



SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM GRANTHAM & ASSOCIATES, INC.

As work began on this Winter Newsletter, it became evident that our most significant event of 2003 would not fit neatly in the familiar business format. The question then became whether or not to share it at all. You see, it's a personal trial.

However, we are extremely grateful to the many recipients of G&A's newsletter who have provided encouragement and support to us during this trial. As a result, we have prepared this special edition as a token of our appreciation.

THE PERSONAL TRIAL

- ❄️ In June 2003, my wife Bert was diagnosed with osteosarcoma in the femur bone of her left leg, just above the knee.
- ❄️ Osteosarcoma is a rare and aggressive form of bone cancer, typically found in the under 25 age group, and twice as likely to occur in males than in females.

PROVIDENCE

- ❄️ Bert went to an orthopedic surgeon within two weeks of experiencing pain and swelling above her left knee.
- ❄️ He immediately recognized the potential for something serious from Bert's test results and referred her to an orthopedic oncologist.
- ❄️ Using a surgeon friend of ours as a means of introduction, we were able to see the leading orthopedic oncologist in Dallas the same day we called.
- ❄️ He immediately scheduled multiple scans and tests followed by biopsy surgery.
- ❄️ As a result, the osteosarcoma diagnosis was determined within a month of Bert's first symptom, two months earlier than the average, thereby limiting the time the cancer would grow untreated.
- ❄️ Bert tolerated better than most the three months of in-patient chemotherapy at Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas.
- ❄️ We found a homeopathic specialist soon after chemotherapy started who prescribed natural products to supplement Bert's traditional medical treatment and boost her immune system.
- ❄️ The difficult leg salvage surgery, which was performed in October, went as well as we could have hoped for.
- ❄️ The pathology test from the material removed during Bert's leg surgery found no trace of cancer which provided the best possible prognosis.

GOOD PEOPLE

- ❄️ Amid times when there is ample evidence of the capacity of the human heart to feel otherwise, we have experienced an outpouring of unconditional love from good people.
- ❄️ The countless e-mails, cards, words of support, offers to help, and other forms of encouragement have been priceless to us.

- ❄️ Encouragement is a gift that we have a greater appreciation for having received such a generous measure of it this year.

OBSERVATIONS

- ❄️ Bert endeared herself to the attending hospital staff by her sweet and sociable behavior while under the influence of anesthesia. How she was able to remember and share with us the names and personal details of these staff members while being “out of it” is beyond me.
- ❄️ Automobiles have no respect for cancer. After our three usually reliable vehicles all got sick on the same day, we considered trading in all three for a Star Trek “transporter” to beam ourselves to and from the hospital.
- ❄️ The hospital cots available for visitors to sleep on are uncomfortable at best. The purchase of an inflatable air mattress to lay on Bruce’s cot was a “life saver.”
- ❄️ Thank you to the traffic officer in Dallas who showed sympathy to Bert who was preoccupied while driving to a doctor’s appointment. However, we would not recommend shaving your head and wearing a chemo cap for the sole purpose of avoiding a traffic ticket.
- ❄️ Modern medicine can be amazing. Half of the length of Bert’s left femur bone, her knee joint, and the top of her tibia bone have been replaced with a metal prosthesis which is doweled through the marrow into her remaining leg bones.
- ❄️ “The growth, the pain, the uncertainty, the biopsy, the shock, the weeping and wailing, the kidney scare during chemo, more weeping, the revised chemo regimen, the tough leg surgery, and the in-patient rehab are all history. Today is a good day.” (Written in a recent e-mail to friends upon learning of Bert’s cancer free pathology report.)

FAITH

- ❄️ After reading a recent Newsweek cover story about the evidence that prayer can contribute to healing, Bert is a testimony of what can happen when hundreds of people (from around the world) pray for a person. Prayer is amazing, not because it guarantees healing, but because of the overriding sense of hope and peace it can nurture during hardship.
- ❄️ It occurred to us that the orthopedic oncologist might be encouraged to learn how many people had been praying for his skill during Bert’s surgery, and how consistently he must be prayed for given his occupation. Upon sharing this thought with him, we learned that he had prayed with his children for Bert the night before her leg surgery.
- ❄️ How do we best say thank you for the many good people who have blessed our lives this year? Perhaps if you are facing a trial, we can extend comfort and hope to you through our experience. We would welcome your call.

In appreciation,

Bruce and Bert Grantham



Grantham & Associates, Inc.