

Keeping Arizonans sun safe



In this special skin issue:

Easy Ways to Fight the Rays • Early Detection • Skin Cancer Research
Sun Safety Patient Education • New Dermatology Residents

Director's Message



Skin cancer is the most common malignancy in the world. One out of three new cancers is a skin cancer and more than 2 million cases of non-melanoma skin cancer occur annually in the United States. We know this all too well under our brilliant Arizona sun.

Since 1980, the Arizona Cancer Center has been actively researching and developing novel technologies and drugs

to dramatically reduce the risk of squamous cell carcinoma of the skin, a key effort within our Cancer Prevention and Control Program. Several successful pharmaceutical companies have emerged from the basic research conducted at the Arizona Cancer Center.

Our Skin Cancer Institute unites the Cancer Center's many prevention activities into one coordinated group, bringing together innovative research, visionary clinical care, life-changing education and community outreach.

Our efforts are making a difference for skin cancer patients, those with sun-damaged skin and our young, at-risk population. We continue to make important scientific discoveries that have contributed to the national progress against these potentially deadly diseases.

Sincerely,

David S. Alberts, MD
Arizona Cancer Center Director

On the cover

The Skin Cancer Institute's mascot, Ray, invites you to Living in Harmony with the Sun on April 16. More information on page 3.

Photo by www.csrichards.com

JOIN US AT LIVING IN HARMONY WITH THE SUN

Learn how to keep your family safe in the sun at the sixth annual Living in Harmony with the Sun on April 16, presented by the Arizona Cancer Center's Skin Cancer Institute and the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. Supported by a generous gift from the Bert W. Martin Foundation, the fun and informative event encourages sun-safe behavior and skin cancer prevention for the whole family.

Living in Harmony with the Sun includes interactive educational displays, entertaining and informative puppet shows, commercial exhibits and a solar-viewing telescope. Free skin cancer screenings are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

If you go

Living in Harmony with the Sun

- **When:** 9 a.m.–4 p.m. April 16
- **Where:** Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, 2021 N. Kinney Road, Tucson
- **Cost:** Free with museum admission: adults \$14.50, \$4.50 for ages 6–12
- **For more information:** Contact Denise Spartonos at dspartonos@azcc.arizona.edu or (520) 626-1037.



Photo by www.csrichards.com

Around the Center



In February, the Skin Cancer Institute (SCI) participated in the second annual "Creativity in the Great Outdoors" contest sponsored by Clear Channel Outdoor. The SCI entry above, created by Arizona Cancer Center Student Graphic Designer Kendra Flesner, won "crowd favorite." As a result, a billboard with this design is now up in Tucson along the east side of Interstate 10 south of Grant Road.

The Skin Cancer Institute: coordinated skin cancer research, outreach, education and patient care

The Arizona Cancer Center's Skin Cancer Institute (SCI) is an international model for coordinated skin cancer prevention research, patient care, education and community outreach.

More than 2 million new cases of skin cancer are diagnosed each year in the United States, accounting for nearly half of all cancers nationwide, according to the American Cancer Society. Arizona has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the nation.

To save your skin, avoid the sun as much as possible between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays are strongest. When in the sun, wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat. Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher early and often to any exposed skin.

Skin cancers may be disfiguring, or even deadly – but most are preventable and curable, if detected early. Doing regular skin checks is the best way to find skin cancer early. To learn more, visit www.azskincancerinstitute.org and click on *Skin Cancer: Learn to Spot it Early* in the box on the right to watch a 12-minute video with a detailed demonstration of a skin self-exam, examples of what to look for and testimonials from skin cancer survivors.

This issue of Act Against Cancer provides information about the SCI's efforts to prevent and cure skin cancer, but there is so much on the website that can't fit on these pages. Visit www.azskincancerinstitute.org to learn more. To make an appointment for a skin exam, please call (520) 694-CURE.

Easy ways to fight the rays

HATS ON: PROTECTING TUCSON BABIES

The Skin Cancer Institute aims to protect the youngest members of our community through the Hats On program, which educates parents on how to protect their babies' fragile skin from the dangers of the sun.

Since the program began in 2009, more than 3,000 babies have received a baby hat gift bag that contains an educational brochure and a sun-safe baby hat. SCI partners with University Medical Center and Diamond Children's to distribute the bags at community events as well as at childbirth education classes and to parents taking newborns home from the hospital or to pediatric well-check appointments.

This year, the SCI will expand the Hats On program by launching a community-wide sun safety educational campaign targeted at families and babies.

To help ensure more parents learn about skin protection and receive a free hat for their babies, contact Heather Hiscox at hiscox@azcc.arizona.edu or (520) 626-1074.



Photo by Renee Bibby



Photos by www.csrichards.com

Clara Curiel, MD, holds up a dermatoscope, which takes magnified pictures of pigmented skin lesions.

DETECTING SKIN CANCER WHEN THE HUMAN EYE CAN'T

Early detection is key to curing skin cancer, but melanoma and non-cancerous moles can look very similar.

Some melanomas can even mimic a mole with minimal atypical features, and distinguishing them in a clinical exam can be difficult and sometimes impossible. Currently, there is no way to confirm that a pigmented skin lesion is cancerous without first removing it, so some patients may undergo a biopsy only to discover nothing was wrong.

Now imagine an automated diagnostic device that can determine whether a suspicious mole is dangerous without doing a biopsy. Swedish company SciBase has created a device that aims to do just that. The method, which uses the electrical properties of healthy and cancerous skin to detect malignant melanomas, is being tested in clinical trials at 20 European centers and five American centers, including the Arizona Cancer Center.

"It's a handheld device and you put it on a lesion and it tells you, suspicious or not suspicious," said Clara Curiel, MD, director of the Arizona Cancer Center's Pigmented Lesion Clinic, co-director of the Cutaneous Oncology Program and a principal investigator of the study.

Since May 2010, the Cancer Center – the top recruiter in the U.S. – has tested 155 lesions on 143 subjects using the SciBase method. So far, patients have been very willing to participate, said Senior Research Nurse Lynne Morrison, RN.

"Not one person has turned me down," she said. "The patients are thrilled to help advance science."

After a subject's pigmented skin lesion is photographed with a digital camera and a magnifying dermatoscope attachment, the SciBase probe is pressed on normal skin near the

pigmented skin lesion to give a reference reading and then on the lesion in question. A small disposable electrode on the tip of the probe applies a light current between two microscopic spikes, which are long enough to penetrate only the outermost layer of skin, not the layer that contains nerves. The results of the painless process appear on a screen as a graph demonstrating the resistance of the tissue and the outcome of the lesion measurement.

"Patients and the population in general are gravitating toward technology. If they believe there is technology to do certain things, they might trust it more."

- Clara Curiel, MD

"It works with the assumption that electrical impedance spectroscopy at clinically relevant frequencies reflects cellular properties of the tissue that are different between normal and malignant cells," Dr. Curiel said. "Therefore, the resistance of the atypical cells as the electricity passes through is different than in a normal cell. Based on that assumption, you can measure differences in skin lesions and identify the patterns that are more typical in malignant cells."

The lesion is then removed and sent for histological analysis and the patient receives the follow-up care he or she requires. SciBase collects the digital images and pathology slides to compare the device's results to the diagnosis.

While physicians don't know the outcomes in this blinded study, previous published studies on the method have been promising. Earlier trials showed that the SciBase method is able to separate benign and malignant moles with a sensitivity exceeding 98 percent and specificity more than 20 percent better than dermatologists in the studies. It also distinguishes non-melanoma skin cancer from benign skin lesions with close to 100 percent sensitivity and 87 percent specificity.

If the device is validated and approved for use in the U.S., Dr. Curiel said it has the potential to improve early detection of melanoma, which is crucial to saving lives. Though it's almost 100 percent curable when treated early, the incidence and mortality rates of melanoma have been increasing worldwide. The National Cancer Institute estimates that there were 68,130 cases of melanoma and 8,700 deaths from it nationwide last year.

"Someone dies of melanoma every hour in the U.S.," Dr. Curiel said. "Early detection is key."

Dr. Curiel said the SciBase device could be particularly helpful to primary care physicians and other health care professionals who might need further reassurance when diagnosing pigmented lesions.

"The ultimate added value of automated diagnostic devices in the clinical field will only be determined when devices like SciBase enter the market and are evaluated in the long term," she said. "The adoption and impact of this approach will vary between dermatologists with different levels of expertise in assessing pigmented skin lesions and other healthcare providers such as general practitioners."

The device might also play a role in increasing public awareness of skin cancer. Much the way some dermatologists now advertise having a particular cosmetic laser, physicians may someday advertise that they have a device to detect



Clara Curiel, MD, and Lynne Morrison, RN, use the SciBase device to examine a patient's pigmented skin lesion.

changes in concerning skin lesions, and that will hopefully encourage patients to be evaluated, Dr. Curiel said.

"Patients and the population in general are gravitating toward technology," she said. "If they believe there is technology to do certain things, they might trust it more. I think it will drive a number of patients to go and get tested."

- By Sarah Mauet

A NOTABLE DISCOVERY FOR SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMAS

The loss of a particular gene may play a key role in the development of an aggressive type of skin cancer that afflicts millions worldwide.

The finding may lead to better treatments for squamous cell carcinomas, or SCC, a type of nonmelanoma skin cancer that can metastasize if left untreated.

The joint Arizona Cancer Center, Mayo Clinic and Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen) discovery, published in *Cancer Prevention Research* in October, is a notable advancement, said Arizona Cancer Center Director David S. Alberts, MD.

"We've identified a new tumor suppressor gene," he said.

Researchers analyzed skin tissue samples ranging from normal skin to invasive SCC. In some tumors, they identified genetic deletions in a portion of DNA that normally harbors the INPP5A

gene, or inositol polyphosphate-5-phosphatase, which limits cells' proliferation. Additionally, a third of precancerous growths showed decreased INPP5A levels, and the gene's activity level continued to be further decreased in samples of increasingly advanced cancers.

"It appears that INPP5A is a tumor suppressor gene that gets lost in the transition between an actinic keratosis – a precancerous growth – and metastatic SCC," said Dr. Alberts, who added that studies are already underway to develop a drug to target the gene. "Observed deletions in INPP5A represent a highly selected, non-random genetic event in SCC, giving researchers confidence that this is a biomarker with great potential for clinical study and patient benefit."

- By Sarah Mauet



PATIENTS BENEFIT FROM SUN SAFETY EDUCATION

While Tucsonans often brag about enjoying so many sunny days a year, all that sunshine can take a toll, sometimes in the form of skin cancer.

The Arizona Cancer Center's Skin Cancer Institute aims to prevent and cure skin cancer by increasing awareness about sun safety and skin cancer detection. In addition to running community outreach programs, the SCI provides enhanced education and training for skin cancer patients and high-risk individuals through a patient education program.

"That makes all the difference in the world," said Clara Curiel, MD, director of the Cancer Center's Pigmented Lesion Clinic and co-director of the Cutaneous Oncology Program. "I believe it is an incredible service we provide to the patients."

Patients with a family history of melanoma, personal history of any type of skin cancer, multiple moles and/or atypical moles have the opportunity to visit with the patient educator, Lisa Quale, who has seen more than 1,000 patients since 2006.

"It's amazing I've talked to 1,000 people," said Quale. "It's rewarding knowing that, but it's even more rewarding to think that each person I talk to goes out and shares information with friends and family members. In my mind, a large number of people benefit from each individual that receives patient education."

The aim of the patient educator is to arm patients with the information they need to become their own health advocates, Quale said. She gives patients information about sunscreen, sun-safe behavior and how to do skin self-exams, and she takes time to tailor her meetings to focus on the details each individual needs most.

It's important for Arizonans to be proactive and learn to protect their skin and check it for sun damage, particularly because most adults today didn't grow up aware of the dangers of the sun, Quale said.

"We used to lay out," said native Tucsonan Susan Pitt. "We put iodine and baby oil on. We lived near Himmel Park and we would walk there, swim all day and walk back. We were in the sun all that time."

About 35 years ago, Pitt became concerned about a spot on her left leg. A newly divorced mother of four, Pitt had recently returned to the University of Arizona. Campus Health referred her to University Medical Center, where she was promptly diagnosed with melanoma. Physicians surgically removed the cancer and Pitt was able to avoid chemotherapy and radiation.

"I always have been very grateful for UMC because I would not have gotten treatment otherwise," she said. "I was a student at the time. I didn't have health insurance or any resources. I'm very grateful for the treatment I received."

While her treatment was a success and she returned for regular follow-up appointments, Pitt never received education about sun safety or skin self-exams. That was typical for the time, but times have changed.

In December, Pitt made an appointment for a routine skin exam at the Arizona Cancer Center. Because she's a melanoma survivor, she saw Dr. Curiel.

"I had heard of Dr. Curiel so it was lucky I got to come in and see her," Pitt said. "I was just thrilled with her. She's one of the best physicians I've ever seen."

After the appointment, Pitt met with Quale and became her 1,000th patient. The meeting was very helpful, Pitt said. She learned important details about specific ingredients to look for in a sunscreen or daily moisturizer with SPF (sun protection factor) 30 or higher.

"Lisa made me more aware," Pitt said. "It really helped me because she gave me information about several sunscreens to select from. The skin products are so much better now. I use more of it now because it feels good on my skin."

In addition to receiving individualized sun safety education, Pitt's recent appointment also differed from her experience 35 years ago in that she was treated at a state-of-the-art facility that she and her husband, Donald, helped make possible. The Pitt Family Medical Oncology Pavilion, which sits between the Diamond Family Multidisciplinary Oncology Pavilion and the Gumbin Family Women's Cancer Pavilion at the Arizona Cancer Center at UMC North, honors their generous contribution.

Pitt often hears acquaintances mention when they or a loved one visits the Cancer Center and she and her husband have been pleasantly surprised to learn how many people they know benefit from treatment at the Arizona Cancer Center.

"It's amazing how many people do come to the Cancer Center," Pitt said. "It's really a resource for the community. We're glad it's here."

- By Sarah Mauet

Five things everyone should know about skin cancer

1. Finding skin cancer early could save your life. Get to know your skin by checking it once a month. Be on the lookout for new and/or changing spots on your body.
2. Limit your time in the midday sun. Try to do most of your outdoor activities early in the morning or late in the afternoon, when the sun is less intense.
3. Use a good sunscreen. Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. Look for zinc oxide, titanium dioxide or avobenzone in the list of active ingredients.
4. Don't rely on sunscreen alone. When you're outside, wear long sleeves, pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses.
5. Never lie out in the sun or use tanning beds. A tan is a sign that your skin is trying to protect you from the sun's damaging rays. Both sunburn and tan cause skin cancer.

A QUEST TO DEVELOP A GLOBAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SUN DAMAGE SCALE

Measuring sun damage is an essential part of skin cancer research and treatment. It is also highly subjective, which makes it difficult to determine just how effective a new agent or intervention may be.

Arizona Cancer Center member Naja E. McKenzie, PhD, RN, is trying to change that. She is working to develop a global photographic sun damage scale to help standardize the process.

"The whole idea of having a scale is to be able to generalize judgment," she said. "Our goal with this is to have this be the way people define sun damage."

When researchers around the world describe a patient with skin damage, they use a ranking system – 0 for no damage, 9 for the worst of the worst – in three clinical categories and give an overall score. While the system seems logical, there's no way to know if researchers are talking apples to apples – if an 8 to someone in Copenhagen is the same as an 8 to someone in Tucson.

While photographic scales exist to measure sun damage on the face, chemoprevention of skin cancer studies tend to focus on the forearm to more easily allow for biopsies to determine whether using a test agent has improved sun damage.

"This study is important because as we develop more agents to look at chemoprevention or for cosmetic purposes, scales must be generated to measure for damage," said Arizona Cancer Center member Clara Curiel, MD, who participated in the study. "It is important to have a scale that you can refer to, to measure outcomes of the interventions."

"The whole idea of having a scale is to be able to generalize judgment. Our goal with this is to have this be the way people define sun damage."

- Naja E. McKenzie, PhD, RN

To develop the scale, Dr. McKenzie and her team took photographs of 48 subjects' right and left forearms. Duplicate copies were made and five community dermatologists in addition to Dr. Curiel ranked 288 images. While the physicians' answers agreed in 73 to 90 percent of the cases, there was some diversity in the results, which only reinforced the need for a standardized scale.



Using a photographic scale of skin damage such as the one above will allow researchers around the world to ensure that they are "talking apples to apples," said Naja E. McKenzie, PhD, RN.

"A lot of that depends on who you see on a regular basis," Dr. McKenzie said. "If you see a lot of older people who play a lot of golf, you're likely to think less of a bad looking arm because you've seen worse."

Based on the answers the dermatologists gave, Dr. McKenzie has created a scale using photographs to represent a typical example of each level of the scale. Dr. Curiel was impressed at the overall agreement in the first leg of the study, and thinks it could be increased even more if reviewers are first presented with the new photographic scale.

"We were able to prove that between five physicians you can reach reasonable agreement," she said. "The next step is to pre-train people and then see how the correlation changes with the scale being taught up front."

The study, published in *Archives of Dermatology* in January, has received some good feedback; one reviewer called it a "God-send," Dr. McKenzie said. The study will now be replicated in Australia by researchers in the Pan-Pacific Skin Cancer Consortium, which comprises scientists from the Skin Cancer Institute and Queensland Institute of Medical Research.

However, it's just a first step. There are many issues that need to be worked out before the photographic scale can be applied to research and clinical situations globally.

"On each continent we don't have the same skin color," Dr. McKenzie said. "That's something we will be working on down the road. There are a lot of different populations out there where this would not work as it stands. It's very preliminary, but the concept and the blueprint of how to go about doing it are there."

- By Sarah Mauet

MEET THE RESIDENTS



From left: Sandra Leyo DuPont, MD, James E. Sligh, MD, PhD, and Jason DuPont, MD.

When Arizona Cancer Center member James E. Sligh, MD, PhD, took over as division chief of dermatology at the University of Arizona College of Medicine, his top priority was to develop a residency program.

"There is a desperate need for trained dermatologists in Arizona," said Dr. Sligh. "The need for the program is obvious. We have an aging population in Arizona, and our skin cancer incidence is very high."

Last year, the Division of Dermatology in the UA College of Medicine's Department of Medicine received full national accreditation for a residency program in dermatology by the Dermatology Residency Review Committee of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. The three-year program is accepting two new dermatology residents each year to eventually support six residents at a time.

The first residents are Jason DuPont, MD, and Sandra Leyo DuPont, MD. The married couple, both board certified in family medicine, worked in dermatology clinics in Phoenix and Casa Grande for several years before deciding to pursue this residency program.

"Dermatology is a fascinating specialty with a great mix of medicine and surgery," Dr. DuPont said. "It's a very exciting field and there are endless opportunities to learn. Everybody's skin is unique, and we enjoy the diagnostic and therapeutic challenges each patient brings. Ultimately, what's most important to us is taking great care of our patients and helping them look and feel their best. That's what we strive for every day."

The residents see patients at the Arizona Cancer Center at UMC North and the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System and will get training in medical and surgical procedures, including Mohs surgery, as well as dermatopathology. They will do a pediatric dermatology rotation at Phoenix Children's Hospital, and they will

work at affiliated community practices, the Dermatology Center and Pima Dermatology, to learn advanced surgical as well as cosmetic procedures.

"They will increase their levels of autonomy based on their experience," Dr. Sligh said. "They will take a greater role in patient care as they progress in the program."

All patients seen by the residents are also seen by an attending physician, so Dr. Sligh knows firsthand how patients feel about the new physicians.

"The response from patients to these new residents has been overwhelmingly positive," he said. "Patients have been pleased with the thoroughness of the examinations they are receiving."

As part of their training, residents will also attend conferences, medical education seminars and participate in community outreach efforts, such as conducting free skin screenings at Living in Harmony with the Sun (see page 3 for details).

Once residents complete the three-year program, they must pass the American Board of Dermatology examination to become board-certified dermatologists. Upon finishing the program, Drs. DuPont and Leyo DuPont hope to open their own dermatology practice someday.

"We're honored to be the first residents in the program and plan to stay in Arizona when we're finished," Dr. DuPont said. "Our goal is to provide outstanding dermatologic care for the people of this state."

- By Sarah Mauet

Did you know?

Though located at the Arizona Cancer Center at UMC North, patients don't have to have skin cancer to be seen at the dermatology clinic; it provides complete care for all diseases of the skin, hair and nails. To make an appointment, please call (520) 694-CURE.



Clockwise from top left: siblings Mae Friedman, Benjamin Friedman and Sydney Heller; Robert and Sydney Heller, William Heller's parents; Benjamin Friedman, William Heller's uncle

A LASTING LEGACY, A GIFT OF HOPE

Like too many others, William Heller has lost loved ones to cancer and heart disease.

Determined to do what he can to put a stop to those devastating diseases, William Heller is leaving his estate to further research at the Arizona Cancer Center and the Sarver Heart Center at the University of Arizona.

Mr. Heller grew up in Delaware and the suburbs of Philadelphia, the child of Robert Heller, a physician, and Sydney Heller, a stay-at-home mother, who provided him with an education and all that he needed to thrive and be independent. His aunt and uncle on his mother's side, Mae Friedman and Benjamin Friedman, Esq., never married and treated William Heller like a son. They kept him grounded, giving him the love and guidance that shaped his career path and life goals.

These family members served as role models by volunteering in the community and taught him the importance of hard work, honesty and giving back.

Sadly, the four individuals who so profoundly shaped Mr. Heller's life met their own ends too early. His aunt passed away in 1965 from multiple myeloma, a cancer that starts in plasma cells, a type of white blood cell. In 1981, his uncle passed away due to pancreatic cancer, the deadliest of all major cancers. William's father passed away after a massive heart attack in 1985, and three years later, his mother, who had a heart valve replaced in 1982, finally succumbed to the stress of her ailing heart.

Thanks to the values instilled in him by his family members, Mr. Heller had a successful career as an attorney for the federal government with the Small Business Administration specializing in disaster loan management, and for the Federal Aviation Administration where he practiced aviation law. Before retiring, he was also employed with the Arizona Department of Transportation in the Highways Department, where he concentrated on eminent domain proceedings.

Devastated by the loss of his family members, William wanted to do something to pay tribute to them.

Mr. Heller sees his gift to the Arizona Cancer Center and the Sarver Heart Center not only as an opportunity to help defeat heart disease and cancer and provide hope for other families struggling with these conditions, but also as a way to create a lasting legacy that will honor his parents and the aunt and uncle who meant so much to him.

"I want the research to help other people who have been touched by these diseases," William said. "That's the way they raised me and there is no doubt that I am doing the right thing. This is what they would want me to do."

After a moment of reflection, he added, "I think they would be proud."

- By Suzanne Y. Omelas

*If you would like more information about how to make a planned gift to the Arizona Cancer Center, please contact the development office:
Tucson: (520) 626-7008 or Phoenix: (602) 827-2211.*

An Evening with the Friends

When guests arrive March 26 at the new Camelback Ballroom at the storied Phoenician resort for the silver anniversary gala of the Phoenix Friends of the Arizona Cancer Center, they will be greeted with the feel, sound and look of a Mediterranean villa.

This Silver Anniversary gala "Evening with the Friends" will feature the expected fabulous silent and live auction, dinner and dancing and a commitment by the 50 amazing "Friends" to support the Arizona Cancer Center's quest to prevent and cure cancer.

Planning has been in the works since the close of last year's successful Friends gala, said Sally Ruscitti, the chair of the Silver Anniversary event. Ruscitti, who has been a Phoenix Friend for two and a half years, counts the other 49 women as true friends.

"We are serious about what we are doing but we have fun doing it," Ruscitti said.

Ruscitti says she became more committed to the Friends' cause after traveling to Tucson to visit the Arizona Cancer Center's research and clinical facilities.

"There is such professionalism, friendliness and openness there," she said. "The progress the Cancer Center makes within a 12-month period is rather astounding."

Ruscitti said she and the Friends realize that "the disease doesn't take a break" so the group works year-round, too, to plan and present one of the best parties in the Valley of the Sun.



"At the Villa Mandarine" by Judy Feldman was commissioned for this year's auction.

The Phoenix Friends have commissioned a piece of fine art for this year's auction, and the artist, Judy Feldman, will attend the gala. "At the Villa Mandarine" is in keeping with the bright Mediterranean theme for the evening. Strolling musicians will entertain guests and auction bidding will be done with paper ballots, not electronic touch pads, which Ruscitti said took away from the social flavor of the gala.

"We have such a good time and we want to give a good party to honor the work of the Cancer Center," she said.

- By Sara Hammond



The Phoenix Friends

The Phoenix Friends of the Arizona Cancer Center have raised more than \$5 million for the Arizona Cancer Center. Their gifts have supported essential cancer research programs and new technology for 25 years.

Please visit www.phoenixfriends.org for more information about An Evening with the Friends and the Phoenix Friends of the Arizona Cancer Center.

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www.arizonacancercenter.org

EVENTS CALENDAR

March

Colorectal Cancer Screening Month

16 Green Valley Community Lecture: Assessing Your Cancer Risk Based on Family History with Christina Laukaitis, MD, PhD, FACP, and Joanne Jeter, MD. 10–11 a.m. West Center.

16 Metastasis: Where is the Clinical Opportunity: 11:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. at Kiewit Auditorium, AZCC. For more information or to RSVP please contact cmorris@azcc.arizona.edu.

19 TruFit Studios Skin Cancer Awareness Benefit: Dance, be screened, give back. All proceeds benefit the Skin Cancer Institute at the Arizona Cancer Center. 9 a.m.–noon at TruFit Studios, 16715 E. Avenue of the Fountains, Fountain Hills, AZ. For more information, please call Cindy at (480) 272-0547.

26 The 25th annual An Evening with the Friends Gala: Be a part of the cure, be a part of the magic. 6 p.m. The Phoenician, 6000 E. Camelback, Scottsdale, AZ. For ticket information, please visit www.phoenixfriends.org or call

April

Cancer Control Month

(480) 830-3007.

9 Catalina State Park 5.2-Mile Trail Run/Walk: A Better Than Ever goal event. A portion of proceeds will benefit BTE research grants. 7:30 a.m. Please visit www.everyoneruns.net and www.arizonabte.org for more information.

10 Komen Race for the Cure: Partially benefits breast cancer education and outreach at the Arizona Cancer Center. Please visit www.komensaz.org/komen-race-for-the-cure for more information.

16 Living in Harmony with the Sun: A fun and informative event for the whole family. 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, 2021 N. Kinney Road, Tucson, AZ. Free with museum admission. See page 3 for details.

16 Second Annual Puma Prowl 5K Walk: The event, hosted by Perry High School DECA in honor of Cheryl Watkins in Chandler, AZ, benefits cancer research at the Arizona Cancer Center. 8:30 a.m. Freestone Park, 1141 E. Guadalupe Road, Gilbert, AZ. Please visit www.perrydeca.com for more information.

20 Green Valley Community Lecture: Diet, Nutrition and Cancer Prevention with Michelle Bratton, RD, CSO. 10–11 a.m. West Center.

20 Director's Circle Tucson: Featuring Joyce Schroeder, PhD, on her breakthrough drug to fight aggressive breast cancer and other cancers. By invitation.

21 Director's Circle Phoenix: Featuring Peter Lance, MD. "Bringing the Best to Phoenix - Cancer Prevention. The Past. The Present. The Future." By invitation.

May

Melanoma/Skin Cancer Awareness Month

1 Cinco de Mayo 10K Run/Walk: A Better Than Ever goal event. A portion of proceeds will benefit BTE research grants. 7 a.m. Please visit www.azroadrunners.org and www.arizonabte.org for more information.

2 Melanoma Monday: The first Monday of May is the kick-off of Melanoma/Skin Cancer Awareness Month. People are encouraged to examine their skin for skin cancer. Please visit www.azcc.arizona.edu/sci/about/may for more information.

27 Don't Fry Day: The day before the unofficial start to the summer/vacation season, the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention encourages Americans to pledge to enjoy the outdoors safely by protecting against overexposure to the sun's damaging UV rays. Please visit www.azcc.arizona.edu/sci/about/may for more information.

COMMON EVENT LOCATIONS:

AZCC = Arizona Cancer Center
1515 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson

AZCC at UMC North = Arizona Cancer Center
at UMC North, 3838 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson

West Center = 1111 Via Arco Iris, Green Valley

Oro Valley Public Library = 1305 W. Naranja
Dr., Oro Valley

Please visit www.arizonacancercenter.org for more information about the Arizona Cancer Center.