



5008 Brittonfield Parkway, Suite 700
E. Syracuse, NY 13057 * 315.472.7504 * www.hoacny.com

Our Connection to You

Spring 2006
Newsletter

Our Mission is to provide the highest level of quality care in a healing environment for the mind, body and spirit of patients dealing with cancer and blood disorders.

Blood Drive * Brittonfield office * Friday, May 12th *
10am—3pm * Please call 472-7504 x 2044



Gussie Sorensen

The 2005 Robin Butler Spirit Award Recipient **Gussie Sorensen**

Gussie Sorensen, LCSW, our clinical social worker, is the recipient of the **2005 Robin Butler Spirit Award**. This award is one of the greatest honors an employee can receive at Hematology-Oncology Associates. Nominated by her peers, Gussie was awarded this honor because she consistently demonstrates an exemplary team spirit, passion for excellence and commitment to our mission. The award is named for Robin Butler, our loved and respected Director of Human Resources from March of 1998 through August 2005 when she resigned for significant health reasons.



Robin Butler

In this issue:

- **In Loving Memory**
—Dr. Tom Maher
- **For the Mind and Spirit** * Services for our patients
- **Our Research Department and Clinical Trials**
- **Announcement!**
Joseph Navone, MD is joining our practice !
- **Reaching for the Stars!**
- **FYI—From our practice to you!**
- **Complementary Therapy**
- **We're not miles away ... Just miles ahead!**
- **Medicare and the Payor Circuit**

Quote for the Quarter

“The best way out is always through”
Robert Frost

* In Loving Memory *

Thomas J. Maher, MD



June 15, 1957—January 4, 2006

As the darkened skies and raindrops fell upon Syracuse on January 4th, so the tears poured forth from our hearts as it appeared that a light had been extinguished from Hematology-Oncology Associates with the passing of our beloved Dr. Maher. A person, however, would only need to meet Dr. Maher once to know that the light of his love, laughter, dedication to his patients and passion for his profession would remain bright forever. He will always be in our hearts and the plethora of memories will make us smile and laugh throughout eternity.

Dr. Maher received his Doctor of Medicine Degree from Upstate Medical University and his undergraduate degree in Biology from St. Bonaventure University. He completed a fellowship in Hematology and Oncology at the New England Medical Center in Boston. While in Boston he was also an instructor on the faculty at Tufts University. He was board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in Hematology, Oncology and Internal Medicine. He was a beloved partner and physician at Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY and an active member of the medical staff at Community General Hospital since 1989. At Community General Hospital he was the Section Chief of Hematology-Oncology, Chairman of the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, Member of the Ethics Committee and Chairman of the Transfusion Committee. He was one of the Board of Directors for the American Cancer Society and his professional affiliations included: The Onondaga County Medical Society, Medical Society of the State of New York, American Medical Association, International Society of Hematotherapy and Genetic Engineering, American Society of Clinical Oncology, American Society of Hematology and the American College of Physicians. In 1993 he coauthored publications in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute and Modern Pathology.

Look Good... Feel Better

Cosmetology professionals will help you with make-up application, dry skin, discolored nails, choice and care of a wig, scarves, turbans and hats.

Held every 2nd Monday 5:30—7:00 pm
at our Brittonfield Office

Call Leigh Knapp 437-7026 ext. 112

Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, The Cosmetic, Toiletry and Fragrance Association and the National Cosmetology Association.

Art as Therapy

Classes held:

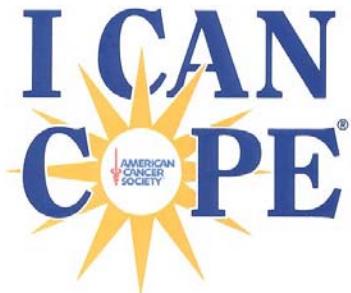
Every 4th Monday of the month from 5—7 pm

Art in all its forms is good for the soul and body! A truly therapeutic adventure—join Art Therapist Lisa Kiefer at our Brittonfield Office

Contact: Penny Murphy

KATS

Kids Adjusting Through Support –a heartwarming program for children and their families to help cope with a serious illness, by intervening with group support and an education process. This program is provided in conjunction with Camp Good Days and Special Times. Please call Penny at x2065 to inquire as to dates.



A Series of Free Educational Programs for Cancer Patients and their Family Members

Every Tuesday evening in April from 6-8 pm

Light Refreshments Served

Brittonfield Office - Third Floor Lounge

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| "The Cancer Journey" | Dr. Anthony J. Scalzo |
| "A Survivor's Story" | Nancy St. Onge |

Tuesday, April 11, 2006

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| "Pain Management" | Jonas Congelli, RPh |
| "Acupuncture" | Dr. Linda Lemay |

Tuesday, April 18, 2006

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| "Supplements 101" | Jennifer Matthews, RN, NP |
| "Address Your Stress—Techniques to Fertilize your Mind, Body and Soul" | Anne Hines, MS |

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| "Imagination, Vibration and Intention" | Maryann Roefaro, MS |
| "A Survivor's Story" | Laurie Mezzalingua |

For the mind and Spirit Support for Our Patients

Free to All !!

Patient Support

This group, as with all support groups, is facilitated by our social worker, Gussie Sorensen. She is a certified clinical oncology social worker with an abundance of wisdom and skill. You do not need to be a patient of the practice to attend. Support groups meet each Tuesday from 4–5:30 pm in the Brittonfield 3rd floor conference room.

Caregivers and Family Support

This group provides caregivers and family members the opportunity to meet with others who have cared for or are currently caring for a loved one with cancer. Sessions include discussions about the emotional reactions to diagnosis, effective problem solving, the role of the caregiver, spiritual considerations and helpful ways to manage stress. This group meets the fourth Monday of each month from 4-5:30 pm in the Brittonfield 3rd floor conference room.

Recurrent Support Group

This support group is dedicated to providing guidance to those cancer patients with recurrent disease. The unique aspects of this journey are explored with patients who are experiencing similar challenges. This group meets the 1st Monday of each month from 4-5:30 pm at Brittonfield in the 3rd floor conference room.

CLINICAL TRIALS

Colorectal Cancer is Preventable!

“Colorectal Cancer Screening Intervention for Family Members of Colorectal Cancer Patients”

Hematology-Oncology Associates Clinical Research Study in Collaboration with Fox Chase Cancer Center

The primary aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of three interventions on colorectal cancer screening behaviors and intentions among siblings at increased familial risk for colorectal cancer. The study population will include the siblings of colorectal patients who have not been screened for this according to the guidelines suggested by the American Cancer Society. The patient's age must be less than or equal to 60 years at diagnosis. Siblings must be over 40 years of age, or 10 years younger than the age of the relative's diagnosis—whichever is younger. Our research department can answer any questions you may have regarding this study. For more information please call 472-7504 and ask for the Research Department.

“Randomized Trial of Letrozole in Postmenopausal Women After Five Years of Tamoxifen Therapy for Early Stage Breast Cancer”



This trial was designed to test the effectiveness of 5 years of Letrozole therapy in postmenopausal women who had already completed 5 years of Tamoxifen for breast cancer; it was a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study.

A total of 5187 women were enrolled in the study nationwide and the conclusion was that Letrozole therapy after the completion of standard Tamoxifen treatment significantly improved disease-free survival; the initial results were so positive that the study was terminated for ethical reasons (so that the participants could be unblinded and those on placebo could start Letrozole therapy if they desired.) This study was published in the New England Journal of Medicine and included the data our practice provided from our enrolled patients. Today's clinical trials really can be tomorrow's treatments!

Your Community Clinical Oncology Program

The Community Clinical Oncology Program or CCOP is a large network that enables patients and physicians to participate in clinical trials across the United States and Puerto Rico. Clinical trials are research studies conducted with patients or healthy people. These studies are designed to answer specific questions about the effectiveness of new ways to prevent, detect, diagnose and treat cancer. The CCOP was established by the National Cancer Institute in 1983 to ensure that cancer patients have access to quality medical care in their own communities. We are proud to be among the 50 CCOPs in the United States and one of only two in New York State (the other on Long Island). We have been a CCOP since 1986 and we will celebrate our 20 year anniversary in June!

Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY is your Community Clinical Oncology Program and brings you clinical trials and cancer control and prevention studies like those offered at the following:

- Fox Chase Cancer Center
- University of Rochester Cancer Center
- MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Mayo Clinic
- Memorial Sloan Kettering
- Roswell Park
- Brigham and Women's Hospital

We can offer investigational drug therapies and cutting edge treatments to our patients—and they don't need to travel to Philadelphia, Buffalo, Rochester, Texas, Boston, Minnesota or New York City!

Please Welcome Dr. Joseph Navone!



We are thrilled to share this news with our patients! Dr. Joseph Navone will join our practice in July of 2006. He is currently a highly skilled and respected Hematologist/Oncologist at Internal Medicine Associates of the Southern Tier, P.C. in Elmira, NY. He has over 13 years of experience in this private practice and is relocating to Syracuse to join our family of physicians. He is also the Hospice Physician with the Southern Tier Hospice and Palliative Care team, he is Vice President of the Chemung County Medical Society, he is a delegate of the House of Delegates for the NYS Medical Society and he is a board member of the Regional Advisory Board of The Lifetime Healthcare Companies and a board member of the Twin Tier Area Plan. Dr. Navone is board certified in Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology. He received his medical degree from the University of Rome, Italy and completed his fellowship in Hematology/Oncology at New York Medical College in Valhalla, NY. His Internal Medicine residency was completed at Our Lady of Mercy Medical Center in the Bronx, as well as NY Medical College. If his name sounds familiar it's because his brother, Dr. Anthony Navone, has been a respected cardiologist in Syracuse for many years. Dr. Navone will focus his practice at our newly expanded, comprehensive cancer center located on Broad Road adjacent to Community General Hospital—scheduled to open by Thanksgiving 2006!

Reaching For the Stars ...

Striving for Excellence



Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) awards

Hematology-Oncology Associates a Certificate of Superior Performance

We were very proud to accept a *Certificate for Superior Performance* from the MGMA as a "Better Performing Practice" when compared to other medical practices in the nation. The MGMA is the nation's leading organization representing medical group practices and the professionals who lead them.



Hematology-Oncology Associates Broad Road Expansion Project!

We are pleased to announce that construction has commenced at our Community General Hospital office site. It is anticipated that by Thanksgiving of 2006, we will be better able to serve the needs of our patients living in the Western suburbs with our new 13,000 square foot, comprehensive cancer center. We will provide Medical Oncology and Radiation services that include: Infusion Therapy; Laboratory; Pharmacy; Inpatient and Outpatient IMRT and Radiation Therapy; Patient and Family Counseling and Support Groups; Dietary Consults and Nutritional Counseling; and Clinical Research.

Children Under 12 Years Old

We are grateful to our patients for their continued support and understanding regarding our "Children Under 12 Policy". For the safety of those children and our patients, we request that children refrain from areas of operation. Many of our patients are immunocompromised. This means that their ability to fight infection and illness are often impaired because of chemotherapy, decreased white blood cell counts, or other vulnerabilities that prevent them from fighting disease. Children under 12 have a plethora of opportunities to acquire colds and other illnesses. It is not unusual for an illness to be in an "incubation phase" in children such that they are infective without any signs and/or symptoms of illness. For this reason and others, we are grateful for your adherence to this policy.

Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY

SMOKE FREE

In January of 2006, our building became a totally "Smoke Free" work environment. This includes both our building and surrounding property.

We work diligently every day to provide care and support to our patients as they travel the road to wellness. The Physicians wanted to express their commitment and dedication to the health and well-being of employees and patients—and voted "Smoke Free" !

Medical Data Recovery Source and the MDRS Card

The mission of MDRS is to save lives by providing the patient with safe access and control of their medical information. MDRS is a locally owned and operated company that commenced operations in 1991. The MDRS card system was developed with the assistance of local medical experts for the purpose of providing safe, timely patient information, access and control. The card works by utilizing state-of-the-art technology and proprietary MSRS software. Data related to a given individual is stored on a secured central server. Patient data updates are captured by the software and are instantly stored for archival and retrieval. This patient data is available at the point of care to healthcare providers anywhere in the world. Studies show that 30% of patient encounters occur without the MD having access to patient charts and 90% of Emergency Room visits occur without knowledge of patient records. MDRS is a secure system available via the Internet. It provides people with the ability to manage their own personal medical information and provide access to information such as Insurance, Health Proxy, DNR, Living Will, Medications, Illnesses, Allergies, Emergency Contacts, Physicians, Immunizations, Family History, Pharmacy and more. These records are safe and protected. If you're interested in learning more about this service, just log onto www.mdrscard.com. If you decide to purchase this service, use the promotion code **HOACNY** and receive a \$10 per year discount on your annual membership—\$29.95 instead of \$39.95 for our patients, family members, staff and friends!

Hospitalized Patients

In January of 2006, in an effort to better meet the needs of hospitalized patients while providing continuity in our office setting, our Physicians voted to modify the manner in which daily hospital visits and hospital on-call responsibilities occur. The premise of this new system is to eliminate emergency trips to the hospital during office hours. Interruptions of this nature precipitate delays in our physicians' ability to see their office patients and can result in great frustration for patients, physicians and staff. The new schedule allows a segment of our physicians to focus solely on patients in the office and a segment of physicians to focus solely on hospital inpatients. We hope our patients will support this new paradigm. Since hospital physician coverage is equitably rotated, a patient's doctor may not be the hospital physician during that admission. Each physician has the opportunity to provide hospital coverage to all patients. A special thanks to our patients for accepting this modification to inpatient care.

Complementary Therapy

Complementary Therapies are services that support your current medical treatment and are never intended to replace it. They are for patients who are seeking wellness or well being of not only the physical body, but of the mind, body and spirit.

Massage

Reiki
Restorative Yoga

Healing Touch

Lymphatic Drainage

Acupuncture

Foot Reflexology

Trager

Please refer to our brochure for appointment times and pricing



Our Featured Modality: **Healing Touch**

Healing Touch is biofield therapy that is an energy based approach to health and healing. The basis of Healing or Therapeutic Touch is the belief that each living being has a "life energy field" which extends beyond the surface of the body. This energy field can become unbalanced and this therapy is predicated on the restoration of the energy field such that the body can heal itself. This restoration of energy balance contributes to the well-being of the mind, body and spirit.



Comprehensive Outpatient Treatment and Support Services

- ◊ Chemotherapy and Radiation
- ◊ Clinical Research
- ◊ Accredited Clinical Laboratory
- ◊ Pharmacy
- ◊ CT and Other Diagnostic Testing
- ◊ Patient and Family Counseling and Support Group Services
- ◊ Nutritional Counseling
- ◊ Complementary and Art Therapy
- ◊ Community Educational Programs

Amenities

- ◊ State of the Art Facility ◊ Imaging Services
- ◊ Boutique ◊ Flat Screen TV's in Infusion
- ◊ Patient Internet Access in Infusion ◊ Free Parking
- ◊ Patient Education Area ◊ Electronic Medical Record

Did you know?

Healing Touch International, Inc. will celebrate it's 10th year anniversary in 2006. You can find information regarding this modality and supportive organization at <http://www.healingtouch.net>

If you have any suggestions for our newsletter or if you want to be added to our mailing list, please email :



Newsletter@hoacny.com

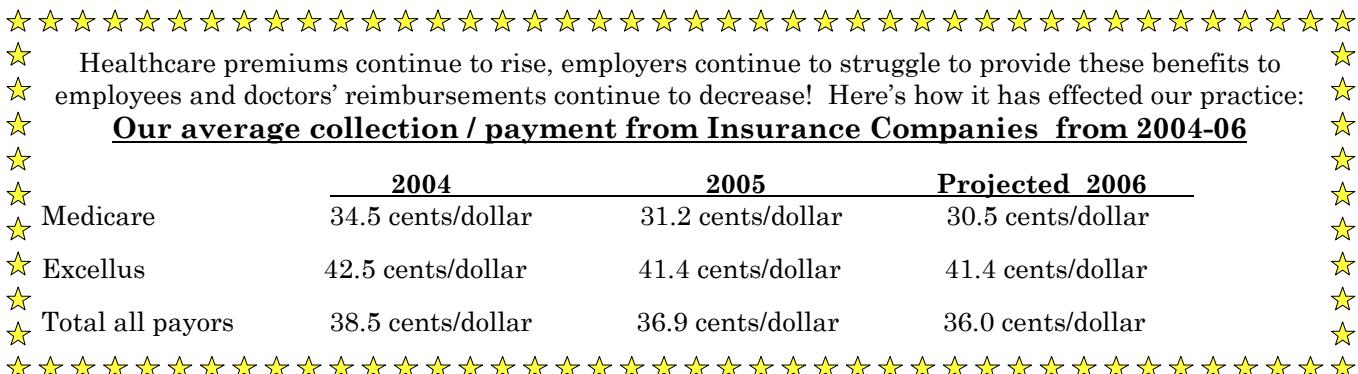
It has been said that the daily practice of meditation, done over a period of years, results in the gradual increase in subtle body energies, which in turn, leads to a healthier and happier existence. Stresses that have been incurred throughout life are slowly dissipated. Meditation results in the releasing of energy blockages and allows greater flow of Universal Energy or the Life Force. The meditation process assists in the learning of important life lessons as it promotes listening to the inner wisdom of the higher self. **Meditation** may be a journey worth taking!

Medicare and the Payor Circuit

The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 was signed into law by President Bush with the intent to create a more modern Medicare system—for cancer care, it has been a challenging and difficult road to travel throughout our country.

As the payment system for chemotherapeutic drugs was modified to an Average Sales Price or ASP plus 6%, we now find that some reimbursements of drugs do not cover our costs. The profit margin on drugs (insurance reimbursement minus drug cost) was previously used to cover non-reimbursed services such as nutritional counseling and many other social and support services. These support services include the 4-6 RNs that spend every hour of their day on the phone, trying to assist patients in an effort to keep them in the comfort of their homes while tending to their needs. To offset this decrease in cash, in 2005, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid provided additional reimbursement in the form of a "2005 Demonstration Project". This project paid our practice for providing services in infusion that assessed the condition of a patient prior to chemotherapy. Although we always did and always will provide these patient assessments (because it is good patient care), the government rescinded that project and no longer pays us for providing this service. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid have developed another Demonstration Project for 2006 to pay us for other services we already render, but these payments will be \$300,000 less than the Demo Project for last year. This continual decrease in Medicare reimbursement from year to year provides great challenges in the face of annual increases in wages, benefits, energy costs, and supplies.

On February 8th the President did sign the Deficit Reduction Act which halts the 4.4% reduction in all physician rates that already went into effect for 2006. This would have been a hardship for all specialties and Medicare has until July to pay back the money due from claims that were reduced. Although this means a zero increase in payments for Medicare providers for 2006, it was a huge relief to medical practices in our nation.



We need your help!!

Difficult decisions regarding access to care have been precipitated by legislative changes. Insurance companies would like to emulate the Medicare changes that continue to challenge and stress our patient services. **Together**, we can prevent this. The need to critically assess every insurance company's reimbursement is now mandated by medical practices. We can no longer participate with every insurance company. We will not allow the level of care or expertise you have come to expect and trust be diminished. Please stay connected and support our decisions to fight for you—our valued patients. When open enrollment comes to your employer—please make sure you sign up for an insurance we participate with—taking care of **you** is very important to us!

Insurance Agreements & Issues

Excellus (BC/BS): We are having great difficulty trying to prevent pre-authorization mandates for patients prior to treatment with Procrit and Aranesp. These drugs keep red blood cell counts to levels that help maintain health and minimize fatigue during chemotherapy. We do not give these drugs to spend Excellus' money—we give them to help our patients feel better and fight infection. Please call the customer service line at Excellus to voice your concern regarding this pending rule. We apologize for any delay in your therapy that may be caused by Excellus.