

The Strength of Survival

Letter from the Director

Hello Survivors!

The end of October is upon us and the weather is finally starting to match the calendar. I hope you all get a chance to get outside and breathe some fresh, autumn air. October was a busy month for TSTS.

Our first annual fundraiser, THRIVE & SURVIVE, was held on October 14 at the Trenton Country Club. What a fabulous day! I want to thank you for making our first fundraiser a big success. The feedback I got was wonderful. It seems it's unanimous... the TSTS ladies are amazing! There were many people at the event not directly involved with TSTS, and let me tell you... you completely inspired them. I can't tell you how many people came up to me after the event in absolute awe of you.

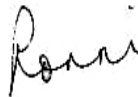
Besides the fact that you are all spectacular, the other consistent piece of feedback was that many attendees were surprised that this was our first fundraiser since it was so well done. For that, I thank my committee members, and all of you who so gracefully shared a bit of yourselves. Thank you for sending me your member profiles, and thank you for sharing your stories. They do not fall on deaf ears. Now that people know we are out there and we are FABULOUS, I'm sure next year's fundraiser will be even bigger.

TSTS Programming Notes:

The Colts Neck walking group and the Colts Neck Hot Yoga class will meet the second and fourth Sundays in Nov as follows:

- November 11 and November 25
11:00 am Dorbrook Park walking group
12:00 noon Yoga at Colts Neck Hot Yoga

Happy Training,



Upcoming Events:

- 11/18: Philadelphia Half Marathon and Rothman 8k
- 11/24: Total Immersion Swimming Clinic
- 12/09: 2008 Planning Meeting

WINNERS OF THE DANSKIN TRI PLEDGE PROGRAM!

The Danskin triathlon pledge program was a huge success. Thanks to everyone who participated. The top 4 fundraisers will all receive gift cards to Whole Foods. The winners were, in order:

1. Martha Hostetter (both for dollars and number of pledges) - \$75 gift card
2. Susan Berowitz - \$50 gift card
3. Karolyn Tucker - \$25 gift card
4. Lenora Kandiner - \$20 gift card

Congratulations, ladies, and thank you for supporting TSTS!

Thrive & Survive Re-Cap

The beautiful Sunday morning started out with a meet & greet at the Trenton Country Club. Our members mingled with friends and family, while browsing our silent auction and filling their plates with a wonderful buffet of brunch goodies.

We opened our presentation with a video/slide show montage of the last 2 years. It was a moving, poignant, and very inspirational display of TSTS gals at various classes, races, and events. The photos, with member quotes dispersed in between, were set to background music. We also were fortunate enough to have some video interviews with TSTS members. Thanks to Sandy Kitain, Bonnie Crowley, Lenora Kandiner, and Susan Holden for allowing me to catch you on video! If you missed the brunch, you can see the presentation as we'll be adding it to the website shortly.



TSTS members all dressed up



Dr. Beth DuPree and Ronni Arno Blaisdell

After the slide/video presentation, Honoree Dr. Beth DuPree spoke. She shared with us the story of how she feels about her practice, her patients, and why she uses the approach that she does. We appreciate that Dr. DuPree took time out of her schedule to join us. She was a wonderful addition to the day.

TSTS members Sharon Friedman and Jennifer Polo spoke after Dr. DuPree, and their stories were incredibly inspirational. I thank them for getting up in front of all of those people and sharing some very personal parts of their lives. As Sharon and Jen were speaking, I glanced around the room. All eyes were glued on them and you could have heard a pin drop.

Dr. DuPree, Sharon, and Jennifer were hard acts to follow, but our keynote speaker, Sean Swarner, took the stage next. Sean also had a slide/video presentation, which was quite amazing. He took us on a journey to his childhood, shared with us his difficult teenage years when he struggled with two types of (supposedly terminal) cancers, then onto his young adult years when he decided to climb Mt. Everest in order to give hope to other cancer survivors who felt that they had none. Sean's presentation was at times funny, at



TSTS members Jennifer Polo and Carla Hagan with Sean Swarner

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Dr. Beth DuPree, TSTS Board President Dan Faber, Sean Swarner, and Ronni Blaisdell

times poignant, but always inspiring. His message was one that we at TSTS believe in: live your best life.

Of course we couldn't have had such a successful event without our sponsors:

- **Presenting Sponsor:** Institute for Family Wealth Counseling
- **Platinum Sponsor:** Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Arno
- **Bronze Sponsors:** Mr. and Mrs. Richard Crowley, Novo Nordisk, Inc.
- **Benefactors:** REI, Flemington Fur Company, MediMedia Managed Care

I would also like to thank all the people who so generously donated their talents to the silent auction items. So many of our items were made by TSTS members...who knew we had such a creative group?! The items were all truly beautiful.

And how about this surprise that almost (almost...) left me speechless: An anonymous donor pledged \$10,000 to TSTS over the next four years! Wow!

I look forward to another fantastic event next year. Thank you for all of your support!



Ronni Arno Blaisdell and Sean Swarner



TSTS members Karolyn Tucker and Sherry Rosenblatt with Sean Swarner



TSTS member and yoga instructor Donnalyn Giegerich and Sean Swarner

FITNESS TIP OF THE MONTH: Visualization

Visualization as a fitness tip? Isn't that more of a mental thing? Yes, and no. Several studies have shown that athletes who visualize themselves reaching their goals are more likely to reach them. Research also shows that people who only visualize themselves exercising actually get physically stronger in the process. They get a similar muscle response simply thinking about the exercise, even though they weren't physically performing the exercise. Team Survivor Tri-State will be holding a visualization seminar on Sunday, January 6 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon (location TBD).

Sugar and Cancer

If you search the Internet for *sugar and cancer*, you will find a barrage of warnings that sugar causes cancer. You might also be warned that since your doctor is not a nutritionist, he or she does not know the dangers of eating sugar, and is not providing you with the tools to prevent or fight the disease. For a cancer patient, this is extremely frightening information! Here is the truth about sugar and cancer from a registered dietitian and cancer nutrition specialist.

Sugar and Hormones

It is true that sugar feeds cancer. But it is not as simple as some would have you believe. And it is certainly not as simple as curing cancer by cutting out all sugar. Sugar feeds every cell in the body, including cancer cells. The rest of the story is more complex, involving hormones such as insulin and insulin-like growth factor. The body releases these and other hormones that promote cell growth in response to a rise in blood sugar. These growth-promoting hormones are the real problem for people living with cancer.

Good Sugars and Bad Sugars

Why does sugar take the rap when hormones are really the problem? Sugar does cause the body to release growth-promoting hormones, but that is not the whole story. Sugar is very important to life. However, just as there are good fats and bad fats, there are good sugars and bad sugars.

Bad sugars, often referred to as simple sugars, are those in foods that do not offer any other nutritional benefit. Examples of simple sugars include foods like soda, sweets, sugar cereals, juice drinks, and refined grains.

Good sugars, or complex carbohydrates, are present in foods that provide nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, protein, and fiber. Examples of complex carbohydrates include foods like fruit, vegetables, beans, and whole grains.

Reduce Simple Sugar Intake

Simple sugars enter the bloodstream quickly and cause a rise in insulin and other growth-promoting hormones. Research shows that high levels of these hormones may increase the growth of cancer cells. The key to reducing these hormones is reducing your intake of simple sugars. Complex carbohydrates do not affect insulin the same as simple sugars, and thousands of research studies have shown that they actually reduce the risk of cancer.

Increase Consumption of Complex Carbohydrates

By substituting complex carbohydrates for simple sugars in your diet, you can reduce your risk of cancer and other chronic diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes.

To reduce the amount of simple sugars in your diet make the following substitutions:

<i>Instead of...</i>	<i>Try...</i>
Orange juice	A whole orange
Strawberry flavored yogurt	Plain yogurt with fresh strawberries
White bread	Whole grain bread
White rice	Brown rice
Sugar cereal	Whole grain cereal
Fruit snacks	Fruit leather
Prepared salad dressing	Homemade vinegar and oil dressing
Pretzels	Popcorn

MORAL OF THE STORY: Reduce simple sugars from your diet, such as soda, sweets, white bread, and other refined carbohydrates. Replace those with complex carbohydrates such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and beans. Your body will thank you!

Source: Erin Dummert, RD, CD

Tax deductible donations always welcome: Please click "Make a Donation" at the bottom of our home page at www.TeamSurvivorTriState.org

Member Spotlight: Karolyn Tucker

What and when was your cancer diagnosis and what treatment did you choose?

During June, July and August, 2002, I had observed spotting but charged it to menopause. As my bladder cancer vocabulary expanded I learned I had gross (visible to the naked eye) hematuria (blood in my urine).

“Gross” hematuria may be the medical term....but let me tell you it was my very non-medical reaction to those events! A visit to my ob-gyn and urinalysis diagnosed a severe bladder infection. A potent antibiotic was prescribed, and the blood went away. BE HAPPY! DON'T WORRY! Fortunately for me my sister-in-law is a nephrologist (kidney specialist) who insisted that I see a urologist and have a cystoscopy (a painless look inside the bladder). Besides the ob-gyn, three other physicians said my sister-in-law was over-reacting, and I only had an infection. If cancer was involved my symptoms would not have cleared up....no chance of cancer. September 29, 2002, I was diagnosed with two types of Bladder Cancer: Tis (3 tumors): carcinoma in situ, a flat, insidious, aggressive and deadly tumor which lies on the inside wall of the bladder that defies discovery. Mine had not yet invaded the subepithelial connective tissue of the bladder wall. Ta: non-invasive papillary carcinoma. Both were Stage 0. Three things saved my life: I was fortunate to have the best uro-oncologist in Philadelphia; I was part of a clinical trial using a special light to detect the presence of CIS; and I listened to my sister-in-law.

Bladder cancer is treated with immunotherapy, also referred to as biological response modifier therapy. This therapy uses the body's immune system, either directly or indirectly, to fight cancer. Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG), an inactivated form of bovine tuberculosis bacteria, is mixed in a saline solution and instilled directly into the bladder via a catheter. It is not yet totally understood why BCG works against cancer, it is thought to elicit an immune response. BCG does

not cause hair loss, but it produces severe flu and bladder infection symptoms, along with fatigue. The maintenance sequence consists of cystoscopy, BCG instillation, and urine marker tests every three months, then moves to every six months. At 5 years of NED I could go to once a year...but no way. I plan to continue with the six-month checkups.

When did you get involved with TSTS?

The December 25, 2006 issue of the Bucks County Courier Times ran a great article interviewing and picturing TSTS members at the “Y” doing a toning class and describing all the activities. I immediately went on the website and emailed Ronni.

What TSTS programs do you participate in?

I began with swimming at the “Y”, then added spinning and yoga at PEAC and yoga in Yardley. Somewhere along the way I learned about the Danskin triathlons. So began the training sessions for bike, swim and walk (I don't run). Everyone was so genuinely encouraging....because no one in TSTS would ever say, “Ooh, maybe you are not up to that challenge.” I trained with the great coaches Tom, Ed, and Jacquie. I completed the Danskin Tri in September and am planning for next year and hoping to add the Chicago Tri. I didn't choose cancer, I chose to be wherever the next challenge will be.

Have your exercise and nutrition habits changed since your diagnosis?

I had always been very active. Living in Colorado, the whole family did downhill skiing 2 and 3 times a week, along with ice skating. Biking first with the kids on the back of the bikes and then on their own was a big part of each weekend. I belonged to a gym and did step, aerobics, and spin classes. But the gym and exercise can be an isolating experience. That all changed with TSTS where everyone

comes together in friendship and sisterhood to encourage and challenge each other. I learned a great deal of information on nutrition attending the Cancer Project cooking classes at Whole Foods. I discovered how easy it is to incorporate vegetarian and organic foods into everyday meals. While I may never be a vegan, I have decreased animal products significantly.

Is there anything else you'd like to share with other TSTS members?

ANY BLOOD IN THE URINE MEANS AN APPOINTMENT WITH A UROLOGIST! Statically bladder cancer hits primarily men, heavy smokers, and over the age of 65. I didn't fit into any of the categories! The most common



TSTS Member Karolyn Tucker finishing the 2007 Danskin Tri

scenario is this: a woman goes to her primary care physician or ob/gyn complaining of blood in the urine that turns it red or rusty colored, pain during urination, frequency, or false feelings of the need to urinate. The assumption is a urinary tract infection; courses of antibiotics follow. Symptoms disappear, as does the only chance for early life-saving detection! This scenario is

repeated several times, maybe for a couple of years. When the BiCa is diagnosed, it is stage IV, bladder needs to be removed, and lymph nodes are involved.

I will get off my bladder cancer band wagon now. Cancer took away my belief in my invincibility, but I replaced it with my firm belief that nothing is impossible. It is important to plan today what I will accomplish tomorrow. What I really want to share is how much being a part of TSTS means to me. It takes a village to raise a child... it takes more than that to survive cancer. Friends, family and support from the women in TSTS! Smile, laugh and remember how much there is to live for.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH: *Sweet Cinnamon Squash*

This dish can be used as a side dish or a dessert. Cinnamon is helpful for reducing intestinal gas and aids in increasing blood circulation. You can find a great variety of organic squash this time of year.

- 1 medium winter squash (butternut or acorn works well)
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon powder
- 1 tablespoons brown rice syrup or agave nectar (natural sweeteners)

- Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
- Wash, dry and cut squash in half. Remove the seeds. Cut into evenly sized chunks, leaving the skin on
- Place the squash chunks into a mixing bowl and drizzle with the sweetener and cinnamon. Toss to coat all the pieces evenly and place squash in a baking dish.
- Cover the baking dish with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil and bake uncovered for another 10-15 minutes, until the squash is tender.

Exercise Helps Battle Effects of Cancer Treatments

Rather than rest, aerobic exercise and strength training have emerged as the keys to reducing the pain and fatigue that accompany the treatment of cancer.

- A six-week study of 32 patients rehabilitating from high-dose chemotherapy concluded that those who walked on a treadmill exhibited both higher hemoglobin concentration and maximum physical performance. And none of the 16 patients who walked regularly reported feeling fatigued during their daily activities as compared to 25 percent of those who remained sedentary.
- A second study of 20 cancer patients who had recently undergone chemotherapy examined their responses to a program of aerobic exercise and strength and flexibility training. After 10 weeks, average strength increased by 43 percent and the time patients were able to spend on the aerobic machines nearly doubled.

The benefits of exercise extended beyond physical measurements. When questioned about their quality of life, participants noted improvements in all psychological areas as well as a reduced perception of pain.

According to James Sallis, Ph.D., professor of psychology at San Diego State University, "Patients and health-care providers should be interested in adding physical activity to the treatment regimen as a means of improving quality of life."

Sources: Cancer, September 1997 ; Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research, January 1998

Team Survivor Tri-State 2008 Planning Meeting Sunday, December 9

TSTS will be holding its annual planning meeting on Sunday, December 9, at 11:00 a.m. We will be discussing programs and events for the upcoming year, including possible races, seminar subjects, new program locations, and any other ideas you would like to explore. The location of the meeting will be determined as soon as we find out how many members will be attending. Bagels, fruit, and coffee will be served.

Please RSVP by emailing ronni@teamsurvivortristate.org or by calling 609-203-7012.

*Toughness is in the soul and
spirit, not in muscles.*

- Alex Karras

Coming Next Month:

- Dairy: Bone Builder or Bad News?
- More great news and tips!