



NORTHWEST HOSPITAL  
& MEDICAL CENTER

July/August 2006

# MED-INFO

A Health Magazine Connecting Northwest Hospital With Our Community



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## Gamma Knife Procedure Gives Brain Cancer Patients New Hope Patient Embracing Life Four Years After Lung, Brain Cancer Treatments

**D**elores Clark is truly a survivor. At 59, she has overcome all odds to beat lung cancer - and a brain tumor.

Clark was diagnosed with lung cancer in 1998 when a chest x-ray revealed a softball-sized tumor in her lung. While a successful surgery removed the cancerous growth, a recurrence just one year later required intensive chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

In 2002, Clark began experiencing what she thought was sinus trouble. Antibiotics prescribed by her physician to treat a sinus infection didn't seem to help. Then, Clark woke up one morning unable to see. She was rushed to the hospital, where an MRI revealed an inoperable tumor in her cerebellum, where her lung cancer had metastasized. She was referred to Dr. Sandra Vermeulen, a radiation oncologist at Northwest Hospital & Medical Center, for treatment.

Clark was treated with whole brain radiation, followed by Gamma Knife® radiosurgery at the Northwest Hospital Gamma Knife® Center, which introduced the safe, bloodless alternative to brain surgery to the Pacific Northwest in 1993.

Today, four years after having Gamma Knife treatment, Clark's MRIs show that her brain tumor is completely gone.

**"Thanks to the Gamma Knife, I have been able to go back to living my life."**

*- Delores Clark,*

*Brain Cancer Survivor,  
Received Gamma Knife  
Treatment at Northwest  
Hospital & Medical Center*

She is a healthy, happy woman, who enjoys a full life. Clark says she is thrilled to once again be doing the things she loves, such as traveling, baking and leading her church choir at Second Baptist Church in Everett, Washington.

"I am very grateful for the Gamma Knife treatment and the care I received at Northwest Hospital," Clark says.

"It was non-invasive and the recovery time was minimal. Thanks to the Gamma Knife, I have been able to go back to living my life."

This non-invasive procedure has given new hope to many patients like Clark, who suffer from brain tumors and other conditions of the brain that were once thought inoperable.

In fact, a 2004 study published in *The Lancet Medical Journal* showed that patients who receive a Gamma Knife "boost" directly to the affected spot on their brains following whole brain radiation show improved control of the tumor and a survival advantage over those who have whole brain radiation alone.

Northwest Hospital has been utilizing the Gamma Knife as a "boost" treatment in patients such as Clark since shortly after bringing the technology to the Pacific Northwest in 1993. Since that time, Northwest has also been using

Cancer Survivor Delores Clark speaks with a fellow member of her congregation following a Sunday morning church service at Second Baptist Church in Edmonds. Clark received Gamma Knife treatment at the Northwest Hospital Gamma Knife Center® after her lung cancer metastasized into a brain tumor. Today, Clark is cancer-free and back doing the things she loves, like singing in her church choir and baking for her family.



Photo by Nichole DeWent

Gamma Knife to treat patients when brain radiation is not successful, or for those seeking alternatives to whole brain treatment to reduce radiation risks, Dr. Vermeulen says.

"We have found Gamma Knife to be a very effective primary and secondary treatment for brain tumors," Dr. Vermeulen says. "Gamma Knife allows us to put high doses of radiation directly into the tumor, while sparing the surrounding tissue."

According to Dr. Vermeulen, with whole radiation alone, there is a 50 percent chance of tumor recurrence. With a Gamma Knife boost, the rate of recurrence can be dropped to 10 percent.

"Patients are monitored closely following Gamma Knife treatment," she says, noting that patients such as Clark will receive an MRI twice a year for the rest of their lives. "If there is a recurrence, there is an excellent chance that we will catch it early, giving the patient many treatment options."

For Clark, knowing that Dr. Vermeulen is monitoring her brain closely helps give her peace of mind.

"It's a blessing to know that they are watching me closely and that I can have additional Gamma Knife treatment if it becomes necessary," Clark says.

In addition to treating various types of brain tumors, Gamma Knife is also used to treat tremors, Trigemina Neuralgia (a pain disorder affecting the face and jaw), and arteriovenous malformation or AVM (an entanglement of blood vessels that forms in the brain). Since the procedure is non-invasive, or "bloodless," the risks of post-operative complications, such as infection and hemorrhage are eliminated, says Dr. Vermeulen.

**For additional information on the Northwest Hospital Gamma Knife® Center, call (206)368-1626 or visit [www.nwhgammaknife.org](http://www.nwhgammaknife.org).**

## Cardiac Rehabilitation Helps Patients Recover

The Cardiac Rehabilitation Program at Northwest Hospital & Medical Center is a powerful tool in helping patients with heart disease recover as quickly and completely as possible.

Those most commonly enrolled in the program are people who have had a recent heart attack, stable angina, coronary bypass surgery, or coronary angioplasty/stent placement.

"This is a comprehensive program of prescribed exercise, cardiac risk modification, education and counseling," says Mary Pat Hoffman, RN, Clinical Coordinator of the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program.

"The focus is on reaching individual goals in a casual, fun atmosphere."

The exercise classes, held three times a week, are designed to improve cardiovascular endurance, muscle strength, flexibility and balance. A variety of fitness equipment, including treadmills, exercise bikes and free weights are used in the class.

The twelve week program also includes education classes designed to assist patients in making positive changes toward a healthier lifestyle.

**For additional information on the Cardiac Rehabilitation program, call (206) 368-6550.**

## Northwest Hospital's Report to the Community

In accordance with Northwest Hospital's Master Plan - a document that provides a long-range planning vision for the hospital - a report to the community is periodically published in the Med-Info Community Newsletter to update our neighbors about solid waste management, charity care and other activities that may be of interest to the community.

### Solid Waste Disposal

The hospital reported to the community about its waste management plan in the May/June 2005 and November/December 2005 issue of the Med-Info Community Newsletter.

In 2005, the hospital recycled approximately 1576 cubic yards of mixed paper, glass, cans, milk cartons, plant material and plastics and 544.5 cubic yards of shredded paper. We also recycled 378 assorted printer cartridges. Overall, the Hospital removed more than 2120.5 cubic yards of this material from the waste stream.

The hospital continued to use an outside company for the recycling/disposal of fluorescent lamps, batteries, hazardous waste and kitchen fat. In 2005, the hospital recycled/disposed of 3590 lamps, 1786 pounds of batteries, 11,1540 pounds of computer monitors and televisions, 7,200 pounds of kitchen fat, 7,546 pounds of chemicals and 559.9 tons of

garbage were land filled.

### Charity Care Update

In 2005, Northwest Hospital & Medical Center gave more than \$ 4.5 million in charity care and support to the community. Of the estimated \$ 4.5 million, \$ 2.2 million were contributed to charity care and \$ 2.3 million were given to support clinical research

and community services, such as health education, senior programs, charitable organizations, and school programs.

For years, the hospital has been a forerunner in its efforts to promote High Occupancy



Vehicle (HOV) options to our employees. In 2005, we continued to offer free Metro Flex Passes for full time employees, eight fully funded vanpools, 75 percent of fare for ferry riders, and free parking for registered employee carpools and vanpools.

In conjunction with King County and North Seattle Community College, we help fund Metro Bus Route 346. This provides service to our staff and community between the hospital campus, the Outpatient Medical Center, the Northgate Transit Center and other key points in the area. A bus shelter is maintained onsite to facilitate the needs of bus riders.

## AARP Driver Safety Program

Feeling less confident behind the wheel?

It may be time for a refresher course. AARP is offering the popular Driver Safety Program for drivers 50 years and older. Graduates may be eligible for discounts on their auto insurance.

Time: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Date: Saturday, July 22 and 29.  
Participants must attend both days of class to complete the course.

Location: Northwest Hospital & Medical Center Campus,  
1550 N. 115th Street, North Seattle

Cost: A \$10 fee payable to AARP at the first class.

Call the Community Education Department at (206) 368-1564 to register.



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To contact us about the newsletter, e-mail newsletters@nwhsea.org or call (206)368-1645.

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Visit [NWHOSPITAL.ORG](http://NWHOSPITAL.ORG) for information and directions.

## S.A.G.E. Program Helps Patients Improve Mobility and Balance Program Participation Lowers Risk of Falls, Encourages Activity

Mary Heckel knows that taking a fall can be a life-changing experience. For Heckel, it wasn't just the broken shoulder or the cut on her head that changed her life - it was the move from her Seattle home to a retirement community, as well.

"My house had a lot of stairs and my children were concerned for my safety," says Heckel, 80.

Shortly after relocating to the retirement community, Heckel's physician referred her to the Safety and Gait Enhancement (S.A.G.E.) Program at Northwest Hospital & Medical Center, a program designed to help seniors gain the confidence and skills they need to avoid falls and stay independent in the community.

Since completing the S.A.G.E. Program, Heckel says she has regained her confidence and is currently shopping for a condominium, so that she can be out on her own again.

"The S.A.G.E. Program helped me greatly. I feel so good about having taken it," she says. "It was a very practical program that taught me the things I need to be aware of around the house, and I learned balance enhancing exercises that I can do at home."

For Heckel, the greatest benefit of the S.A.G.E. Program was that she improved her overall confidence and feels comfortable enough to move out of the retirement community.

"I feel so much better about myself in general. It was a good experience," Heckel says.

The S.A.G.E. Program is designed for individuals who are active, but have developed unsteadiness that leads to fear of falling.

"The fear of falling often leads to reduced participation in normal activities," says Lisa Mosley-Johnson, Physical Therapist with the S.A.G.E. Program. "In turn, reduced activity then leads to reduced mobility and further unsteadiness."

According to Mosley-Johnson, this is one of the most critical factors threatening the independence of older adults. The S.A.G.E. Program breaks this cycle through a combination of education and treatment.

"Improved balance and mobility can effectively lower the risk for falls, injury and loss of independence," Mosley-Johnson says.

When patients are referred to the S.A.G.E. Program, a therapist evaluates their leg strength and range of motion; balance, and gait. The therapist also asks patients about any previous falls or balance problems they have experienced.

Based on the results of this evaluation, the physical therapist designs a customized physical therapy treatment and home exercise program to meet patients' individual needs.

### Considering the S.A.G.E. Program?

The program is designed for individuals who are active, but have developed unsteadiness that has led to fear of falling. These individuals may:

- Walk slower than usual.
- Shuffle as they walk.
- Walk with their feet wide apart in an effort to maintain better balance.
- Reach for walls and furniture for balance.
- Be unsteady when turning.
- Have recently experienced a fall.
- Have difficulty sitting and rising from a chair.

Each personalized program emphasizes strengthening, flexibility and balance exercises; posture; shoe selection; safe walking training; and techniques to safely rise from chairs. Additionally, patients utilize Northwest Hospital's unique Easy Street® Environment, a life-sized replica of a city street, to practice the new techniques they learn.

Patients in the S.A.G.E. Program typically meet with a therapist once or twice a week. Visits usually last from four to eight weeks and are frequently covered by insurance. A doctor's prescription is required.

Falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations for older adults in Washington State. Those with a history of falls, who live alone, have a medical condition and are on medications that affect the central nervous system or the heart may be at greater risk for falls.

Staying in good physical condition can reduce the risk of falling, as well as reduce the chance of serious injury if a fall should occur. Experts also recommend making the home environment safer by minimizing risks, such as decreasing clutter, avoiding step-stools and moving often-used items to lower shelves and cupboards.

Additionally, it is a good idea for patients to visit the eye doctor regularly, and have their healthcare provider review their medications to ensure that they are not impacting balance.

**For additional information on the S.A.G.E. Program, call the Northwest Hospital Center for Medical Rehabilitation at (206) 368-1769 or visit [www.nwhospital.org](http://www.nwhospital.org).**

# Community Classes at Northwest Hospital & Medical Center

August - October 2006

## CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

Childbirth, Parenting, and New Baby classes are offered in conjunction with the Gracewinds Perinatal Services. All classes are held on the Northwest Hospital campus. **Please call Gracewinds Perinatal Services at (206) 781-9871 or visit [www.gracewindsperinatal.com/nwclasses](http://www.gracewindsperinatal.com/nwclasses) for scheduling and registration information.**

### Childbirth Prep Classes

A four session course that is designed to give expectant parents the tools and information needed during childbirth. This course is also available in a condensed weekend format. Cost: \$105 per couple.

### Newborn Care Class

This course is an excellent primer for first time parents, grandparents and babysitters. Cost: \$35 per couple.

### Infant Safety/CPR

A class designed to give new parents, grandparents and babysitters the skills to help prevent accidents, to perform infant CPR and to relieve an obstructed airway. This class does not provide a CPR certification card. Cost: \$35 per couple.

### Breastfeeding Basics

This class is designed to educate parents on proper feeding techniques and positioning. Cost: \$35 per couple.

### Conscious Fathering

A class for expectant dads. Taught by an experienced father, this popular class addresses topics and issues associated with fathering. Cost: \$35.

### All Inclusive Family Education Package

Purchase all five classes and get one class for free. Cost \$200.



## PRENATAL SERVICES

### "Baby Your Back"

Back pain is a frequent complaint of pregnant women and has many causes. Baby Your Back is a two-hour class for expectant mothers taught by a licensed physical therapist. It is offered the second Thursday of each month at Northwest Physical Therapy Services, located in Northwest Hospital & Medical Center's Outpatient Medical Center.

Cost: \$10. Call (206) 368-6032 to register. Healthcare provider referral required.



## WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY EDUCATION

"Is Weight Loss Surgery Right For You?" Join us for a free informational seminar to learn more about: weight loss surgery options and risks; patient selection criteria; nutritional requirements; and insurance coverage. Question and answer segment to follow each talk.

"Laparoscopic and Open Gastric Bypass and Laparoscopic Band Surgery," presented by Joseph Chebli, MD from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on July 27; August 9 and 24; September 6 and 21; October 4 and 19.

Call (206) 368-1350 to reserve your space today. Cost: Free.



## EMERGENCY SERVICES EDUCATION

### CPR Training

Learn lifesaving skills from Medic II personnel. Offered on the third Tuesday of each month, 7 - 10 p.m. Registration required. Call (206) 368-1564 for more information or register online at [www.nwhospital.org](http://www.nwhospital.org).

Cost: Free.



## DIABETES EDUCATION

### Living Well with Diabetes

This program has been formally recognized for excellence by the American Diabetes Association. Participants will gain information and skills to manage diabetes in this four-session series offered monthly.

Note: Physician referral is required for class. Day and evening classes available. For more information contact your physician, or call (206) 368-1564 to receive a brochure.

# Classes, Lectures, Support Groups and Research Studies



NORTHWEST HOSPITAL  
& MEDICAL CENTER

July - October 2006 (continued)

## CANCER LIFELINE CLASSES AT NORTHWEST HOSPITAL

Below is a sampling of the Cancer Lifeline Classes offered on the Northwest Hospital campus.

Call **Cancer Lifeline** at (206) 297-2600, or visit [www.cancerlifeline.org](http://www.cancerlifeline.org) on the Web for more information and a full class listing.

### Beginning Soaring Crain Qigong

Gentle movements and visualization increase focus, energy and well-being. *For continuity, students are asked not to drop in mid-session.*

Wednesdays, September 13 - October 25, 2:30 - 3:45 p.m.

### NEW! Meditation for Stress Reduction

In this experimental class, participants will learn a variety of meditation and relaxation techniques to reduce stress. Meditation is appropriate for people of all physical abilities and does not require any experience.

Thursdays, October 12 - 26, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.



### Lung Cancer Support Group

Second and fourth Thursdays: August 24; September 14 and 28; October 12 and 26; 7 - 8:30 p.m.

### Breast Cancer Support Group

Wednesdays: August 16; September 6 and 20; October 4 and 18; 4:30 - 6 p.m.

### Nutrition and Cancer 101

Good nutrition is important before and after cancer treatment. Learn the key components of good nutrition, and how the Top Ten Super Foods help speed recovery and may prevent recurrence. Thursday, October 5, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

### Writing Group For Women

Whether you are writer of poetry, prose or undefined snippets, join us! Tuesdays: September 12 - October 10, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

### NEW! Gentle Yoga

Enjoy easy stretches, postures and guided meditation. Physician release required for those in treatment within the last year. Request healthcare provider release form when calling to register.

Tuesdays: September 12 - October 24, 6 - 7:30 p.m.

### NEW! Brain Cancer Support Group

Wednesdays: September 13; October 11; 4:30 - 6 p.m.

### Reclaiming Your Life

Wondering where to go after you finish cancer treatment? This 8-week group is for women who are at least 3 months out from completion of treatment. Intake interview and registration required. Please call Kathy Albin (425) 299-7753 for more information.

Wednesdays: September 13 - 27; October 11 - 25, November 8 and 15; 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

### ColoRectal Cancer Support Group

Wednesdays: September 6; October 4; 7 - 8:30 p.m.

## Northgate <sup>2nd Annual</sup> August Festival

### featuring the Northwest Hospital & Medical Center Health Fair

Time: 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Date: August 12 and 13, 2006

Place: Northwest Outpatient Medical Center,  
10330 Meridian Ave. North in North Seattle

Details: The Health Fair includes: Free health screenings; Healthcare information and giveaways; Demonstrations and educational booths from several Northwest Hospital & Medical Center providers.

Cost: Free

*Additional activities at the Northgate Festival include two stages with live music, food, and a children's area featuring inflatable rides and games.*

Please visit: [www.northgatefestival.com](http://www.northgatefestival.com) for more information.

## Northwest Hospital Unveils Jack & Irene Curran Fountain Plaza New Plaza Features Original George Tsutakawa Sculptural Fountain

In a dedication ceremony held June 27, Northwest Hospital & Medical Center unveiled the Jack & Irene Curran Fountain Plaza, the latest addition to the hospital's innovative healing environment.

The Plaza features an original, three-piece sculptural fountain by the late George Tsutakawa, an internationally-renowned sculptor and painter, who is perhaps best known for some sixty public fountains he created and installed in North America and Japan since 1960.

Those in attendance at the dedication ceremony included Gerard Tsutakawa, the sculptor's son who is an established artist in his own right, and who was instrumental in bringing his father's fountain to the Northwest Hospital & Medical Center campus. Other members of the Tsutakawa family were also present at the event, as well as Irene Curran, whose generous donation to Northwest Hospital funded the development of the Jack & Irene Curran Fountain Plaza.

Irene Curran made a donation to Northwest Hospital Foundation to establish the Fountain Plaza as a tribute to the outstanding patient care both she and her husband Jack received at Northwest. Irene, who served as a Northwest Hospital Foundation board member for many years, was interested in putting her donation toward further enhancing Northwest's patient-focused environment.

In conjunction with the opening of the Jack & Irene Curran Fountain Plaza, Northwest Hospital will launch a new giving program inviting donors to purchase a commemorative brick, which will be engraved and permanently displayed in the Curran Fountain Plaza.

"The plaza is a crossroad of philanthropy, symbolizing the many ways people give because of their love for mankind. Art, design and landscape combine with healing hands and heartfelt donations," says Mark McCampbell, Executive Director of Northwest Hospital Foundation.

The Tsutakawa sculptural fountain in the Curran Fountain Plaza was originally located at the entrance to the Northgate Shopping Center in the 1960s. When the entrance was remodeled in 1975, the fountain was put in storage. When it was taken out for donation to Northwest Hospital 20 years later, one part of the three-piece fountain was missing. It was later recovered by Gerard Tsutakawa, after he recalled seeing the missing component on display in the Seattle area. The piece was returned to Tsutakawa and donated to Northwest Hospital for display in the plaza with the other two pieces of the sculpture.

There are many ways to support Northwest Hospital's mission of raising the long-term health status of the community. Visit the Foundation Website at [www.nwhfoundation.org](http://www.nwhfoundation.org) or call (206) 368-1647 for more information.



(Top) Members of the Curran family gather at the unveiling of the stone at the entrance of the Jack & Irene Curran Fountain Plaza at the June 27, 2006 dedication ceremony. (Bottom) Irene Curran and Northwest Hospital Foundation Executive Director Mark McCampbell watch as the fountain is turned on for the first time. Irene made a donation to Northwest Hospital Foundation to establish the Fountain Plaza as a tribute to the outstanding patient care both she and her husband Jack received at Northwest.

"It is a great honor and privilege to be able to make George Tsutakawa's world-class art a part of the Northwest Hospital campus, and we feel that the plaza will leave a wonderful, lasting legacy for the Curran Family," McCampbell says.

Other works by Tsutakawa located in Seattle include Seattle University's "Centennial Fountain"; "Sandworm," a fountain located in the entry plaza to the King County Administration Building in Downtown Seattle; and "Fountain of Wisdom," located at Fifth Avenue and Spring Street Plaza in front of the Downtown Library.

The commemorative stone donation program launched in conjunction with the opening of the Curran Fountain Plaza will allow donors to leave a lasting legacy for their friends, families and loved ones. Donors can celebrate a life event or honor a special person with a commemorative brick placed within the Plaza. The brick can be inscribed with a personal message and become an enduring piece of North Seattle's history.

**For more information on how to purchase a Commemorative Brick in the Curran Fountain Plaza, or other ways to donate to Northwest Hospital Foundation, call (206) 368-1647 or visit [www.nwhfoundation.org](http://www.nwhfoundation.org).**

## Northwest Hospital Works to Raise Cancer Awareness Sponsors, Participates in Local Race for the Cure and Relay For Life Events

This summer, Northwest Hospital & Medical Center showed its support in the fight against cancer by being a part of the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life and the Susan G. Komen Foundation's Race for the Cure.

Northwest Hospital was a sponsor of both events, and a number of employees showed their support by joining teams and participating. In fact, Northwest Hospital employees and their families who participated in the Shoreline/North Seattle Relay for Life raised almost \$10,000 for the cause.

"We believe that supporting community events such as the Race for the Cure and the Relay for Life is an important part of our role as healthcare providers in the North Seattle community," says Chris Roth, Vice President of Operations at Northwest Hospital & Medical Center. "In addition to raising money to help prevent cancer and save lives, we hope to also raise awareness of early detection, treatment and patient support."



(Top) Participants in the 2006 Susan G. Komen Foundation Race For the Cure visit the Seattle Breast Center at Northwest Hospital booth set up at Qwest Field.



(Bottom) Members of the Mighty Mouse Brigade pose for a team picture at the America Cancer Society's Shoreline/North Seattle Relay For Life at Woolsey Stadium at King's High School in Shoreline. The Mighty Mouse Brigade raised more than \$5,500 for the event.



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