UPCOMING EVENTS

Mary’s Walk and Road Race
Please join us and many others as we walk together on Sunday, March 12, 2000 in this community event celebrating the life of Mary Kerry Libby.

The 2.5 mile walk will trace parts of Mary’s favorite walking route. A 4 mile road race is also planned. Both will begin at Kerryman pub in Saco. Refreshments, Awards & Prizes. Registration at the Pub from 10am-1:30pm. Call 773-2533 for event brochure or visit the website: www.maryswalk.org

3rd Annual Golf Classic
Paul Stewart will be returning for the 3rd Annual Golf Classic! Mark your calendars now - new date: Monday, July 24, 2000. New location: The Woodlands, Falmouth. We look forward to enjoying the warm, leisurely days of summer at one of Maine’s finest golf facilities with you! Call 773-2533 for information.

Cancer Genetic Research
Program Update

The priority research project of the Foundation is to create a cancer genetic database and DNA/tissue tumor bank for the people of Maine. As many as ten percent of all cancers are caused by inherited genes. When a person knows that he/she has inherited a cancer causing gene, steps can be taken to increase the likelihood that the cancer will be detected at its earliest, most treatable form. In some cases, the onset of the disease itself can be prevented.

Karen Rasmussen, Ph.D., is funded by the Foundation with support from the Maine Center for Cancer Medicine and Maine Medical Center, to build this database of information. She works in conjunction with Dr. Tracey Weissberg, an oncologist at MCOM in Scarborough.

On January 18th, the Scientific Advisory Committee heard a report on the progress of the program. Despite the many and complex logistical details that needed to be worked out, the database in its first months collected information on 60 to 70 families where breast, colon, pancreatic, lung, thyroid and other cancers are evident. The Maine Center for Cancer Medicine, Maine Medical Center, Obstetricians/Gynecologists and Oncologists throughout the state, and other geneticists are providing referrals. Word is spreading; whereas in July 98 one patient was seen a week, by January 99 an average of five patients are being seen weekly. The process of interviewing the patient, developing the pedigree and entering data is time intensive requiring on average of four and a half hours.

The first DNA samples, acquired from pathologists with patients’ consent at the time of surgery and/or biopsy, have been received into the tissue and tumor bank. The bank is housed in a refrigeration unit at the Maine Medical Center Research Institute, where a technologist works 10% of her time on managing this resource and organizing its data. Data from the pedigree database and the tumor bank are paired whenever possible.

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