



# Joining Forces To Fight Cancer

Winter 2009

## Wyoming Comprehensive Cancer Control Consortium

### 2009 Colorectal Cancer Pledge To Screen

March is colorectal cancer awareness month and Wyoming men and women are encouraged to support the Wyoming Comprehensive Cancer Control Program by pledging to take care of yourself! Screening for colorectal cancer leads to removal of polyps which could become cancer in the future. Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cause of cancer related deaths in Wyoming;

- If colorectal cancer is detected early it is highly treatable; and
- Everyone over 50 should be screened (if you have a family history of colorectal cancer talk with your provider about screening earlier)!

If cost is keeping you from getting screened, you may be eligible for the state-funded colorectal cancer screening program. Call 1-866-205-5292! Or apply online: [www.health.wyo.gov/phsd/ccp/index.html](http://www.health.wyo.gov/phsd/ccp/index.html)

The pledge has four parts.

1. Get a Colonoscopy if you are over 50;
2. If you are under 50, but have a family history of colorectal cancer, talk with your provider about early screening;
3. Eat healthy/ Exercise regularly; and
4. Think positive thoughts!

If you take the 2009 pledge to screen, you will receive important information and a “buddy bracelet” to remind you about the importance of screening

Please visit [www.fightcancerwy.com](http://www.fightcancerwy.com) to take the 2009 Pledge to Screen today!

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## Governor Freudenthal Signs Essential Health Insurance Legislation

Linda Lucas, along with many other partners, started the Coalition for Wyoming Insurance Solutions in Healthcare (C-WISH). Through their efforts Senate Files 62 and 95 were brought forth this session to the Wyoming State Legislature. These pieces of legislation provide consumer protection to Wyoming residents who purchase health insurance policies and rely on them to cover lifesaving treatment and drugs their doctors deem necessary. Senate File 62 prohibits “discretionary clauses” in policies, which leaves ultimate coverage decisions up to the health insurance insurers, even if medical evidence favors the insured person. Senate File 95 places a much needed definition of “medical necessity” into state law, so both the insured and insurance companies know how claims will be judged. Additionally Senate File 95 establishes a process for a mandatory external review of contested insurance claims. Forty-five states and the District of Columbia all have a similar external review mandates. On March 2, 2009, Governor Dave Freudenthal signed Senate File 62 and 95 in his chambers at the Wyoming State Capitol. Thanks to the incredible work by C-WISH, Wyoming State Legislators, and other key partners, barriers to adequate coverage will be reduced and necessary treatment will be provided.

Governor Freudenthal Signing Senate File 62 & 95



*My husband worked for the same employer for 41 years and paid all his health insurance premiums. In March 2006, Sonny was diagnosed with colon cancer that had advanced to the liver. Fourteen months later, after surgery and chemotherapy, his doctor referred us to a specialist in Colorado who places radioactive beads in the liver. This treatment has a 90% chance of stopping growth of cancer in the liver and spreading further to other organs. During our initial consultation, we met a patient who lives in Colorado who also hoped to undergo the same treatment for the same thing. This procedure is approved by the Food and Drug Administration and by Medicare, and it was the recommended course of treatment for Sonny. Our insurance refused to cover it on the grounds it was “experimental/investigational.” The other patient was denied treatment for the same reason. Our doctor appealed, but our insurer still ruled against it. I discovered the state insurance commission has no authority over these matters. Suing was not an option; we could not show the insurance company was in violation of our contract, because our policy had a discretionary clause in it. Furthermore, Wyoming has no law defining medical necessity, so insurance companies may determine themselves what is medically necessary. Meanwhile, the Colorado patient was approved for the procedure within a few weeks because Colorado law provides for external review. The only thing I knew to do was to go on a letter writing campaign. Four months later the insurance company decided to cover the treatment. Before the treatment could be completed, Sonny developed tumors, some as large as 4 inches, in and on his lungs. Just before he died in December 2007, he wondered if things would have turned out better – if he might have lived longer – had we not had to wait so long for the procedure.*

*- Linda Lucas, Cheyenne Resident*



## **Bowl For Jason's Friends "Bowl- A- Thon"**

The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual "Bowl for Jason's Friends" was held in Casper on Saturday February 28, 2009. The event was a tremendous success with over 1,000 bowlers attending this year's event. The money raised will assist Wyoming families with children suffering from life-threatening brain or spinal cord tumors and childhood cancers. "A huge thank you to all the bowlers that participated, to our corporate sponsors, our door prize donors, our media sponsors, our hard working volunteers, and to El Marko Lanes for hosting the event. Jason's Friends continues to be amazed and in awe of how gracious and generous Wyoming people are," said Lisa Eades, President of Jason's Friends Foundation. If you would like more information about Jason's Friends Foundation please contact Lisa Eades at [lisa@teamnetworks.com](mailto:lisa@teamnetworks.com).

## **2009 Wyoming Cancer Conference "Saddle Up For A Cure"**

The Wyoming Cancer Conference will take place in Sheridan on April 29 & 30, 2009 at the Sheridan Holiday Inn and Convention Center. The objective of this conference is to provide education and information on all cancer prevention and control issues. The theme is "**Saddle Up For A Cure.**"

Pull out your western wear and join us for a good time! Conference speakers include: Dr. Thomas Poulton from Uinta Urology Center, Lori Benson who is a Breast Cancer Survivor and Filmmaker, Dr. Linda Burhansstipanov from the Native American Cancer Research Center and Kevin Sharp, a Country Music Recording Artist and Cancer Survivor.



### **Continuing Education Credits:**

The conference planning committee is currently applying for continuing education credits for numerous professions including doctors, nurses, dietitians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and others. The conference covers approximately 8.75 hours of continuing education.

### **Exhibitor Fair:**

As part of the conference there will be a vendor fair with participants from non-profit agencies, community organizations, and pharmaceutical companies. If you are interested in sponsoring an exhibitor booth at the conference contact Jessica Perez via telephone at 307.777.7362.



## Have You Seen The Super Colon?

The super colon is a giant replica of a human colon which is part of a project the Prevent Cancer Foundation is sponsoring. The Super Colon is an inflatable, lifelike exhibit that teaches people about risks, symptoms and early detection. As visitors walk through the display, they view an up close look at healthy colon tissue, non-malignant colorectal disease like Crohns and colitis, colorectal polyps, and various stages of colorectal cancer.

This project hopes to educate people about the highly treatable nature of colorectal cancer if diagnosed early.



Unfortunately the super colon will not be in Wyoming this year but will be in Boise Idaho on March 21, 2009, Niwot Colorado on April 25, 2009, Great Falls Montana on May 20, 2009 and in Billings Montana July 10, 2009.

For more information on the Prevent Cancer Foundation's Super Colon please visit [www.preventcancer.org](http://www.preventcancer.org)

## Contacts

and information

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[www.fightcancerwy.com](http://www.fightcancerwy.com)

**Did you know the Wyoming Cancer Control Plan expires in 2010! That is less then one year away.**

### Drafting the 2011-2015 Wyoming Cancer Control Plan

In 2006, the Wyoming Comprehensive Cancer Control Consortium released the 2006-2010 Wyoming Cancer Control Plan. Since that time, the WCCCC has done an extraordinary amount of work to implement the cancer plan. In the few short years Wyoming has been working on improving cancer prevention and control in the state, much has been achieved. However, our work is far from complete. Cancer continues to affect all of us, personally and professionally.

The time is fast approaching to determine what we will need to do in the future of cancer control in the state. The WCCCC needs you and your organization to be a part of the next phase by working to set our agenda for the future.

During 2009, the WCCCC and its leadership will be revising the first edition of the cancer control plan. We will evaluate successes, observe challenges, and modify our goals, objectives and strategies to continue to improve the lives of Wyoming people impacted by cancer. Please join us in this effort. If you are unable to participate personally, please identify someone in your organization who can. Your help is critical to the success of this process.

We need your help in writing the 2011-2015 Wyoming Cancer Control Plan. We will be focusing on the creation of the new Plan this summer. Please join us at the Summer WCCCC Meeting to start this process. More details to follow.

