

# CarePackage

The Regional Cancer Center

[www.trcc.org](http://www.trcc.org)



In affiliation with  
UPMC Cancer Centers

Please join us at The Erie Zoo on Friday evening, June 10 to celebrate survivorship – life after cancer! The zoo is a wonderful Erie attraction in itself and it will be closed to the public that evening, open for our event participants only.

Reservations are required. The patient and one guest are free; you may invite other friends and family members to come for an additional charge. Picnic refreshments, including a hot dog and drink, are provided.

We have a great evening planned. Entertainment will include various local performers, our auction will be under the main tent and train and carousel rides are included with your admission! ■RCC

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*You're Invited!*  
**Celebration of Life  
2011**

**The Erie Zoo**  
423 West 38th Street  
Friday, June 10, 2011  
6:00 - 9:00 pm

**The patient and one guest are free**  
Additional tickets are \$5.00

**Dinner will be provided**  
**Chinese Auction**  
**Entertainment**

**Pre-registration is required by calling:**  
**(814) 836-2605**

Registration will begin at 6:00 pm and parking is available both at the Erie Zoo and at the JMC Ice Rink. Shuttle service will be provided from the JMC Ice Rink.

For more information on the Erie Zoo, visit:  
[www.eriezoo.org](http://www.eriezoo.org)  
Event details and registration information on page 3.



John Girard,  
Executive Director,  
The RCC

## FROM THE DESK of John Girard

*“There is nothing permanent except change.”*

I know that for some of you change conjures up excitement and optimism while for others it creates anxiety and pessimism. In either case, all of us here, the doctors, nurses, therapists, and support staff, are about providing an atmosphere of hope for our patients

who are forced to face an unexpected and unwelcome change in their lives.

In the past two and a half years as Executive Director of The RCC, I have insisted that all of the changes seen and unseen will somehow provide hope to and improve the experience of those who walk through our doors.

This newsletter has previously included information about our Patient Advisory Group. These current and former patients have been the driving force behind the changes we have made in all aspects of the operations of the Center. These patients have taught us a great deal about what it is like to be a patient at The RCC. I hope that you have noticed our new website ([www.trcc.org](http://www.trcc.org)) as well as the revisions to the printed information we share with you, including this newsletter.

I am motivated everyday to do a better job. I am second in a family of seven children who grew up in Avon Lake, Ohio, on the

west side of Cleveland. Two of my sisters are cancer survivors – that is motivation enough. In late July I will be walking with my sister, “Birdie,” in the Susan G. Komen 3-day walk for the cure in Cleveland.

With everyday comes a reminder that my work matters. I am proud to lead a *community cancer center* that has no rival in the region. The support of the Board of Directors of The RCC is amazing. Without question, the board demands that we provide the highest level of evidence based care and cutting-edge technology. We are all making sure that every aspect of cancer related treatment and clinical research can be provided here, close to home.

Lastly, I am pleased to announce the appointment of the Executive Director of The Regional Cancer Center Foundation, Geri Cichetti, who will help us raise the funds to ensure the latest, proven treatment options for the future. Geri and I will be working with the Board of Directors, the physicians, the management team and staff to ensure that we meet our objective to provide “world class care just around the corner.”

Change is the constant that has made The RCC the jewel that it is today. For this, the Erie community and surrounding region have every reason to be proud! ■RCC

# Celebration of Life 2011 + Registration Form

**Date:** June 10, 2011 (rain or shine)

**Location:** The Erie Zoo, 423 West 38th Street

**Time:** 6:00 - 9:00 pm

**Cost:** No charge for cancer patient and one guest.

**Additional tickets:** \$5.00

Free parking is available both at the Erie Zoo and at the JMC Ice Rink.

Some shuttle service will be provided from the JMC Ice Rink.

Pre-registration is required by returning the form provided or calling (814) 836-2605.



Please complete all information:

I will attend the celebration

Number attending (including yourself) \_\_\_\_\_

The patient and one (1) guest will be complimentary; the cost for each additional guest is \$5.00

Please print:

Name of patient \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to: The Regional Cancer Center**  
Send to: Celebration of Life, 2500 W. 12th Street, Erie, PA 16505



Jongming Li, MD, PhD

## New Medical Oncologist

Jongming Li, MD, PhD has joined The Regional Cancer Center in the practice of Medical Oncology and Hematology. "The highly dedicated and skilled physicians and staff, active and high quality research program and UPMC affiliation make this center a desirable place to work," comments Dr Li. "And

my family feels at home here. We like the culture and location of Pennsylvania, having lived in Philadelphia for 7 years. We're glad to be back."

Dr. Li is a graduate of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Brunswick, New Jersey where he also was a resident and intern in the Department of Medicine. He was a fellow in hematology/oncology at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute at the National Institute of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. Dr. Li is board certified in medical oncology and hematology and has been in clinical practice for a number of years, primarily in the Department of Medical Oncology at Thomas Jefferson University School of Medicine in Philadelphia. Dr. Li and his family have moved to Erie from Washington State where he has most recently been in private practice at Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital.

■RCC

## New Imaging Service is Also Clinical Trial

The RCC is one of the first cancer programs in the region to offer *F18 Sodium Fluoride (NaF) PET/CT Bone Scans*, a new imaging technique now being evaluated in clinical trials.

Sodium Fluoride PET/CT scans benefit patients with bone metastasis, or potential bone metastasis, particularly in (but not limited to) prostate, breast and lung cancers. These scans are more sensitive and specific than previous alternatives for evaluating metastatic or cancerous bone disease and can be conducted in less time.

At the present time, only Medicare will cover the F18 Sodium Fluoride (NaF) PET/CT Bone Scan under the National Oncologic PET Registry (NOPR). Participation in the research trial requires ordering physicians to document the enhancements to patient treatment plans made possible as a result of the scan. ■RCC



### Support Group for Children of Cancer Patients

- for children 5 to 12 years old
- meets once a week for four weeks
- children participate in fun activities and crafts
- helps express feelings, and encourage communication
- next session: Wednesdays May 4, 11, 18 and 25 from 4- 5:30 PM at RCC

**For more information or to enroll a child please call 814-836-2618.**

Information about cancer, our center and services is available to you at any time at [www.trcc.org](http://www.trcc.org)



## May We Ask You One Question?

You may recall being asked several questions when you are checking in for an appointment at RCC verifying that we have the correct demographic information. "Do you still have \_\_\_ insurance? Is your phone number still \_\_\_? Do you still live at \_\_\_?"

We will now be asking one question, "Would you please review this to make sure we have your demographic information correct?" You will be given the opportunity to review a printed copy of your demographic information to verify or make changes to the information.

This step is being taken to improve your privacy during the registration process as well as to keep our records updated. ■RCC



*Raymond Wynn, MD, FACR, Executive Medical Director, The RCC*

## FROM THE DESK of Raymond Wynn, MD

Clinical trials are the cornerstone of improvements in cancer care.

As a member of The RCC team for the past 2 years, I'm pleased to see the number and level of clinical trials we offer and the hope that brings to patients and their families. There needs to be more. And with room and resources to grow we are well on our way.

Clinical trials include something new—a new way to use an existing drug, a new treatment for one type of cancer that's previously been used for another type of cancer, or a completely new drug or treatment. Patients receive the same standard of care they normally would when going through clinical trials. In addition, many times they also receive something added to see the results in a controlled environment where the patient is protected.

For example, The RCC is currently conducting several clinical trials in our Multidisciplinary Thoracic Clinic lead by Dr. Jan Rothman. For lung cancer patients, the drug Bevacizumab (normally used for colorectal cancer) is being given over 12 weeks to patients who've had lung tumors removed. For patients with inoperable tumors, they are receiving higher doses of radiation and the drug Cetuximab (normally used for colorectal and head and neck cancer) over 14 weeks. Patients with tumors in their esophagus are also being treated with Cetuximab before surgery and their results are monitored as well. These patients provide us with valuable information as a result of their participation in these studies.

Most recently, The RCC now conducts head and neck clinical trials as well as trials for brain tumors. After a rigorous testing period, The RCC became credentialed to conduct these trials. For brain tumor patients, the use of Bevacizumab with radiation therapy is showing great promise. This is cutting edge cancer treatment being conducted in Erie PA!

For head and neck cancers, Cetuximab is now being used for lower risk patients. Formerly the treatment for this type of cancer was surgery followed by radiation therapy only. This trial adds drug therapy which researchers believe will be instrumental in the cancer not returning.

Many of the approaches that we have to cancer care come out of clinical trials. We don't just treat a specific diagnosis any more. Some things may work in some individuals and some may work in others. We are looking beyond, "well it's a lung cancer", to determine the best tailored treatment for each individual patient. All this comes out of clinical trials.

Over the last 20 or 30 years we have significantly improved the treatment of pediatric cancers. I had a family member who had leukemia. Back then the cure rate was about 60 – 65%. Now it is greater than 95%. Why have we improved so much over the years? It's because 80 – 85% of all children who get cancer are enrolled on a clinical trial. For adults it is 3 – 4%, which is the reason we are still struggling with many brain tumors, lung cancers, and pancreatic cancers. It's because we as a culture have not embraced clinical trials for adult tumors. The more we do that, the more advances we have. We clearly know that the advances we have are because of clinical trials, but we still have much more to learn.

I look forward to continuing this growth process here at The RCC to bring new information to the field of cancer treatment with the clinical trials being conducted in Erie PA. ■RCC

## RCC Among Top Performers in RTOG Study

Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG) is an international clinical cooperative group, through which RCC participates in clinical trials. RCC's work with one trial in particular (RTOG 0617 A randomized Phase III comparison of Standard-Dose vs. High-Dose Radiotherapy with concurrent and consolidation Carbo/Paclitaxel +/- cetuximab in patients with Stage IIIA/B NSCLC) is getting national attention. During the fourth quarter of 2010 RCC ranked 6th in the nation for enrollment in this trial among the 197 participating sites. This achievement is a credit to the

resources dedicated to clinical research at RCC, the interest and effort of RCC physicians and staff and – with this trial in particular – the Multidisciplinary Thoracic Cancer Clinic lead by Jan Rothman, MD and Conrad Stachelek, MD, PhD

Clinical research is a priority now and for the future at RCC. External measures like these affirm our work and heighten the awareness of RCC as a strong participant in the community of cancer clinical research.





# Grill Smart This Summer

By Karen Schnaekel, RD

Grilling season is just around the corner. As we all fire up our grills for the backyard barbecue, we need to consider the potential risks of preparing meats on the grill.

*Karen Schnaekel, RD*

According to the American Institute for Cancer Research, a diet high in meat, no matter how it is prepared, has been linked to increased risk for certain cancers. AICR recommends limiting red meat to 18 ounces of cooked meat per week; processed meats, like hot dogs, should be avoided.

Research has shown that when meat is grilled, several hazardous chemicals can form. Substances in red meat, poultry, and seafood can form cancer-causing compounds called heterocyclic amines (HCAs) when reacting with high temperatures, such as on a grill. These HCAs can then enter our DNA and cause damage that can lead to cancer development. As fat from the meat drips onto the grill, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are formed. These, too, are cancer-causing, and are deposited back on the meat by smoke and flare-ups. While it is known that these substances are capable of causing cancer in laboratory studies, there is still limited research that identifies the real risks that come with regularly eating grilled meats.

Until more is known, it just makes sense to grill sensibly to decrease our exposure to these cancer causing substances. Here are some safe grilling practices:

- Grill fruits and vegetables. They do not produce harmful HCAs.
- Use lean cuts of meat and trim fat from meats to reduce drips and flare-ups that can contain PAHs.
- Grill smaller cuts of meat which have shorter cooking times. Kabobs are a perfect choice.
- Flip meats frequently, which speeds cooking time and helps prevent HCA formation.
- Marinate meats. Marinating meats makes those dangerous substances less likely to form. Some research has shown that marinating meats can reduce formations of HCAs by as much as 90 percent.
- Reduce the cooking temperature. Even a slight decrease can substantially reduce HCA formation.
- Line the grill with foil and poke small holes in it, to allow the fat to dip off and to limit the smoke coming back onto the meat.

Now pull out your apron and spatula, and grill up a safe and healthy barbecue! ■RCC



## Grilled Fruit with Strawberry Dip

- 8 oz. part-skim ricotta cheese
- 2 Tbsp. plain non-fat yogurt
- 1/4 tsp. dried, ground ginger
- 8 strawberries, halved
- 4 peaches, halved or quartered
- 8 chunks pineapple
- 4 plums, nectarines, or papayas, halved
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tsp. granulated sugar

In a blender, purée cheese, strawberries, yogurt and ginger together until smooth. Refrigerate the dip for 2 hours before grilling fruit.

When ready to grill fruit, thread pieces of prepared fruit onto 8 skewers. Mix together vinegar and sugar. Grill fruit until lightly browned, turning frequently and brushing with vinegar mixture during grilling.

Serve grilled fruit with sauce on side.

Makes 8 servings.

Per serving: 102 calories, 2 g. total fat (1 g. saturated fat), 18 g. carbohydrate, 4 g. protein, 2 g. dietary fiber, 40 mg. sodium.

Source: American Institute for Cancer Research

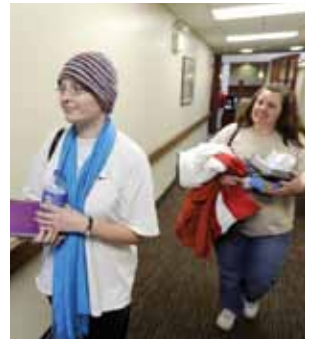
# Patient Finds Help She Needs

RCC patient, Laurie Kriner, recently shared her story of challenge, hope and caring in the Erie Times News.

Laurie is a 39 year old stay-at-home mother of two small children. Her husband is unemployed and the family had no health insurance at the time of her diagnosis. Living near Bradford, PA, 85 miles from the daily radiation therapy she needed in Erie, Laurie faced extraordinary obstacles, just one of them being the diagnosis of advanced lung cancer.

In the face of her overwhelming situation, Laurie found the resources she needed through The Regional Cancer Center and The Regional Cancer Center Foundation. You can read her inspirational story on line by searching "Kriner" on goerie.com, or specifically at <http://www.goeie.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011303189888> ■RCC

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Photos by Christopher Millette



*Geri Cicchetti,  
Executive Director,  
The RCC Foundation*

## FROM THE DESK of Geri Cicchetti

It's hard to believe that The Regional Cancer Center has had a Foundation for 23 years!

That's true. Grateful patients and family members have made donations over that time to financially assist other families going through cancer treatments at RCC. Funding activities

range from day-to-day services for patients and their families to developing advanced technology for cancer treatment.

That is the work of the Foundation. In the past, there were no appeals for funding. Whatever was received was earmarked for patient and family services to include education, research and financial assistance. It is the hallmark of The Regional Cancer Center that no patient is ever turned away because of their inability to pay. Last year alone, \$1.3M was awarded based on the Community Care policy.

Going forward, however, additional funding will be needed to continue this work. In 2010, The RCC Board approved the hiring of the first Executive Director of the Foundation. In this position, it is my goal to draft and implement a plan to advance the mission of both The RCC and the Foundation. More about that in a future issue.

Like many families, cancer has touched my family. My father was diagnosed with prostate cancer 17 years ago. That was certainly a scary time! I remember offering to drive my father to Pittsburgh or Cleveland to seek treatment, but that wasn't necessary. My father met Dr. Scibetta at The RCC and trusted him along with the staff of qualified and caring professionals. My father is now 87 years of age, and I'm grateful to The RCC for how well he was treated.

There are many stories like that.

In 2012, The Regional Cancer Center will celebrate its 25th Anniversary of treating cancer patients. How lucky we are to have this type of facility here in Erie PA. ■RCC



# Give a *Rave Review*



"I can't thank you enough" are familiar words for our staff to hear from grateful patients and families. While personalized care and service are every day priorities at RCC, we know that the impact of our patient interactions can be extraordinary to the people we serve.

Many patients want to thank RCC staff beyond words, and notes. Others just aren't sure how to express the gratitude they feel. RCC's Rave Review program is a meaningful way to say "thank you" in a special way to those who deliver expert and compassionate care that dramatically impacts patients and families.

*"Employees of the cancer center are the nicest, most compassionate people I have met..."*

*"Thank you from the bottom of my heart..."*

## *Your Gift Keeps on Giving*

The Rave Review program is an expression of gratitude that also furthers the work of The RCC. The Regional Cancer Center Foundation was created in 1988 to support the work of RCC. Its mission is to raise money and distribute funds for new or improved services, continuous clinical education, local research and support services for patients in need. By making a gift to the Rave Review program you show your appreciation in a way that will help others as they seek the care they need at RCC in the future.

## *Specially Honoring One or Many*

Your gift to Rave Review thanks the individuals or groups you designate. Complete and return the card below, call us at (814) 836-2679, or log on to [www.trcc.org/](http://www.trcc.org/) giving. Notice of your gift of thanks will be shared with the staff you name, and staff honors will be posted internally for all employees to see.



**YES,** *I wish to thank* \_\_\_\_\_ *from the* \_\_\_\_\_ *department for my care.*

Please accept my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help other patients. Use my gift to support patients' needs in the manner that is most helpful.

Donor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ My check or money order made payable to *The Regional Cancer Center Foundation* is enclosed.

Please return this form along with your tax deductible gift to:  
*The Regional Cancer Center Foundation, 2500 West 12th Street, Erie PA 16505.*  
 Any questions, please call us at 814-836-2679.

\_\_\_\_ I would like to charge my credit card.

ACCOUNT# \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ VISA/Mastercard \_\_\_\_ Discover

\_\_\_\_ American Express

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I wish my donation to remain anonymous.

\_\_\_\_ Please send me information about including *The Regional Cancer Center* in my estate.

\_\_\_\_ I have included *The Regional Cancer Center* in my will.

Gifts made to *The Regional Cancer Center Foundation* are tax deductible to the full extent of the IRS Code Section 501 (c) (3). The Foundation records all gifts and The RCCF Board designates their use based on our mission statement. The Foundation provides tax receipts and recognition to donors.



# CarePackage

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Erie, PA 16505

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UPMC Cancer Centers

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[www.trcc.org](http://www.trcc.org)

## A couple of friendly reminders...



**If you are 15 minutes late** for your scheduled appointment, there may be the chance that your appointment will need to be rescheduled. This will depend solely on the schedule availability of the area where your appointment was planned. However, if you are more than 15 minutes late for your appointment, you will be rescheduled to the next available appointment time which may be an alternate day.

Thanks in advance for your timeliness.



For your safety and that of all visitors, **we ask that small children not be brought to RCC.** Potential risks to the children and other visitors outweigh the joys of their presence, even if they are well behaved and remain outside the treatment areas.

Thank you for your understanding.

■RCC

# CarePackage

The Regional Cancer Center

*The Regional Cancer Center's mission is to provide comprehensive care for patients with cancer and blood disorders with a commitment to advanced care, research and optimal quality of life for patients and families.*

**CarePackage** is published by The Regional Cancer Center twice a year to provide patients, donors and friends information on activities at the Center as well as updates on cancer treatment and education. Lisa Louis is the editor.

If you wish to remove your name from our mailing list, please either clip your mailing label or complete the coupon below and send it to:

Editor, Care Package  
The Regional Cancer Center  
2500 West 12th Street  
Erie, PA 16505

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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