Third Annual Celebrate Hope – Raising Funds For Research To Keep Hope Alive
Today, we’ve gone beyond the cutting edge.

CyberKnife puts a powerful focus on new patient treatment options.

At USA Mitchell Cancer Institute (MCI), we continue to pioneer innovative ways to conquer cancer that also brings a new measure of precision and comfort. Utilizing the latest advances in cancer treatments such as the CyberKnife® Robotic Radiosurgery System, our team of radiation oncologists, Dr. John Russell, Dr. Roger Ove and Dr. Suzanne Russo, provide patients in the region with an effective, non-invasive alternative to surgery.

This remarkable technology—which delivers high doses of radiation in one to five treatments to malignant and nonmalignant tumors with extreme accuracy—offers even greater hope to those with inoperable or surgically complex tumors. Because it is non-invasive, the treatment is pain-free, and in most cases patients are able to return to normal activity following the procedure.

Our CyberKnife System is another way we’re leading the fight against cancer for the people of our region. To find out more or schedule an appointment, go to www.usamci.com or call our CyberKnife Coordinator, Dennise Bunch, at 251-445-9614.
Just over three and a half years ago, we opened the doors of our state-of-the-art, integrated cancer treatment and research facility. Since then, MCI has grown to provide cancer treatments to over 6,000 patients, generating over 55,000 patient visits in the last fiscal year alone. With approximately 300 employees and an expanding clinical and research base, the Mitchell Cancer Institute is on a positive trajectory to become a National Cancer Institute (NCI) designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, serving the Central Gulf Coast region.

Never before has research in cancer been as critical as it is now. Our research base has expanded to include over $11.5 million in peer-reviewed extramural grant funding aimed at advancing cancer treatment through use-inspired research. Over the last six months, we have added a Drug Discovery Program to our research portfolio. Dr. Windy Dean-Colomb, a M.D. Anderson-trained medical oncologist specializing in breast cancer, recently joined us and is developing multi-disciplinary breast programs and focusing on community outreach. We are also working with a Boston-based biotechnology company to develop a novel method to detect pancreatic cancer. You can read about these exciting developments and more in this Progress Newsletter.

With all of our impressive resources.....our talented people, our amazing technologies, our outstanding facilities, and the great support of the people in our region, we have made significant progress in the fight against cancer. We will continue to build upon these accomplishments and I look forward to sharing even more exciting advances in the next 12 months.

Sincerely,

Michael Boyd, M.D., Ph.D.
Abraham A. Mitchell Chair and
Director and Professor of Oncologic Services
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MCI teams up with Boston-based company to develop a test for the early detection of pancreatic cancer
Dr. Bruce Chabner, a Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Director of Clinical Research at Massachusetts General Hospital, has agreed to lead an external advisory board for the University of South Alabama Mitchell Cancer Institute. The announcement was made at the March USA Board of Trustees meeting. The creation of the advisory board, said MCI director Dr. Michael Boyd, is aimed at moving the Mitchell Cancer Institute one step closer to gaining a coveted National Cancer Institute designation, something only about 40 centers have earned nationwide.

Chabner first visited the MCI this past October and participated in the Distinguished Scientists Seminar Program, lecturing on “Clinical Phase I Trials in Cancer Guided Molecular Profiling.” He also spoke at the MCI’s first Scientific Colloquium, recognizing outstanding cancer research within both MCI and the University of South Alabama. In addition, his wife, Davi-Ellen Chabner, author of numerous medical terminology textbooks including “The Language of Medicine” delivered a vibrant lecture to MCI faculty and staff on medical terminology as it relates to cancer.

A visit by Dr. Chabner was especially meaningful for MCI Director, Dr. Michael Boyd, and Associate Director of Cancer Control and Prevention, Dr. Eddie Reed, as Chabner mentored both Drs. Boyd and Reed at the National Cancer Institute where all three collaborated in the 1980s and 1990s.

Dr. Chabner has extensive experience in the field of cancer drug discovery and development. After joining the National Cancer Institute (NCI) as a Senior Investigator in the Laboratory of Chemical Pharmacology in 1971, he participated in the training of clinical and research fellows there for 24 years including a time where he served as Chief of the Clinical Pharmacology Branch and Director of the Clinical Oncology Program. From 1971 to 1989, Chabner maintained an active laboratory program in cancer pharmacology, focusing on the mechanism of action and resistance of antifolates and other antimetabolites, and led the development of Taxol.

“I believe in the mission of the place,” Chabner said of the Mitchell Cancer Institute, “and I think cancer centers accomplish a lot in the communities they exist in. I’ve been associated with the one in Boston for many years and it’s had a great impact on patients and research.”

In 1995, Chabner joined the Massachusetts General Hospital as Clinical Director of its Cancer Center and Chief of Hematology/Oncology and assumed the role as Associate Director for Clinical Sciences of the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center Consortium. The author of several renowned text books and publications, Chabner serves as senior editor for “The Oncologist.” In 2006, Chabner received a presidential appointment to the National Cancer Advisory Board at the National Cancer Institute. According to Chabner, “Mitchell Cancer Institute is developing a first class cancer research and treatment enterprise in a region where the need exists. Great things are happening in Mobile at the MCI.”
As Chief of Drug Discovery Dr. Gary Piazza uses a “bench to bedside” approach, a term used to describe the process where the results of research done in the laboratory are directly used to develop new drugs to treat patients. This is the kind of research Dr. Piazza hopes will one day lead to an experimental cancer drug in a clinical trial.

To find that drug takes a multi-disciplinary team of scientists made up of medicinal chemists, molecular biologists, biochemists, and pharmacologists, which Piazza is in the process of assembling at MCI. Each member of the team has a role which includes identifying new molecular targets, designing and synthesizing experimental compounds, screening of large collections of compounds for target specificity and potency, and testing promising leads in experimental cell and animal models of cancer. It’s a process that requires a dedicated team of scientists working together towards one common goal - to cure cancer by focusing on a specific molecular target.

Not only does it take the right team to discover and develop a new cancer drug, it also takes the right equipment and environment. To facilitate MCI’s aspirations to become a leading cancer research center in the country, they recently invested over $2 million in robotic equipment and other specialized instruments for a process referred to as High Throughput Screening (HTS). This investment will be the cornerstone of a new state-of-the-art drug discovery research center at MCI.

When Gary A. Piazza, Ph.D, was recently hired to establish the new Drug Discovery Research Center at the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute, he brought extensive scientific expertise in cancer discovery and development to MCI. He also brought a can-do attitude from his experience in academic and pharmaceutical research.
HTS equipment gives the team a unique advantage in its ability to interrogate large collections of compounds for anticancer activity. The results of these large-scale screening campaigns provide valuable insight for chemists to design new drug candidates. For this purpose, MCI is also renovating and outfitting an adjacent laboratory that will be dedicated to synthetic chemistry and will be staffed by medicinal chemists.

Just over a decade ago, this type of drug discovery research was mostly limited to big pharmaceutical companies. But in the last 10 years, the National Institute of Health has moved to fund academic drug discovery programs by establishing high throughput screening centers throughout the United States, opening up the field to scientific investigators at cancer centers such as MCI.

“By having the equipment, infrastructure and expertise in place here at MCI, we are postured to tap into new sources of funding,” says Dr. Piazza. “There is also strong potential that homegrown compounds could be discovered and developed here in Mobile leading to clinical trials.”

But it won’t happen overnight.

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), it takes on average 12 years and over $350 million to develop an experimental compound into a new drug on the pharmacy shelf. Once a research center discovers a drug candidate, it undergoes about five years of preclinical development to test for safety and effectiveness before an application is made to the FDA for testing in humans. Only about one in 1,000 compounds that enter preclinical development will ever make it to human testing.

But Dr. Piazza hopes to improve the odds by building a strong team of scientists focused on drug discovery at MCI. He has seen firsthand how the drug discovery process works from his experience at Southern Research Institute where he directed a NIH designated high throughput screening center. Prior to joining MCI, he was also the Senior Director of Biology for a pharmaceutical company, Cell Pathways, Inc., where he led the preclinical development of an anticancer drug from early laboratory studies in mice to Phase 3 clinical trials in humans.

Seeing a drug go from initial laboratory testing through all phases of FDA approval is a once-in-a-lifetime achievement for a scientist. Dr. Piazza is trying to do it twice.

“We need better cancer drugs. Many of the drugs being used in the clinic today were developed 20-30 years ago and they’re still being used because we have nothing better. Cancer is a major killer and we need less toxic and more effective anticancer drugs. I’m a believer that the silver bullet is out there and HTS is the perfect tool for the job of finding it.”

THE POTENTIAL OF “SUPER-ASPIRIN”

One of the research areas of interest for Dr. Gary Piazza is nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), a widely-used class of drugs that includes over-the-counter drugs such as aspirin and ibuprofen, and prescription strength NSAIDs such as Clinoril and Celebrex. Clinical and preclinical cancer studies have shown that NSAIDs taken in high doses for an extended period of time have strong cancer preventive properties for numerous types of cancers, particularly colorectal, breast, lung and bladder cancers.

So why aren’t we popping aspirin or ibuprofen every day to deter cancer? The reason is that NSAIDs are too toxic for long-term use in humans. They are not recommended by the FDA because their benefits do not outweigh their potentially fatal risks. However, Dr. Piazza and other scientists believe that it is possible to design newer drugs that are safer and more effective for suppressing cancer.

Dr. Piazza collaborates with medicinal chemists as far away as Egypt and Saudi Arabia to design new NSAID derivatives. “You can call it the search for a super-aspirin,” he says. The team has been investigating a new mechanism for their anticancer activity that is being targeted to discover safer and more effective drugs using HTS approaches.

Dr. Piazza believes that part of the reason NSAIDS have been overlooked is because many researchers consider them an old class of drugs, lacking the glamour or buzz of newer experimental drugs.

“If we can harness that potential, such drugs could greatly benefit individuals who are at high risk of developing cancer.”
For the 2011 Celebrate Hope Gala: Sheri Weber served as Chair, Tonia and Jerry Silverstein served as Vice-Chairs.

For the second year in a row, the gala was presented by iBERIABANK.
Event was record-breaking, grossing over $400,000.

Over the past three years Celebrate Hope has raised nearly $785,000 with all proceeds directly benefiting cancer research at the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute.

MCI was transformed into a land of hope. With white peak tents, and the silver, cobalt blue and black color scheme contributing to the modern theme “Keeping Hope Alive.”

Third Annual Celebrate Hope was held on Thursday, November 17th from 6:00-10:00 pm at the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute.

Guests enjoyed signature dishes by 14 featured chefs, which were paired with a wine and specialty beer, all while being entertained by Mark and Clark, dueling piano twins from Orlando, Florida.

Held annually the Thursday before Thanksgiving, Celebrate Hope has now been established as a “must-attend” event in our community.
Dr. Windy Dean-Colomb is passionate about improving breast cancer outcomes for all her patients and is working hard to improve health disparities for women in Mobile, AL. The positive, upbeat outlook of this 5 ft 2 in medical oncologist, will make a difference for women in our region. “Dr. Dean,” as she is known by her patients, came to the Gulf Coast from the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston to establish a practice not far from her roots in Baton Rouge. A veteran of challenges, Dr. Dean had just completed her residency at the University of Illinois when she was called to assist Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the disaster relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. This sort of “working in the trenches attitude” is what makes her look at Mobile and envision how she believes change can be brought to this community to improve breast cancer outcomes for all women. Partnering with the Mobile-based Franklin Primary Health Centers, Inc., Dr. Dean has already received a grant to establish a breast cancer prevention clinic within the Franklin Medical Mall located on Martin Luther King Ave. Staffed with a patient navigator and community health advisors, this clinic focuses on increasing breast health education and increasing the number of mammograms performed on women who reside in areas that reflect the poorest screening rates in the state.

Collaborating with the American Cancer Society (ACS), Dr. Dean has strongly supported the “Community Network Partners” initiative where community health advisors are recruited to educate their own communities. While working on this project Dr. Dean discovered that Walkitria Alexander, 2012 MAMGA Queen of Mardi Gras, was a medical student at Morehouse College of Medicine and shared a common interest in bringing positive changes in healthcare to her community. The Franklin Primary Health Centers, Inc., American Cancer Society, Alabama Department of Public Health, Mobile County Health Department and Mitchell Cancer Institute hosted a Health and Career Fair this past February at the Franklin Primary Health Center; the event included the reigning Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association king and queen and provided the opportunity to highlight their platform for healthier communities.

“I treat my patients the way I would want my family to be treated.”

Facing the loss of her brother to colorectal cancer when he was only 24, and later impacted by the realization that her family is BRCA 2 positive, which places women at higher risk of developing breast cancer, Dr. Dean understands the impact of cancer on the entire family. This empathy motivates her both in her research and in her caring for patients. “I treat my patients the way I would want my family to be treated. I make sure they fully understand their cancer diagnosis and their treatment options. It’s important for women to be able to tell their daughters and sisters exactly what kind of cancer they have.” Her philosophy is that education, communication and teamwork in cancer care is what saves lives.
Cancer deaths are decreasing each year. In the last two decades, more than 1 million deaths have been avoided through better screening, treatment, and prevention. One Mobile family hopes their donation to the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute will further reduce these rates, particularly in women diagnosed with breast cancer.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in women, second only to lung cancer. In 2009, Sylvia Stein Newman succumbed to breast cancer at the age of 55. In memory of his beloved daughter, Melvin “Buddy” Stein established the Sylvia Stein Newman Breast Cancer Research Endowment at MCI to advance research discoveries into novel therapies and diagnostic tools.

With a laboratory focus on breast cancer metastasis and tumor progression, money generated from the corpus of this endowment will provide critical funding for innovative clinical and translational research that stems from out-of-the-box thinking of MCI researchers. The funds provide breast cancer research teams with state-of-the-art equipment that perform advanced digital imaging, high throughput drug screening and monitor effects of genetic and chemical treatment on cancer cells. The Stein donation represents a “launch-pad investment in the generation of groundbreaking research projects that will win national and international recognition and bring us closer to a cure,” states MCI Associate Director of Basic and Translational Sciences, Dr. Laurie Owen.

The start of 2012 arrived with a number of new patient focused “care” initiatives at the MCI. These initiatives focus on serving our patients with more compassion, better communication, better service and an overall higher standard of care. “We Care Initiative” includes the implementation of an oncology-specific electronic medical record system (EMR), the introduction of “MY CARE” notebooks for each new patient, a patient satisfaction survey and customer service program, and the development of additional monthly support groups focused on engaging the patient more fully in their care and helping to meet the psychosocial needs of patients and their families.

While EMR was created to integrate health information so that today’s technology increases efficiency and organizes what can be an extremely large amount of information, the initial implementation can prove challenging for both the healthcare provider and the waiting patient while a new system is implemented. We are working hard to make this transition as easy and seamless as possible. Transferring protected health information between the team of doctors involved in a patient’s care, while insuring their information is secure, must be done incrementally. Over the coming months notifications of our progress will be posted and updates will be provided as milestones are reached.

Complementing the introduction of EMR, are our CARE notebooks, funded through the Winn-Dixie Foundation. The notebooks are designed to give patients a sense of control of their disease by providing an overview of the MCI and how patient care is delivered here. This single source notebook includes important contact information, names of doctors, a working calendar for appointments, a medication chart, a place for tests or procedures performed, guidelines regarding nutrition and symptom management and information on support groups and additional cancer-related resources.

We will continue our effort to provide knowledge to patients regarding complementary therapies, coping mechanisms and tangible resources within the community that assist patients through our monthly Educational Support Group (lunch and learn every fourth Tuesday of the month). In addition, we are offering a newly formed Trigeminal Neuralgia Support Group (every third Tuesday of the month at 5:30p) and will be launching a support group addressing patient psychosocial needs in the upcoming months. Our emphasis on patient care also includes a patient satisfaction survey and customer service program. The “We Care Initiative” is about our patients and how we can better provide the very best cancer care.
MCI provides advanced, comprehensive cancer care with a highly skilled team of professionals. This interdisciplinary team works hand-in-hand with University-based and private practice surgical oncologists, our member physicians and referring physicians to develop individualized treatment plans tailored to the unique needs of each cancer patient.

Under the leadership of Director Michael Boyd, M.D., Ph.D., our team of clinicians, clinician-scientists and researchers work in a collaborative environment where we battle cancer on all fronts, from the “bench to bedside,” with cancer research and treatment under one roof: Meet our team of oncologists. We are here for you.
MCI’s member physicians are actively engaged in the care for cancer patients and work closely with the interdisciplinary team of MCI oncologists. Member physicians are provided access to clinical trials as well as access to the collective expertise of our interdisciplinary team of clinicians and researchers. They also have access to MCI core support research facilities and the opportunity to participate and collaborate in grant funded and investigator initiated research activities.

Member physicians fall into the categories of 1) Member Physician as defined as a board-certified physician engaged predominantly in cancer patient care and/or diagnosis within our partner health systems, 2) Associate Member Physician as defined as a board-certified physician substantially engaged in cancer patient care and/or diagnosis within our partner health systems, and 3) Affiliate Member as defined as a board-certified physician substantially engaged in cancer patient care and/or diagnosis outside of the MCI primary service area.
SUCCESS STORIES THAT PUSH US AHEAD EVERY DAY

“Now my family understands when I volunteer to raise funds.”

Rosie McGowin has always been a huge supporter of the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute (MCI), volunteering to raise money for the Institute through Polo at the Point. But she never thought she would have a need for it—until her daughter, Win, (pictured far right) was diagnosed with cancer. That was when Rosie saw firsthand how worthwhile her efforts have been.

“At first, I felt like a deer in the headlights until I saw the plaque dedicated to Polo at the Point and I immediately felt a connection,” McGowin said. “I am amazed and humbled by the support we received from MCI since my daughter’s diagnosis. Now my family truly understands when I volunteer to raise funds. MCI is a world-class facility and would not have been possible without multitudes of volunteers and many generous donors living in our community.”

Today, Win is back in the saddle and getting on with her life!

MCI FACULTY TRAVEL THE GLOBE SHARING EXPERTISE

MCI faculty members travel the globe representing USA Mitchell Cancer Institute and sharing expertise in cancer research. In early September, Dr. Eddie Reed, Associate Director of Cancer Control and Prevention, travelled to the Institut de cancerologie Gustave Roussy in Paris to serve as a visiting professor and guest of Dr. Jean-Charles Soria, Chief, Lung Cancer Group and Director, Phase I Clinical Studies. The Institut de cancerologie Gustave Roussy is the 4th largest cancer center in Europe.

MCI researcher, Dr. Ming Tan, travelled to Oslo also in early September as a guest lecturer at the Norwegian Cancer Symposium 2011. The focus of this internationally prestigious symposium was “Growth and Proliferation: Molecular Regulators of Cancer.” Dr. Tan and only 16 other invited lecturers from around the world were invited to speak at the symposium. Included in this list of renowned cancer researchers was Sir Richard Timothy Hunt (pictured left), a Nobel Prize Laureate.
SHARING THE WORD ON BREAST CANCER...

One Cup at a Time

Each year an estimated 230,000 women in the United States are diagnosed with breast cancer. At MCI, we’re committed to “Thinking Pink” to maximize awareness of breast cancer and the importance of breast cancer screening. This past October, MCI held its second annual “Think Pink Tea” in partnership with Infirmary Health System. Cookie Aftergut, breast cancer survivor and founder of ChemoBlage, an Atlanta-based non-profit organization designed to teach women to be self-confident cancer survivors, served as the keynote speaker. With an attendance of more than 200, our Think Pink Tea successfully celebrated breast cancer survivors. Mark your calendars for the upcoming 2012 Think Pink Tea to be held on October 25, 2012.

“WHEN MANY HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE,”
NEW SCIENTIST, 31 MARCH 2012

The March 31, 2012 publication of the prestigious New Scientist featured an article entitled “When Many Heads are Better than One,” which highlighted the importance of translational cancer research in bringing together scientists and physician-scientists from a broad range of disciplines to fight cancer. Emphasizing the critical role of creating an environment where clinical and basic cancer researchers communicate and collaborations are encouraged, the article quoted Dr. Michael Boyd as well as leaders at M.D. Anderson and New York University School of Medicine. “While translational research may be easy to talk about,” says Boyd, “it’s hard to achieve. But when it all comes together, it’s almost magical.” Innovative approaches at MCI were cited alongside institutions including Brown, University of Pennsylvania, University of California, San Francisco and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, among others.

“The Mitchell Cancer Institute, for example, encourages transparency among researchers, clinicians, and patients by having facilities with glass walls,” states the article.
Pancreatic cancer is one of the most fatal of all cancers. Of all cancer types tracked by the National Cancer Institute, pancreatic cancer is the only cancer with a five year survival rate in the single digits. Most notably, survival rates for pancreatic cancer have not improved substantially in the last 40 years since the passage of the National Cancer Act. A major factor underlying the poor overall survival is that most pancreatic cancers are diagnosed in clinically advanced stages. Because the pancreas is located deep inside the body, early tumors cannot be seen or felt by health providers during routine physical exams. Patients usually have no symptoms until the cancer has spread to other organs or become so large that normal liver function is impaired (blockage of the common bile duct leading to jaundice). At this stage the cancer is often advanced and treatment options are more limited.

Two years ago, Jana Rocker, a childhood cancer survivor, started a Ph.D. program under Lewis Pannell, Ph.D., in the Proteomics facility of the MCI. She was interested in utilizing protein biomarkers to find more accessible methods for the detection of colorectal cancer. Colon samples were obtained by using a current U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommended screening test for colorectal cancer known as a fecal immunochemical test or FIT.

That is how the current research project into pancreatic cancer began. While looking for markers for colorectal cancer the research team detected proteins that indicated the health of the pancreas. The work was exciting and became the major focus for Rocker’s Ph.D. thesis. This work would not be possible without the highly collaborative environment that is fostered at the MCI. The proteomics group is working closely with Drs. Carlo Contreras and Jack DiPalma from the USA Health System as well as Drs. Lee Thompson and Russell Brown from Mobile Infirmary Medical Center with the goal of developing a test for the early detection of pancreatic cancer. The data collected from these samples helped to establish the pancreatic cancer diagnostic approach which led to the filing of an expedited patent application in 2011.

This research attracted the attention of a major Boston-based company that realized the potential health benefits of early detection of pancreatic cancer. Through the Technology Transfer Office at USA, MCI entered into an agreement with this company to continue this promising research. Dr. Pannell, who joined the MCI in 2002 as its second member, sees this as exactly the way clinical research should work. “There needs to be a close affiliation between the research and clinical operations,” says Pannell, “to ensure that approaches are developed for significant clinical problems that can then be translated into detection and treatment.”

Researchers continued on page 16

EXAMPLES OF CURRENT CANCER TESTS USING PROTEIN BIOMARKERS:

**PSA**
Prostate Specific Antigen

Biomarker used in the early detection of prostate cancer

**CA125**
Cancer Antigen 125

Biomarker used to monitor patients with a known cancer; most commonly used with ovarian cancer
TAPPED FOR A NEW ROLE

In addition to his role as Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Clinical Oncology, Dr. Rodney P. Rocconi has been appointed Deputy Associate Director for Clinical Research. In this role, Rocconi serves as the physician-leader and advocate for the Institute’s growing clinical trials portfolio. Rocconi is uniquely qualified for this role; as a physician-scientist at the MCI, he maintains a thriving gynecologic oncology practice as well as a basic research laboratory program. “As an academic cancer center, our goals include providing state-of-the-art advancements in cancer treatment and playing a key role in advancing the science of cancer therapy. With this mission, we provide a ‘bench to bedside’ approach in developing treatment plans for our patients. I look forward to expanding our clinical trials portfolio as we continue to offer the latest cancer therapies to our region,” says Rocconi.

FOR THE COMMUNITY, KNOWLEDGE IS HEALTH

The Mitchell Cancer Institute was proud to partner with the Alabama Department of Public Health during June and July of 2011 to promote awareness of the need for education about prostate cancer, providing information on signs and symptoms and supporting the role of the individual in informed decision making. The awareness campaign included partnering with the Mobile Bay Bears for the Ed Randall “Bat for the Cure” baseball event and it also included free screenings offered by Drs. Eddie Reed and Roger Ove to the public on 6 consecutive Fridays here at the Mitchell Cancer Institute. Participants were citizens age 40-75 who resided in Mobile, Baldwin or Washington Counties. Education was provided during the intake process by MCI Patient Navigators, Cathy Tinnea and Dennis King. A total of 118 men were screened. Of those men screened, 42 were found to have abnormalities that required counseling or clinical intervention and 4 were found to have cancers. While screening for prostate cancer remains a topic frequently in the news, the need for informed decision making and awareness of each individual’s risk factors are crucial components of comprehensive cancer care that the Mitchell Cancer Institute provides.

Prostate screenings will be offered again in June and July 2012. To schedule an appointment call 251-445-8428.

ONCOLOGY OUTLOOK 2012

March 16-17th, marked the third year that the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute has sponsored Oncology Outlook, a continuing medical education event held at one of our local treasures, the beautiful Marriott Grand Hotel Golf Club & Spa in Point Clear, AL. The goal of the conference is to offer timely updates on the latest treatments and emerging technologies in cancer care, as well as provide a relaxed atmosphere in which regional physicians and other healthcare providers can interact, discuss the delivery of care and share ideas, which ultimately improves patient outcomes. This year’s conference focused on women’s cancers and was co-directed by MCI gynecologic oncologists Drs. Rodney Rocconi and Michael Finan. For more information visit usa-cme.com or contact Susan Crutchfield at 251-445-9829 or scrutchfield@usouthal.edu. Oncology Outlook 2013 will be held on March 15 and 16, 2013.
According to Dr. Pannell, the glass walls and open design of the MCI building were planned to encourage these interactions and to let patients and researchers know that they are each there for the other.” Our patients, researchers and medical staff are all part of the team that works toward a goal of reducing the suffering and death rates from cancer. “Without all players, things cannot move forward.” Laurie Owen, Ph.D., Associate Director of Basic and Translational Science at MCI said, “This is a great example of how cross-collaborative, use-inspired, research efforts can synergize in an effort to save lives.”

A video on the proteomics research group and Jana’s history is available at http://southalabama.edu/research/MCIvideo.html.

Stein continued from page 9

The Stein family’s support of breast cancer isn’t limited to research however. David and Veritha Stein, Buddy’s son and daughter-in-law, made a contribution that enabled MCI to purchase bags created specifically for patients preparing to undergo breast surgery. The bfflbag™ (best friends for life) is designed to provide comfort and improve the patient experience by providing all of the things a woman might need for her in-hospital surgical recovery and then to accompany her through her chemotherapy and radiation, if needed.

According to Mr. Stein, one of the toughest decisions that a family, as care givers, has to make when a loved one is diagnosed with cancer is to decide where the individual can get the best treatment. “For most people, this decision is complicated by having to travel out-of-town for quality care, whereby disrupting the family. Having the Mitchell Cancer Institute in Mobile, however, helps makes that decision a little easier for families in South Alabama, South Mississippi and North Florida,” he explained.

The Stein family hopes their contributions will make a cancer diagnosis and treatment journey easier for future patients.
A donation of $489.20 was presented to the MCI from proceeds of Kidz Klozet’s bi-annual charity sales.

In October 2011, fifty percent of subscription dollars from ACCESS Magazine was donated to the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute.

St. Luke’s Episcopal School 5th Grader, Michaela Holt (pictured left), implemented a recycling program as her project for being the school’s Red Ribbon Award Ambassador. She has collected cans all year throughout the school and at St. Luke’s sporting events to raise funds for the MCI.

The fourth annual GO RUN was held on September 17, 2011 on USA’s main campus. With over 1,200 participants, the GO RUN is now one of the largest 5K runs in Mobile. During the past four years this event has raised significant awareness of gynecologic cancers and has generated over $135,000 in funding for gynecologic cancer research at the Mitchell Cancer Institute.

McConnell Automotive hosted the Second Annual Cash for Cancer Skeet Shoot and Gathering on March 10, 2012, at Dennis Lake in Stockton, Alabama. This event was held in memory of Jim “Cash” McConnell. The event raised $15,000 which will be used to purchase two video time-lapse microscopes. These microscopes are small enough to be placed directly in the incubator so that cells can be monitored as they divide and interact with each other. Event organizers Baker and Stan McConnell featured.

The second annual Tennis for Tatas tennis tournament was held in October, 2011 at the Mobile Tennis Center. Players enjoyed a beautiful day of tennis while supporting breast cancer research. Over $10,000 was raised for the MCI.

Pictured above are tennis chairs, Cindy Leonard and Dianne Mareno with Dr. Windy Dean-Colomb.

The University of South Alabama Mitchell Cancer Institute recently received a gift from the Mobile Fire Rescue Department. At the check presentation are, from left, Alfred Patrick, fire service driver and president of Local 1349; Jim Spafford of MBI Inc.; USAMCI Oncologist Dr. Windy Dean-Colomb; and, James Connick, fire service captain and vice president of Local 1349.

The 5th Annual Eastern Shore Toyota/Hyundai Golf Tournament was held on October 18, 2011 at Timber Creek Golf Club. Shawn and Leyla Easfahani present a check in the amount of $30,854 to Drs. Rajeev and Lalita Samant for breast cancer research at the MCI.

McConnell Automated hosted the Second Annual Cash for Cancer Skeet Shoot and Gathering on March 10, 2012, at Dennis Lake in Stockton, Alabama. This event was held in memory of Jim “Cash” McConnell. The event raised $15,000 which will be used to purchase two video time-lapse microscopes. These microscopes are small enough to be placed directly in the incubator so that cells can be monitored as they divide and interact with each other. Event organizers Baker and Stan McConnell featured.

The 14th Annual “Walking for the Memories” was held on April 28th at Grand Bay Middle School. Nearly $9,000 was raised for breast cancer research at the MCI. Pictured: Chair Barbara Hudson waves as walk begins.

The Kerri Castello Cancer Research Foundation Serving Hope Tennis Challenge was held in March, 2012 at the Mobile Country Club. Held in memory of Kerri Castello, this event contributed $42,937.44 to the Mitchell Cancer Institute.

Participating players enjoyed a pre-tournament party at Camp Grace. For more information on the KCCRF, visit: www.servinghope.com.
Thank you to all of the donors, sponsors, attendees and volunteers that made the Third Annual Celebrate Hope, benefiting the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute, a great success. We once again had sellout attendance and 100 percent of the funds support local research. Thank you also goes to our featured restaurants and caterers including Aramark/USA Dining Services, The Battle House Renaissance Hotel, Bay Gourmet, The Bull, The Camellia Café, Classic City Catering, Clifton Morrisettes Catering, Jam Cakery, Kneading Dough Catering, Panini Pete’s Café and Bakeshoppe, Ruth’s Chris Steak House, TRUE Restaurant, Vincent Henderson Signature Events and The Wilton Caterer, accompanied by custom wine and specialty beer pairings provided by Alabama Crown, Brookley International Distributing, Gulf Distributing Company of Mobile LLC, and Preferred Brands.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING US IN KEEPING HOPE ALIVE.

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