



The Connection

Fall/Winter 2003 Newsletter
Volume 2, Issue 2

ANNUAL MEETING

The Maine Cancer Consortium held its annual meeting on October 1, 2003 in Augusta. A new Board of Directors was elected. The Board gratefully acknowledged the outgoing chair and board members for their contributions: Meredith Tipton for serving as chair during the past two years and Rebecca Colwell and Andrew Dionne, MD. We are fortunate that all three will remain active in the Consortium. Meredith will continue to serve on the Board, Rebecca will continue participating in the Palliative & Hospice Care Work Group, and Andrew will stay on the Early Detection Workgroup.

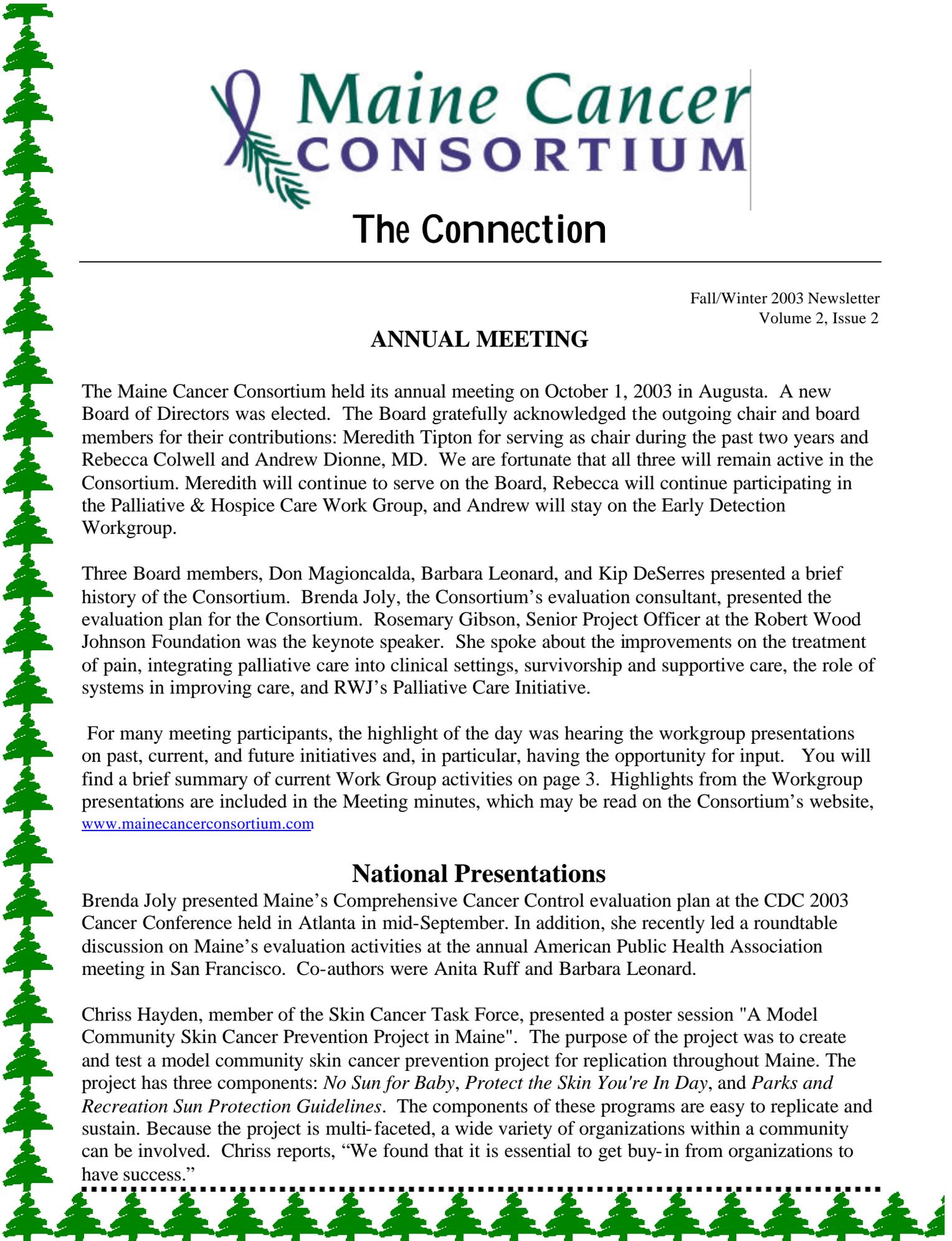
Three Board members, Don Magioncalda, Barbara Leonard, and Kip DeSerres presented a brief history of the Consortium. Brenda Joly, the Consortium's evaluation consultant, presented the evaluation plan for the Consortium. Rosemary Gibson, Senior Project Officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was the keynote speaker. She spoke about the improvements on the treatment of pain, integrating palliative care into clinical settings, survivorship and supportive care, the role of systems in improving care, and RWJ's Palliative Care Initiative.

For many meeting participants, the highlight of the day was hearing the workgroup presentations on past, current, and future initiatives and, in particular, having the opportunity for input. You will find a brief summary of current Work Group activities on page 3. Highlights from the Workgroup presentations are included in the Meeting minutes, which may be read on the Consortium's website, www.maine-cancer-consortium.com

National Presentations

Brenda Joly presented Maine's Comprehensive Cancer Control evaluation plan at the CDC 2003 Cancer Conference held in Atlanta in mid-September. In addition, she recently led a roundtable discussion on Maine's evaluation activities at the annual American Public Health Association meeting in San Francisco. Co-authors were Anita Ruff and Barbara Leonard.

Chriss Hayden, member of the Skin Cancer Task Force, presented a poster session "A Model Community Skin Cancer Prevention Project in Maine". The purpose of the project was to create and test a model community skin cancer prevention project for replication throughout Maine. The project has three components: *No Sun for Baby*, *Protect the Skin You're In Day*, and *Parks and Recreation Sun Protection Guidelines*. The components of these programs are easy to replicate and sustain. Because the project is multi-faceted, a wide variety of organizations within a community can be involved. Chriss reports, "We found that it is essential to get buy-in from organizations to have success."





New Recommendations for Preventing Skin Cancer

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued two new reports about skin cancer prevention in the October 17, 2003 MMWR (Morbidity, Mortality Weekly Report). This represents the first combined publication from two leading independent panels: the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), which is supported by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), and the Task Force on Community Preventive Services which is supported by CDC.

A summary of the reports:

Counseling to Prevent Skin Cancer: “The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force concludes that the evidence is insufficient to recommend for or against routine counseling by primary care clinicians to prevent skin cancer.” To read the entire document, go directly to the web site:

www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5215a2.htm There will be a link on the Consortium’s web site soon.

Preventing Skin Cancer: The Task Force on Community Preventive Services found sufficient evidence to recommend two interventions:

1. Wearing protective clothing including long sleeved clothing or hats.
2. Education and policy changes in primary schools and recreational and tourism sites.

They found insufficient evidence to determine the effectiveness of many other public health initiatives and recommended additional research in those areas. You may read the document by logging on to this address: www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5215a1.htm There will be a link on the Consortium’s web site soon.

Colon Cancer News

Several Consortium members recently attended a leadership roundtable on Colorectal Cancer Screening and Prevention in New England in Massachusetts.

- The good news: colorectal screening rates are now a HEDIS measure. HEDIS is the Health Plan Employer Data and Information Set and is used to assess clinical performance on key measures of clinical effectiveness. The new measure should result in an increase in screening rates and an increase in insurance coverage. Currently, not all carriers cover colon cancer screening.
- “The Katie Couric effect”: Using a news celebrity to promote colon cancer screening has greatly increased awareness of the disease and the importance of screening. It has increased screening rates, too.

Colon Cancer Screening Presentations

On January 14, 2004, Dr. Leo Siegal will present at the Maine Coast Memorial Hospital in Ellsworth at 7:00 am. Contact Karen Hawes at the hospital for more information.

On December 12, 2003, a presentation is planned for PenBay Medical Center in Rockport. Contact Cathy Hopler at the hospital for more information.





Work Group Updates

Primary Prevention Work Group: The Primary Prevention Work Group considers its primary purpose to advise the Maine Comprehensive Cancer Control Program in the identification of annual priorities as well as program gaps. Recruitment of new members is ongoing; representatives from the environmental health field and school health are particularly welcome. For more information or to participate in the workgroup, contact Tina Harnett at 795-5991 or Julie Sullivan at 756-8054.

Skin Cancer Taskforce: The task force found that 54% of hospitals with maternity units implemented the *No Sun For Babies Program* this past year. Some hospitals are doing the program year round and not just during Skin Cancer Awareness Month. The task force has worked with municipal recreation departments by educating them to promote the use of sunscreen among their program participants. The task force plans to expand this initiative next year to summer camps. Chriss Hayden, Portland Public Health, presented on the task force's initiatives at a national cancer conference in St. Louis. She found that people from other states wondered why a skin cancer prevention program was needed in Maine. They thought we didn't get much sun! For more information or to participate in the workgroup, contact Bonnie Bickford at 373-3729.

Early Detection Work Group: Has developed a professional education presentation on colon cancer. Presentations in hospitals across the state have been scheduled. It has been converted to an online self-study course that will be available on our website. Application to award CME's is in process. For more information or to participate in the workgroup, contact Evelyn Kieltyka at 622-7524.

Rehabilitation and Survivorship Work Group: A University of Maine graduate student intern, Ellen Sharp, has been working closely with this group to assess the availability of cancer support services throughout Maine. She is currently developing a survey to identify the needs of cancer survivors and their families/friends/caregivers that will be administered in physician offices. For more information or to participate in the workgroup, contact Cheryl Tucker at 800-464-3102 (press 3) or Nadine Bullion at 973-7476.

Palliative & Hospice Care Work Group: The Maine Hospice Council is currently conducting a chart audit to assess the quality of life people living in Maine Veteran's Homes experienced at the end of their life. For more information or to participate in the workgroup, contact Kandyce Powell at 626-0651.

Data Work Group: This group continues to assist the other Work Groups with data support as well as providing input on how best to evaluate our efforts. For more information or to participate in the workgroup, contact Judith Graber at 287-1420.

Note: Meeting minutes and Logic Models for all of the Work Groups are posted on our website

The Maine Cancer Registry Issues New Report

Cancer Incidence and Mortality in Maine 1997-1998

For more information or to request a copy, contact the Maine Cancer Registry at 287-5272.





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Maine Responds to Cancer

www.MaineCancerConsortium.org

New Board of Directors Elected

In accordance with the Consortium by-laws, a new Board of Directors was elected in October 2003. The following Consortium members will serve a two-year term on the Board:

Kip DeSerres, MSPH, American Cancer Society, New England Division ~ Chair
Don Magioncalda, MD, MaineGeneral Medical Center ~ Vice-Chair
Nadine Bullion, LCSW, CancerCare of Maine
Tina Harnett, MPH, CPC, Healthy Androscoggin
Evelyn Kieltyka, MSN, MS, FNP, Family Planning Assoc. of Maine
Allen L'Italien, RN, OCN, CancerCare of Maine
Barbara Leonard, MPH, Bureau of Health
Kandyce Powell, MSN, RN, Maine Hospice Council
Holly Richards, BS, Redington-Fairview General Hospital
Laura Ronan, MPH, Medical Care Development
Julie Sullivan, MPH, Portland Public Health Division
Meredith Tipton, MPH, PhD, University of New England

Upcoming Conference of Interest

January 13, 2004

Ethics in End of Life Care and Pediatric Palliative Care

Joanne Wolfe, MD and her Children's Hospital Pediatrics Palliative Care Team
Lachlan Forrow, MD, Director of Beth Israel Palliative Consult and Ethics Consult Services
Dana Auditorium, Maine Medical Center
FMI: Contact Laneay Yates 842-7352.