



March 27, 2010

Dear Friends of AzMN:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 4th Annual Living with Myeloma Conference and to be celebrating another successful year as a 501(c)(3) charity in Arizona. For some of you, this will be the first time you have attended our myeloma awareness and education conference. Being here may be a very bitter sweet experience since you or your loved one received that devastating diagnosis of multiple myeloma. We know how you feel. When my husband Jack was diagnosed 19 years ago, it was just a month before our marriage and it felt like a 'black cloud' was hanging over us and our life together. We had to find myeloma treatment in five countries and three states as Jack continued his career as an international construction manager. I followed along and did what caregivers do: look for resources, make appointments, keep our various homes and apartments comfortable, cook wholesome meals, and numerous other responsibilities. Over the years, thanks to an early and correct diagnosis and the wonderful research and new treatment options now available, Jack and many others are surviving and thriving.

Our mission when we started out five years ago was to create more awareness about myeloma and to educate ourselves and others so that we could make better treatment choices and help people in similar situations not feel so alone and overwhelmed. Each year, our small, dedicated staff and 'team' of volunteers, have helped us build on our programs and reach out to many more people in need of cancer information and resources.

In spite of the advances in myeloma treatment, there are still many challenges, as we all know, not only for the patient, but for his/her caregivers. In 2010, we are proud to introduce the AzMN/Pat and Bill Hite Caregivers' Program™, which you will see listed in our Agenda today. This program is one that I have thought about since we first began AzMN in 2005 in our spare bedroom. And, inspired by other caregivers and sharing their stories over the years, a team of us, got together to develop this program with the support of Pat and Bill Hite, and the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters. Pat and Bill are like many of us who deal with myeloma and try to continue their normal work and family life. Thanks to the Hites' generosity, and the money that UA helped us raise at our annual golf tournament, we now can develop this important new program.

2009 has been a year of tremendous growth and accomplishment for AzMN. In addition to our annual myeloma conference, we held our 2nd AzMN/John Wayne Cancer Foundation Cancer Awareness Conference on the Navajo Reservation. It was even more successful with a larger turnout and many new cancer resources and partners. We also introduced our Breast Cancer Education and Training Program to the Navajo Nation, co-sponsored by the Susan G. Komen Foundation and the Arizona Cancer Control Program. It is also a free program and provides training for volunteers to reach out to others with breast cancer. We had a great year and have been honored by a second year grant from Komen to continue and expand our work.

In September, we held our John C. Lincoln Foundation Tissue Donor Awareness Program (TDAP™) to educate the public about donating cancer tissue for research.

Our 1st Race for Hope for All Cancers on October 18th brought together over 250 men, women and children who ran and walked for Hope. This year, we are planning our 2nd Race on April 18th at Westgate. We have added many new sponsors and partners and hope to double the number of participants. We would like to raise much needed dollars, but also raise even more awareness about myeloma and all other cancers. Please stop by our AzMN Race table and sign up or make a donation.

In recognition of AzMN's achievements, I received the prestigious Hon Kachina Award for volunteerism in Arizona. It is a reflection of the many wonderful partnerships and collaborations we have developed over the years. And, through this award, we have gained even greater credibility and interest in our work on behalf of cancer patients and families.

We need everyone's help to be able to continue our important work, so please sign up for our Race, our golf tournament, buy raffle tickets, make a donation and/or join our volunteer team.

Have a great day – learn, meet and share!

Sincerely,

Barbara B. Kavanagh, MSW, Founder and President



We are grateful to the wonderful cancer researchers and clinicians, pharmaceutical companies, cancer organizations and treatment centers, local businesses and hundreds of other concerned individuals who have joined our 'fight'. Today, as we greet over 200 patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals, we know that we aren't alone and that together we can accomplish our dream: To improve treatment and help researchers find a 'cure' for myeloma and all cancers.