray machine for the treatment of cancer. With the machine's installation and the opening of the Swedish Tumor Institute, the hospital became one of only eight institutions in the United States offering high-energy radiation therapy for cancer and the only one west of the Mississippi. It was the beginning of a 75-year commitment by Swedish to providing cancer patients with the best, most innovative care available. Here are some of the milestones that have occurred along the way.

1932
Swedish Tumor Institute opens to become first radiation therapy center west of the Mississippi

1939
Eleanor Roosevelt visits Swedish Tumor Institute

1954
A 2-million volt X-ray machine, one of only seven in the country, is installed

1969
First chemotherapy oncologist joins Swedish

1975
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center founded on Swedish premises by long-time Swedish surgeon

1985
First radioactive seeds implanted for prostate tumors by a physician who later affiliates with Swedish

1996
Marsha Rivkin Center for Ovarian Cancer Research opens

1999
Tumor Institute renamed the Swedish Cancer Institute

2000
Swedish joins International Early Lung Cancer Action Project

2001
Cancer program at Seattle Providence Medical Center joins the Swedish Cancer Institute

2002
Swedish Cancer Institute expands, celebrates 70 years

2004
Breast Care Express mobile mammography clinic hits the road

2005
Robotic surgery performed for the first time at Swedish

2005
An Image Guided Radiation Therapy system, one of the first in the country, is implemented, allowing physicians to "see" a tumor at the same time radiation is applied

2005
Swedish receives an "outstanding achievement award" from American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer

2006
Advanced CyberKnife treatment made available through Swedish Cancer Institute

2007
Swedish Cancer Institute is first in world to offer Calypso 4D Localization System for prostate-cancer treatment

2007
Swedish Cancer Institute celebrates 75th anniversary
Greg Fox was just 22, and Vicky Edmond was 18 when the two met in Ketchikan, Alaska in 1976. She was working as a waitress and he for an electrical company when she developed “a big crush” on him. The relationship lasted about two years, before Vicky broke it off.

“I think we were just young and didn’t know how to talk to each other,” says Vicky, who moved to Seattle and eventually became a writer and teacher.

Greg returned to Montana where his family lived, but the two would sometimes meet for coffee when he was in Seattle and, occasionally, they talked on the phone. Eventually, however, Greg and Vicky married other people and started their own families. “I thought we’d always be just friends,” says Vicky.

Even when their marriages failed, Vicky and Greg continued to be “just friends.” But two years ago, when Greg was passing through Seattle and Vicky met him for coffee, they realized they were still in love after all these years.

Soon after this reunion, Greg visited a doctor in Montana because he was having trouble swallowing. That physician referred him to an oncologist in Helena whose tests resulted in a grim diagnosis. Greg, he said, had esophageal cancer. He suggested chemotherapy, but was not optimistic about its long-term effect. He did not recommend surgery. It would be best, the doctor said, if Greg put his affairs in order.
“It felt like we were all part of a team working together to give me the best chance for recovery,” remembers Greg.
“It felt like the people who took care of me had a calling,” says Dixie. “It was their care that made the difference for me.”
While smoking did not cause Greg’s illness, it most probably played a part in Dixie McAllister’s diagnosis last year of lung cancer. “I want people to know that,” says Dixie, 63, who smoked heavily for more than 40 years. “I want them to know what happened to me so it will encourage them to quit and get tested because it’s so important to find this early.”

Paula Manner coordinates Swedish’s Lung Cancer Screening Program, the only site in the Northwest for an international study of whether low-radiation CT scans are an appropriate screening method for detecting lung cancer at its early stages. Paula probably saved her life, says Dixie, by persuading her to come back to Swedish for a screening when it seemed to be too much trouble now that she had retired and moved from Seattle to Roy, Washington.

Vicky, who had been visiting Greg and was on her way home to Seattle when she got the news, turned her car around. Soon she was on the Internet, researching esophageal cancer and looking for doctors in Seattle who might offer some hope. Her search eventually led the couple to Swedish physician Brian Louie, M.D., an esophageal and thoracic surgeon affiliated with the Swedish Cancer Institute.

Greg remembers their first meeting well. Dr. Louie spent more than an hour explaining test results and outlining three surgical approaches for extracting the cancer. Dr. Louie said he believed he could remove the cancerous tissue and re-route the esophageal connection with Greg’s stomach. “It felt like we were all part of a team working together to give me the best chance for recovery,” remembers Greg. What Vicky remembers is that – unlike some of the other physicians they consulted – Dr. Louie “didn’t treat Greg like he was dying.”

With Greg undergoing chemotherapy to shrink the tumor and an operation scheduled at Swedish for mid-December, he and Vicky made a momentous decision. They would marry on Thanksgiving Day. “We picked that day because we felt we had so much to be thankful for,” says Vicky. “And we continue to feel that way every day,” says Greg. About two weeks after the surgery, Greg suffered a bowel obstruction that brought him back to the hospital. Since then, he has made a steady recovery of his health and is today “cancer free.” There is no guarantee that the cancer will not return, but Greg and Vicky say they are focused on living the best life they can right now without worrying about what may, or may not, happen in the future. Greg has retired from the Montana National Guard, where he served 20 years as a photographer and videographer, sometimes in such war-torn areas as Bosnia and Iraq. He’s now taken up a long-delayed passion for sailing, while Vicky continues her work as a poet and writing teacher.

While some esophageal cancers can be caused by smoking, the majority of esophageal cancers in North America, like Greg’s, are caused by chronic gastroesophageal reflux disease. Whatever the reason, Greg says that if he could turn back the clock and not have cancer, he wouldn’t do it. “I’ve learned so much. I’m more thoughtful now of how I treat others and how I treat myself. I think I breathe more deeply. I think I love more deeply. Every day is a blessing.”
HELPING others became a calling for Leo Richard Ward, 82, after he was diagnosed and successfully treated for prostate cancer in 1993. The next year Leo took over leadership of the fledgling Man-to-Man Prostate Cancer Education and Support Group.

Although the group is primarily educational and not therapeutic, being with other cancer patients has a beneficial effect, says Leo. “It helps to know you’re not the only one with this problem.” Leo’s cancer was discovered in March 1993 via a routine physical that included a PSA, a blood test that screens for prostate cancer. He underwent radiation therapy and his cancer has been in remission ever since.

Leo is particularly thankful for the support of his family, which includes his wife and four adult children, during his treatment. “I think of a survivor as someone who has a lot going for him emotionally and physically,” says Leo. “I had all that and I want other men to know they don’t have to face this alone.”

Today, Leo walks five miles a day and watches his diet. He doesn’t dwell on his bout with a potentially fatal illness. “I tell newly diagnosed men that this is a medical problem that can be treated or cured,” says Leo. “I encourage them to come to the support-group meetings and learn as much as they can and to be an active part of their treatment.”

But with Paula’s consistent encouragement, Dixie made the trip in early 2006 for her fifth scan and that’s when several “suspicious” spots were seen on her lungs. In March of that year she underwent surgery at Swedish, which confirmed one of the nodules was cancerous and it was removed at that time. No chemotherapy was required and today Dixie is cancer free. She continues to have regular tests.

“I now have an awareness that I am truly blessed,” says Dixie, who credits Swedish with giving her an opportunity for living a longer life. “It felt like the people who took care of me had a calling,” says Dixie. “It was their care that made the difference for me.” Dixie says that if her story “can get one other person to get checked,” she will feel she has done a small part to help others get the care they need.
“I tell newly diagnosed men that this is a medical problem that can be treated or cured,” says Leo.
“We’re all survivors of something,” says Christine. “Cancer doesn’t define me. What I do with the rest of my life does.”
Just like Leo Ward, Christine Smith’s bout with breast cancer led her to helping others facing the same challenge. Christine was just 32 when she was diagnosed in May 2000. An active, stay-at-home mother with two young sons, Christine credits the support of her husband, friends and extended family with helping her get through her surgery and chemotherapy. Just two short months after her diagnosis, Christine was reaching out to help others by founding Northwest Hope & Healing (NWHH), an organization that provides non-medical support to breast-cancer patients at Swedish. That first year, with the help of family and friends, Christine distributed dozens of “healing baskets” to patients that were filled with comfort items such as lavender eye pillows, lip balm, inspirational notecards, creams and cosmetics.

In addition to the healing baskets, NWHH now raises money to provide financial support for patient necessities not covered by insurance. Rent, money for food, and even childcare reimbursement are offered to those unable to cover these costs during treatment. Christine herself often meets with newly diagnosed patients. “Initially, I thought I was going to die,” says Christine, whose cancer was characterized as aggressive. “I know what it’s like to be afraid.”

Christine says her fear “went away all at once” and she focused on living rather than dying. “I feel so fortunate to have been treated by the fabulous doctors at Swedish,” says Christine. “I never asked ‘why’ when I was diagnosed. I just look at my experience as a reason to help others.”

Christine, who through genetic testing has learned she has a gene that means she has a heightened risk for ovarian cancer, says that she doesn’t call herself a “cancer survivor.” “That separates me from other people and I’m not any different from anyone else,” says Christine. She and her husband, Tim, recently adopted a little girl from China. Christine says she lives her life enjoying all she has in the present moment and looking forward to the future. “We’re all survivors of something,” says Christine. “Cancer doesn’t define me. What I do with the rest of my life does.”

Northwest Hope & Healing, founded by Christine Smith, works with the Swedish Foundation to help other Swedish breast cancer patients by providing several services, including healing baskets and financial support for non-medical needs. For more information, contact Shari Sewell at 206-215-2888 or go to www.nwhopeandhealing.org.

The Man-to-Man Prostate Cancer Education and Support Group lead by Leo Ward meets the third Thursday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in The Arnold Building next to Swedish Medical Center on First Hill.

Information about this group and other patient-support services at Swedish that support cancer patients is available online at www.swedish.org/cancer.
Thanks to a generous gift from PACCAR, the Swedish Cancer Institute (SCI) is enhancing its Mobile Mammography Program. PACCAR, a Fortune 150 technology company headquartered in Bellevue, is donating two Kenworth trucks to the SCI. One has replaced the truck pulling the Swedish Breast Care Express. The other will allow for a second mobile clinic for expanded outreach to locations not currently served in Washington.

“This gift represents a creative way companies can support the services that nonprofits like Swedish provide in the community,” said Swedish President and CEO Rod Hochman, M.D. “PACCAR is not only upgrading our current truck, they are helping us meet the growing need for mobile mammography services by helping us build the new mobile clinic.”

“PACCAR and Swedish are leaders in their respective fields,” said Mark Pigott, PACCAR’s Chairman and CEO. “Working together generates significant benefits for the communities in which we work and live. We’re honored to be able to support the life-saving work being done by Swedish every day in the early detection of breast cancer.”

Developed in 2004, the current Swedish Breast Care Express is believed to be the first mobile clinic in the world equipped with both full-field digital-mammography capabilities and satellite-transmission technology.

The 64-foot-long tractor-trailer features an on-board suite that includes separate areas for waiting, changing and examinations. When there is a need for specialized interpretations of a patient’s digital mammogram, the results can be transmitted to Swedish within minutes.

Swedish’s Mobile Mammography Program is funded entirely through philanthropy and has long benefited from the generous support of participants in Swedish’s annual Women’s Wellness Luncheon.

Regular Mammograms Save Lives

Breast cancer is a leading cause of cancer deaths among women in the United States. Experts agree that regular mammograms are the best way to detect breast cancer and that early detection increases the likelihood that treatments will be successful and the cancer will not return.

The National Cancer Institute reported in 2005 that the decline in breast cancer deaths from 49.7 to 38 per 100,000 between 1990 and 2000 was partially due to the increased use of mammography to detect early breast tumors.

The Swedish Breast Care Express is in continuous operation six days a week. During any given week, it may be offering services to remote Native American communities such as the Klallam, Makah, Hoh, Quets and Quinault tribes; city programs such as the Holly Park Clinic, International District Clinic, and North Seattle Public Clinic; or on the campuses of large employers such as PACCAR, Boeing, Microsoft, IKEA and REI.

PACCAR’s support of the Swedish Breast Care Express is a natural extension of its long history of service to the Pacific Northwest. PACCAR has provided valuable support to many charitable organizations by making a positive and lasting difference in the communities throughout the country. Prior to this current gift, PACCAR has provided more than $500,000 in philanthropic support of Swedish Medical Center.

“Because the PACCAR donation will enable us to expand our mobile mammography program and reach out to more women, we will undoubtedly be able to save more lives through early intervention,” noted Albert Einstein, M.D., executive director of the Swedish Cancer Institute. “That, in the end, is the full meaning of this gift.”
Donations Fund New TeleStroke Program

When it comes to stroke, “time is brain.” In fact, for every minute that passes without treatment being offered to someone having an acute stroke, the chance of meaningful recovery diminishes.

With the help of donations to the Swedish Medical Center Foundation, Swedish’s stroke team is launching an innovative stroke telemedicine program that will allow Swedish to share its stroke expertise with patients throughout the region.

Through a secure videoconferencing network, Swedish stroke experts at the Cherry Hill and First Hill campuses will be able to perform “virtual” bedside neurological evaluations and provide real-time, expert assessment of patients arriving at emergency rooms (ERs) with stroke-like symptoms.

The TeleStroke program, which will be completely funded by philanthropic gifts, is going to be rolled out in two phases. Phase one will allow Swedish’s Ballard and Issaquah ERs to be remotely linked to the stroke team on the Cherry Hill and First Hill campuses. Phase two will include partnering with rural hospitals throughout the state to provide the same support.

By placing sophisticated video monitoring equipment in ERs, the stroke team can remotely diagnose, assess and offer treatment recommendations 24 hours a day from any location without losing valuable time.

To date, the Swedish Medical Center Foundation has raised nearly $115,000 of the $300,000 needed to launch the first phase, and is still seeking additional donor support to cover program costs.

If you would like more information on the Telestroke program, please contact Randy Mann at 206-386-6791 or randy.mann@swedish.org.

Summit Club Dinner Slated for November 14

This year’s annual Summit Club recognition dinner is slated for Nov. 14 at Seattle’s Grand Hyatt Hotel. This event honors those who donate $1,500 or more every year to Swedish.

Dr. William H. Marks, chief of Swedish Medical Center’s Organ Transplant program and Laboratory for Transplantation Biology, will speak about the Organ Transplant outreach programs made possible through philanthropy. Dr. Marks, a nationally recognized leader in the field, was awarded the Robert B. McMillen Chair for Organ Transplantation in 1999.

Summit Club members enjoy benefits such as:
- Admittance to a private hospital room, when available and medically feasible.
- Free valet or discounted garage parking at Swedish’s First Hill campus.
- Special recognition in the annual report.
- Invitations to educational forums and other special events.
- An expedited registration process when admitted to the hospital.

For more information about joining the Summit Club, please contact Heidi Marsh at 206-386-6927 or heidi.marsh@swedish.org.
Today, more companies than ever before are paying attention to corporate social responsibility and the opportunities they have to improve their communities. Like PACCAR (see related story on page 14), many organizations are committed to this cause. Swedish is helping companies meet their philanthropic goals — from enhancing patient care to providing community health education and outreach.

One example is Swedish’s partnership with Dynacare, a LabCorp company, and a leading provider of medical diagnostic laboratory services. Its $1 million unrestricted donation to the Swedish Cancer Institute (SCI) is helping deliver the most advanced medical care available to thousands of cancer patients.

In appreciation, Swedish recently dedicated the Dynacare Garden Terrace. Located just outside the Medical Treatment Center on the third floor of the SCI, the terrace provides patients, staff and visitors a peaceful place to relax and reflect.

Community Outreach

A great example of community outreach is AstraZeneca’s recent $50,000 contribution to Swedish’s Get Healthy series. Through this initiative, AstraZeneca, one of the world’s leading pharmaceutical companies, is helping Swedish provide free health information and screenings to hundreds of people in the community.

At the Ballard SeafoodFest this summer, more than 500 people received cholesterol, blood pressure, body mass index, asthma and mood disorder screenings. Even more were expected to visit Swedish’s booth at Issaquah Salmon days. In addition to its financial support, more than 30 AstraZeneca employees volunteered to help at these events.

The third event in the Get Healthy series is a health fair Nov. 10 that will focus on women’s health issues. It will feature health screenings, lectures and interactive classes. (For information, call 206-386-2502.)

Other companies support Swedish by sponsoring continuing education programs for physicians. The annual Science Innovation Synergy (SIS) conference, for example, is made possible through corporate sponsors such as Boston Scientific and Cordis. SIS is a continuing-education course aimed at stimulating collaborative thinking to advance science in cardiac, vascular and neurovascular medicine.

At SIS, physicians and other healthcare professionals have the opportunity to observe the latest techniques, learn about procedural updates and equipment advances and interact with distinguished faculty.

“Corporate giving is a vital element of community development,” said Kate Purcell, Swedish’s director of corporate relations. “At Swedish, we understand these gifts are a measure of the confidence and trust these organizations have in us as we serve the community.”

For more information about corporate philanthropy at Swedish, contact Kate Purcell at 206-386-3194 or kate.purcell@swedish.org.

Dr. Juan Guerra of Swedish Physicians’ West Seattle Clinic provided free health-education information at the Get Healthy booth in Ballard.

The Dynacare Garden Terrace was named in recognition of Dynacare’s $1 million gift to the Swedish Cancer Institute.
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