

BRAINSCAN

NEWS & INFORMATION FOR

PATIENTS AND FAMILIES LIVING WITH BRAIN TUMORS

VOLUME 5 · NUMBER 2 · WINTER 2004

THE GERRY &
NANCY PENCER
**BRAIN
TRUST**



*"Making a Difference
in the Quality of Life
of People Living
with Brain Tumors"*

A Message from the Director



Holly Pencer Bellman

Happy New Year everyone! It is my sincere hope that the coming year brings good fortune, health and happiness to all our readers. This issue of *BrainScan* is a special one for several Pencer Centre staff, including myself. We've had our very own "baby boom" right here at the Centre. As a result, we're thrilled to introduce you to three new additions... Tyler Ross Dawson, Joshua Dylan Kanter, and my own daughter, Charlie Shaye Bellman! Read on for more details.

This past October, which was Brain Tumor Awareness Month, was very busy at The Pencer Centre. First of all, I would like to extend a huge congratulations to our incredible Patient & Family Advisory Committee! Harnessing their considerable energy and enthusiasm, they organized the first ever "Head for a Cure" 5K walk in conjunction with the Toronto Marathon. Over one hundred participants raised over \$47,000!!! What a fantastic effort – especially for a first time event! My heartfelt thanks goes out to everyone who walked or ran, raised pledges and volunteered to help out with this event. Special mention has to go to the "Head for a Cure" organizing committee of Henriette Breunis, Kathrine Bryce, Susanne Capone and Steven Ferrari. It is always a challenge to organize an event for the first time and they did a magnificent job!

On October 31st, the 5th annual Open House at The Pencer Centre was held. The day started off with our own special Randy Yee accepting the inaugural "Guy Morrison Volunteer

of the Year Award". Guy's wife Joanne did a wonderful job of presenting the award to Randy. Happily, many of Randy's family – including his wife Nancy, their children and extended family – were present to see him receive his award. It was an emotionally-charged moment for everyone present.

The award ceremony was followed by a wonderfully moving presentation by CFL Hall of Fame recipient Terry Evanshen. Terry spoke very eloquently about his own challenges in recovering from a near fatal car crash, and how he manages to "Seize Each Day" with the continued support of his family, and his own indomitable spirit. It was a wonderful presentation, and we have already had a number of people suggest we have Terry back for a "repeat performance".

Following our Guest Speaker, the staff of The Pencer Centre were pleased to welcome over 200 patients, families, and staff to our Open House. As usual, the Centre was filled with interactive displays developed by the dedicated healthcare professionals who care for patients and families living with a brain tumor. It was a great opportunity for people to learn more about their illness, as well as the treatments, programs and services available at The Pencer Centre. Many thanks go out to Madelon Cooper and friends for ensuring that

continued on page 7

*Providing information
about our progress at
The Brain Trust and
activities at The Gerry &
Nancy Pencer Brain
Tumor Centre, BrainScan
is a great resource for
brain tumor patients and
their families, donors,
the medical community,
like-organizations, and
volunteers across Canada
and the United States.*

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A Calm and Positive
Environment for Patients
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OUR MISSION:

To be a
“Centre of Excellence”
which provides
multidisciplinary care,
treatment, and support
for brain tumor patients
and their families.

To promote clinical and
translational brain
tumor research.

PFAC Heads for a Cure

Clutching pledges carefully collected over the preceding few months, more than 100 excited Pencer Centre patients, their families, and friends, gathered at Queen’s Park early on a cool Sunday morning in October to “Head for a Cure.”

This five-kilometre walk was the culmination of months of work that focused on raising money for a fund to be managed by The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Tumor Centre’s Patient and Family Advisory Committee (PFAC). Enthusiastic participants are thrilled to announce that they have raised the incredible sum of \$47,000! And pledges are still coming in.

Our walkers were first in line, acting as heralds for the runners of the Toronto Marathon. They cheerfully strolled down University Avenue, where traffic was banned for the duration of the marathon, rounded the loop at Front Street, then headed north to complete the walk. PFAC members Steve Ferrari and Susan Capone carried a banner emblazoned with the slogan “Head for a Cure”, and were cheered on by many spectators at the Queen’s Park finish line.

All funds raised by Head for a Cure will go into an endowed fund set up by The Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation. The annual accrued interest will be used to fund special projects at The Pencer Centre. If you have any ideas or suggestions for special projects, PFAC would like to hear from you. Please email your thoughts to Maureen.Daniels@uhn.on.ca.

We hope this inaugural event, which was held to coincide with Brain Tumor Awareness Month, will become an annual fundraiser for PFAC and The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Tumor Centre. 🌞

by Henriette Breunis and Lois Abraham





Dr. Warren Mason
Medical Director

As many of our readers may know, the Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation is currently involved in a large and ambitious fundraising campaign to generate funds to support a wide array of activities at the hospital. Included amongst the goals are a number of priorities for brain tumor research and patient care. We hope that this campaign will provide funding to enhance and guarantee the ongoing research activities at the Centre. This past autumn, members of The Pencer Centre's Patient & Family Advisory Committee (PFAC) participated in Head For A Cure as part of the Toronto Marathon, and raised almost fifty thousand dollars for The Pencer Centre. At this writing, members of the Advisory Committee are in the process of deciding how best to use this money. But the important message here is that with effort and enthusiasm, it is possible for concerned individuals and groups to make a difference, and have an impact. People in the community understand the great needs of patients living

with brain cancer, and want to help fight this disease. The remarkable performance of The Pencer Centre's PFAC provides all of us with the inspiration to go out and continue to raise funds for brain tumor research and patient care.

As this year draws to a close, I would like to update you on some recent personnel changes at the Centre. Cheryl Kantor, our social worker, is currently on maternity leave, having given birth to her first child and son, Joshua, just a few weeks ago. Substituting for Cheryl is Nadia Feerasta, who has settled in quickly to her position here for the next year until Cheryl is expected back. Similarly, Neetu Malik recently returned from her one-year maternity leave, and has resumed her role as our clinical trials nurse. Dolores Dholah, whom many of you know well from her work here as a clinic nurse, has served over the past year as an excellent trials nurse. She now will be leaving Princess Margaret Hospital but will continue to work as a research nurse at Bayview Cancer Centre in north Toronto. We would like to thank her for all the fine work she has done for us over the past several years, and wish her luck and success in her new position. 🌟

It's a Brand New Year and we have some brand new babies at the Pencer Centre!

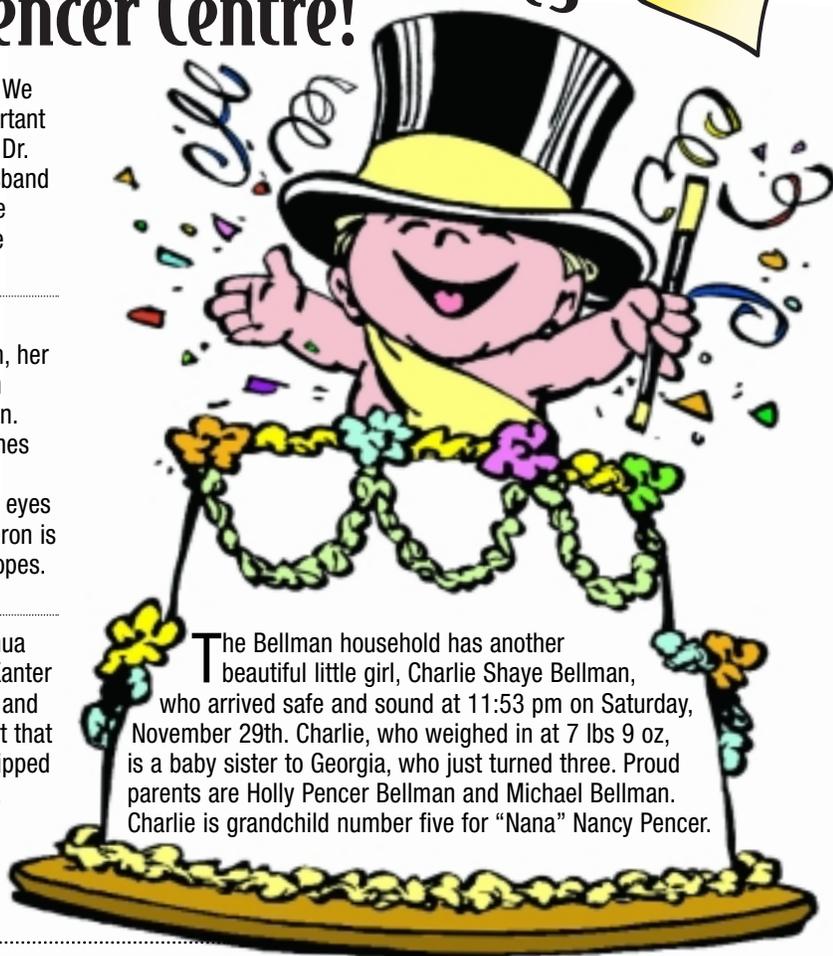
Wow! It has been a productive autumn at The Pencer Centre! We are happy to announce and pleased to welcome three important new members of our Pencer Centre "family": Congratulations to Dr. Laura Dawson and her husband Matt, Cheryl Kanter and her husband Brian, and Holly Pencer Bellman and her husband Michael on the happy, healthy arrival of their new babies. Read on to learn more about this good news!



All of this activity began back in September, when Dr. Laura Dawson, her husband Matt, and their 3 year old son Cameron, welcomed Tyler Ross Dawson. Weighing in at 7 lbs 11 oz, and 21 inches long, Tyler was born at 5:30 pm on September 13th. He has beautiful blue eyes and light brown hair. Big brother Cameron is looking forward to showing Tyler the ropes.



October 17th saw the arrival of Joshua Dylan Kanter. Proud mom, Cheryl Kanter – The Pencer Centre's social worker – and ecstatic dad Brian, are thrilled to report that everyone is doing beautifully. Joshua tipped the scales at a whopping 5 lbs. 12 oz., and his mom reports that he's getting bigger everyday!



The Bellman household has another beautiful little girl, Charlie Shaye Bellman, who arrived safe and sound at 11:53 pm on Saturday, November 29th. Charlie, who weighed in at 7 lbs 9 oz, is a baby sister to Georgia, who just turned three. Proud parents are Holly Pencer Bellman and Michael Bellman. Charlie is grandchild number five for "Nana" Nancy Pencer.

Staff Profile



Isabelle Vallières
Radiation Oncology Fellow

As you read through the pages of this issue of *BrainScan*, we are sure your spirits will be lifted by the abundance of good news we have to share. New babies, successful fund raising initiatives, and new educational materials! The good news even carries over into our Staff Profile column! We are pleased to welcome Dr. Isabelle Vallières to The Pencer Centre as our new Radiation Oncology Fellow. Regular readers of *BrainScan* will be now be familiar with the term “Fellow”. For our new readers, a Fellow is a physician who has already completed extensive medical training, is qualified to work as a physician, and is committed to completing additional training in a very specialized area of practice, such as radiation oncology or neuro-oncology.

Dr. Vallières joined our staff in July this year. She obtained her medical degree from Laval University in Quebec, and has recently completed her specialty certification in radiation oncology. Dr. Vallières is the recipient of an impressive list of awards including the Excellence Scholarship in Medicine from The Edward-Ash Foundation, Laval University (Québec), and a number of additional honours for various scientific presentations.

During her time at Princess Margaret Hospital, Dr. Vallières will work closely with Dr. Laperrière, treating patients who have CNS tumors with radiation therapy. Now that she has been here several months, she says she is “enjoying her experience tremendously”. Because French is her first language, she initially found it a bit of an adjustment to speak English most of the time. However, she has quickly become comfortable in her English-speaking environment, and finds it quite easy to converse with her patients and colleagues. Dr. Vallières says that among the many benefits of working at Princess Margaret is the opportunity to work with Dr. Laperrière and the rest of the staff at The Pencer Centre. “It is a wonderful opportunity for me to work here. It is allowing me to get to know our patients personally, and the challenges they face daily in living with a brain tumor.”

In addition to her clinical responsibilities, Dr. Vallières will be

As many of our readers know, the diagnosis of a brain tumor brings with it many changes. Often, meeting the new needs and requirements associated with a brain tumor falls to family or loved ones, and in many cases there will be one primary caregiver who carries the major burden of these increased responsibilities. While it is important to attend to the needs of the patient, it is equally important to consider the needs of the caregiver. If the caregiver burns out, the patient will be at risk for increased difficulties. To help with this issue, we have compiled a list of ten important tips for caregivers...tips suggested by caregivers themselves.



- 1. Take care of yourself:** Find time to get out of the house and do something just for you. Take a yoga class, go to a movie with a friend or simply have a walk around the block every day.
- 2. Ask for help before you feel you are at the end of your tether:** Be proactive in your approach. Waiting until you are totally exhausted, emotionally, physically and psychologically may mean that you need more assistance than if you had asked for help sooner.
- 3. Accept help:** If someone offers their help to you, find something for them to do. Don't be a martyr. It's great to get some casseroles to put in the freezer, get the lawn cut or the snow cleared.
- 4. Feelings of resentment about how your life has changed are normal:** Talking about these feelings to a professional, such as a social worker, or in a support group exclusively for caregivers can be helpful. As a caregiver, there are times when you cannot or may not want to share all your thoughts with family or friends.
- 5. Disabled Parking Permits** are a valuable item that make transporting disabled persons in your vehicle easier. Make sure you treat them like the privilege they are. They should only be displayed when the person for whom the permit has been issued is with you in the vehicle. Simply displaying the permit at other times (even if you are not using a disabled parking spot) can result in the confiscation of the permit, a hefty fine and even an offense on your driving record!
- 6. Perform small, simple acts of kindness towards yourself every day:** Listen to music you enjoy while driving in the car, have a chocolate milkshake, buy a plant that has beautiful flowers, or have a bubble bath. Whatever small things you enjoy, find a way to make them part of your everyday routine.
- 7. Look after your own health:** Just because you are caring for someone else does not mean your own health needs should go unattended. Make sure you have an annual physical exam, see the dentist regularly, eat properly and get proper rest and exercise.
- 8. Try a new way of expressing your feelings:** Journalling or drawing/painting for example, can provide positive outlets for your emotions. If you want further information about these types of complementary therapies, the staff at The Pencer Centre would be happy to help you.
- 9. Educate yourself about “your patient’s” illness:** Knowledge is power. Having a basic understanding of the condition you are living with will help you and your patient to clarify questions you may have, and to make informed decisions about treatment.
- 10. Use the Patient Information Binder that is provided to every new patient and family at The Pencer Centre:** This organizational tool helps make sense of all the information that is coming your way, and at the same time, reduces some of the associated anxiety.

involved in research activities as well. She explains that her principal focus will be on trying to discover the best planning method in the treatment of meningiomas. In order to do this, she will be comparing three different techniques used to plan radiation therapy. Ultimately, she hopes to determine which

technique is most preferable.

The Pencer Centre is fortunate to have a physician of Dr. Vallières caliber join our treatment team. We are certain that her warm smile and quiet confidence will make patients and families feel comfortable during their clinic appointments. Welcome! 🌸



MY STORY

by Andrée McFaul

An avid reader of BrainScan, Andrée McFaul is a member of the Brain Tumor Foundation of Canada support group. She gets her copy of BrainScan when she attends her support group meetings, and submitted this story for publication.

I began to have problems with my vision in the fall of 1998. When the first incident happened, I felt slightly nauseated and, it seemed, I was seeing everything through a glass filled with water. The situation did not last long, and I was not concerned. However, after that, I began to see flashing lights in the upper corner of my left eye. These symptoms would subside after a few minutes, and again, I did not worry because I had convinced myself I had migraines without pain.

One day at work, though, I lost the sight in my left eye, and could hardly walk because of balance problems. That scared me enough to convince me to see my family doctor, who promptly sent me to see a neurologist. Immediately, he ordered a CAT scan. A few days later, my family doctor told me the news: a mass, or tumor, was growing in my head. It was probably non-cancerous, and was called a meningioma. I was then referred to a neurosurgeon, Dr. Duncan from the Trillium Health Centre. He ordered an MRI which confirmed the diagnosis: a non-cancerous tumor. I was also told that this type of tumor was slow forming, and had probably been forming for 20 years. Dr. Duncan prescribed medications to reduce the brain swelling, and the possibility of seizures. Surgery was an option, but I was told at that time that the tumor was in a very dangerous area of the brain. So, an alternate procedure was suggested

to help reduce the flow of blood to the tumor. The procedure is called an embolization. A radiologist who specializes in neurosurgery would insert a probe into a vein in my leg that would travel all the way to the brain, blocking the blood vessels feeding the tumor. Unfortunately, I suffered a minor stroke during the procedure. The left side of my body was very weak, my speech was slurred and I was seeing double. I was very lucky, as some of the symptoms cleared over the next few days, although there was still weakness on my left side, and I would have problems with my vision for the next six months. I could no longer work.



Andrée McFaul and her husband Bill

Dr. Duncan then decided that surgery was probably too dangerous, and he adopted a wait-and-see approach. I had MRI's every six months or so, and I was taken off medications.

After about five years, the tumor, which had grown to be the size of a golf ball, started giving me major problems with my vision and balance. Dr. Duncan decided then that it was time for surgery. I must admit that I was very frightened, because I knew about the possible dangers with this surgery. It was scheduled for July 28th, 2003. When I awoke from the surgery, I suffered from double vision, and was having trouble with my balance. However, I was able to go home just four days after surgery. Even though I was still using a walker to get around, and an eye patch to cope with the double vision one month after surgery, on the positive side, I found I could read, use the computer and even go to the movies. Today, five months after the surgery, I am happy to report that I am doing very well. While it could take up to a year for the double vision to disappear, and I still use a cane to get around, I have been able to resume all my normal day-to-day activities around the home.

I was very lucky to have such an excellent surgeon, and my husband has been a tower of strength throughout this ordeal. Also, my friends have been very supportive. Bill and I have been members of a Brain Tumor Support Group for many years. The information and wonderful support from all the members was a big help to me, and my husband. 🌟

Director's Message *from page 1*

the food was superb, as usual, and for seeing that all our visitors received gift bags chock-full of useful items such as pens, notepads, mugs and a variety of edible treats.

As we head out of winter and towards spring, I want to remind you to be sure and mark Thursday, May 27, 2004 on your calendars because it's that time of year again: The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Trust's annual spring gala! This year, The Brain Trust presents 'South Beach,' at Toronto's Liberty Grand Entertainment Complex, Exhibition Place. A sexy and sophisticated night reminiscent of the famous destination in Miami Beach, 'South Beach' will feature an Art Deco-style bar & lounge, beautiful people, Latin music and dancing, tapas treats, a spectacular silent auction and many surprises along the way. Once again, our dress code will be 'let your

hair down' and informal. As always, all proceeds from 'South Beach' will go toward research, and support of brain tumor patients and their families at The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Tumor Centre.

Last year's gala event, Bell Bottom Bash, raised net proceeds of \$500,000. This year, once again, we hope to meet or exceed the half million dollar mark. If you would like to get on our invitation list, or to become one of our distinguished corporate sponsors, please contact our event hotline at 416-923-2999.

Thanks to all our donors and supporters, and to everyone who contributed to this issue. As always, if you have any ideas or suggestions about the newsletter, or if you would like to get on our mailing, or have a story to share, please feel free to contact Maureen Daniels at 416-946-2240 or by email at Maureen.Daniels@uhn.on.ca 🌟



Radiation Therapy and You

For the past several years, the radiation therapists at Princess Margaret Hospital have offered a bi-weekly drop-in information session for patients and families who will be undergoing radiation to the brain. During these sessions, a radiation therapist provided an overview of how radiation therapy works, and what the process is for delivering the treatment. Following the formal portion of the session, patients and families were free to ask questions.

Now, through the wonder of technology and with the amazing skill and support of Bob Stefanovic Productions, we are pleased to be able to provide this information to you on video. While you are not likely to see this video listed among the “Top Ten Rentals” at your local video store, we believe it is a “must see” for those people about to undergo radiation therapy to the brain. This 20-minute video walks patients and families who are about to undergo this treatment through the entire process: It shows patients what they can expect, and clarifies who they can look to for assistance and advice throughout their treatment. In addition, the video informs patients about their condition, and enables them to ask questions and get answers from their treatment team, as they move forward with treatment.

Angela Cashell, Clinical Educator in Radiation Therapy believes that this video will provide the patient with a “valuable and practical understanding of the process they may undergo in the preparation and delivery of their treatment.”

The video will be available from a variety of sources at Princess Margaret Hospital. Your R.N. Case Manager or Radiation Therapist would be happy to provide you with a copy to view at the hospital, or if you prefer, you may borrow a copy from the Library in The Pencer Centre or the Main Patient and Family Library at the hospital, to view in the comfort of your own home.

While you can view this video on your own, we want to make sure that you never feel you’re on your own. At no time will you simply be handed the video and expected to get everything you need from it alone. Instead, it should be considered as an information tool that is designed to work with – not replace – the supports already in place at The Pencer Centre and Princess Margaret Hospital. As a result, our staff are always available to speak with you, one-on-one, about any questions you might have after viewing the video, and in general, about any questions you have about your diagnosis or treatment plan. Feel free to speak to any member of your Treatment Team. They will be pleased to answer your questions. 🌞

Moroccan Vegetable Stew

Our own dietitian Connie Ziembicki, highly recommends this hearty veggie stew from the Crazy Plates Cookbook. It's great comfort food, not to mention nutritious and delicious!

2 tbsp each light peanut butter and chopped, fresh cilantro

Heat olive oil in large, non-stick saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, green pepper, and garlic. Cook and stir until vegetables begin to soften, about 3 minutes.

Add all remaining ingredients, except raisins, peanut butter, and cilantro. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes.

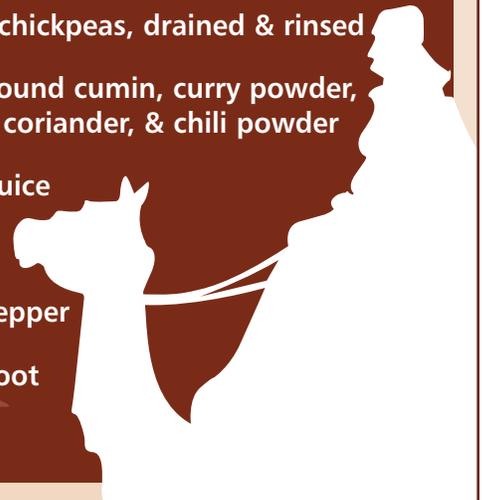
Stir in raisins, peanut butter, and cilantro. Mix well. Simmer for 5 more minutes. Serve hot.

Makes 6 servings.

Each serving provides: 251 calories, 5.1 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 8.9 g protein, 44.9 g carbohydrate, 4.3 g. fiber, 0 mg cholesterol, 784.5 mg sodium

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 cup each diced celery & chopped green bell pepper
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 3 cups vegetable broth
- 3 cups peeled, sweet potatoes
- 1 can (19 oz) tomatoes, drained & cut up
- 1 can (19 oz) chickpeas, drained & rinsed
- 1 tsp each ground cumin, curry powder, ground coriander, & chili powder
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 2 tsp gingerroot
- 1/4 cup raisins





by Dolores Dholab & Neetu Malik

You may have heard your oncologist refer to your treatment as an adjuvant treatment or your tumor as a grade IV. What is he talking about, you may have thought to yourself! Well, here is your chance to familiarize yourself with some of the commonly used Brain Tumor and Treatment related terminology.

Adjunctive Treatment

Any treatment given with the primary treatment to improve response rate. For example: Chemotherapy is an adjunctive treatment if given while you are on radiation. (Radiation being the primary treatment)

Adjuvant treatment

Any treatment given after the primary therapy to improve response rate. For example, chemotherapy that is given after radiation treatments have been completed. (Radiation being the primary treatment)

Alkylating agent

A drug that interferes with a cell's DNA and discourages cell growth (e.g. Temozolomide)

Enhancement

Refers to a pattern seen on Contrasted Imaging studies (CT, MRI) that appears due to uptake of contrast dye - which is taken up by actively dividing cancer cells.

Neo-adjuvant treatment

A treatment (Chemotherapy, radiation) you will receive before your primary treatment.

Nitrosourea

A group of chemotherapies that act similarly to the alkylating agents. e.g. CCNU, BCNU.

Palliative Treatment

These therapies are not meant to actively fight cancer, rather aim to relieve symptoms and improve quality of life. These may include chemotherapy, steroids, surgery or radiotherapy.

Salvage treatment

Treatment given when all standard treatments have been exhausted.

Spinal Tap

A procedure involving the insertion of a needle into the lower spinal column to remove spinal fluid for testing (diagnosis) or to deliver chemotherapy drugs to the central nervous system (also called Lumbar Puncture).

Stereotactic Radiation

A treatment in which a rigid head frame is attached to the skull and a single high dose of radiation is delivered with precision to the tumor. It spares normal brain tissue from injury and is suitable for tumors of smaller dimensions.

Tumor Grading for Brain Tumors

Grading refers to the classification of the tumor according to its degree of aggressiveness. Helpful in predicting disease behaviour and making treatment decisions. Brain tumors are graded on a scale of I to IV, with Grade I referring to benign tumors (e.g. Acoustic Neuroma, Meningioma etc.) and Grade II – Low-grade tumors (low grade Oligodendroglioma), Grade III being Intermediate-grade tumors such as Anaplastic Oligodendroglioma, Grade IV being the most malignant and aggressive of the brain tumors such as Anaplastic Astrocytoma, Glioblastoma Multiforme.

Although these are the most commonly used medical terms, there are scores of others that you may want clarified. Please refer to the following website for a glossary of terms: <http://www.cancer.gov>

For further help you may also contact Neetu Malik at the Centre at 416-946-4624.



Our Occupational Therapist Stephanie Phan and her Husband Louis To were spotted at the Taj Mahal in Agra, India. Stephanie and Louis are the most well-travelled members of the Pencer Team.

**Quarterly
quote**

We cannot do great things... only small things with great love.

Mother Teresa



The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Trust is a not-for-profit organization that was developed by the late Gerry Pencer to make a

difference in the quality of life of people who live with brain tumors. This private family foundation is the catalyst in the establishment of **The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Tumor Centre** at Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto. **The Centre** is dedicated to providing multi-disciplinary care, treatment, and support for brain tumor patients and their families. Additionally, the Brain Trust, in collaboration with **The Brain Tumor Centre** will seek to facilitate and fund the best local, national, and international brain tumor research in the hopes of finding a cure for brain cancer.

The Board of Advisors of The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Trust include:

- **Lawrence S. Bloomberg**, Director & Advisor, National Bank of Canada
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For more information about **The Brain Trust** contact **Linda McKie** at **416-923-2999**.

WHAT'S ON?

Please note that many of the programs offered at the Pencer Centre are on a drop-in basis, allowing people the flexibility to attend when they are able to. On rare occasions, programs may be cancelled on short notice. Therefore, it is always wise to call ahead, to confirm that the program is running on the day you are planning to attend. Please feel free to call Maureen Daniels at 416-946-2240.

Support Groups for Brain Tumor Patients and Families: Our support groups run the second Tuesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 pm. These groups are facilitated by Neetu Malik, Stephanie Phan, Maureen Daniels and Nadia Feerasta, at The Pencer Centre. Patients meet as one group while caregivers meet separately in another room. This is a drop-in program and no prior registration is required. Simply come to the Centre on the evening the group meets.

Relaxation Therapy: Winter is here... Time to relax! Why not join our Relaxation Therapy program, which takes place each Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 pm – 1:45 pm. Led by our occupational therapist Stephanie Phan, it offers patients and family members an opportunity to learn a number of useful techniques for relaxation. This is a drop-in program and no prior registration is required, simply come to the Centre at the above noted time.

Art Therapy: Our Art Therapy Program is a pleasant way to spend those gray winter days. Our first six-week session of the new year will begin on Thursday, January 15th. Led by well-known art therapist Gilda Grossman, this program uses art as a means to explore and share feelings. No prior art experience is necessary. This program is free and space is limited, so for a complete list of dates for 2004 or to register, please call Maureen at 416-946-2240.

Patient Information Binder: Our Patient Information Binder is as popular as ever. Included in the latest edition is a copy of "Brainspirations," a treasury of inspiring stories, poems, and recipes published by our own Patient & Family Advisory Committee (PFAC). If you are a patient of The Pencer Centre and have not received a copy of our Patient Information Binder, or require additional

sheets for your existing copy, please contact Maureen Daniels at 416- 946-2240. This binder is an excellent organizational tool for keeping track of appointments and all the other information you need during your ongoing treatment. It also contains a wealth of information on brain tumors, treatment, available support services, and much, much more.

Radiation Therapy Information Video: Our recently completed video on radiation therapy to the brain is now available for patients and families to view. This 20- minute video tells patients exactly what they can expect, and what they need to know about the course of their treatment. It is available to view in The Pencer Centre, or a copy can be borrowed to view in the comfort of your own home. To obtain a copy, simply come to the Library in The Pencer Centre or contact Maureen Daniels at 416-946-2240.

CD-ROM: Our highly acclaimed CD-ROM, which contains over 20 hours of information on brain tumors, available treatments, supportive care services and even real life patient experiences, is now accessible via the computer in the Resource Library of The Pencer Centre. In addition, copies are also available to borrow through the main Patient & Family Library at Princess Margaret Hospital. The staff at the Centre or one of our resource volunteers would be happy to help you learn how to use this wonderful tool. If you would like to book a time to come in, please call Maureen at 416-946-2240, or drop by the Resource Centre.

Open House 2004: Be sure to mark Friday, October 29, 2004 on your calendar for our annual Open House. Stay tuned to *BrainScan* for details of this upcoming event.

DID YOU KNOW?
The Brain Trust has a toll-free number!
1-877-282-HOPE 4673

BrainScan is published quarterly by The Gerry & Nancy Pencer Brain Trust. Inquiries or requests to reprint any of the articles should be directed to Maureen Daniels, Coordinator, The Gerry & Nancy

BRAINSCAN

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