CANCER IS NEVER A WELCOME DIAGNOSIS, BUT COLON AND RECTAL CANCER ARE TYPES OF CANCER THAT CARRY THE GRIMMEST OUTLOOKS. HIGHLY RESISTANT TO TREATMENT, COLORECTAL CANCER IS THE SECOND LEADING CAUSE OF CANCER DEATHS IN THE UNITED STATES AFTER LUNG CANCER.

AND WHILE THE RATE OF NEW COLORECTAL CANCER CASES AND DEATHS IS DECREASING IN THE U.S., STILL, MORE THAN 145,000 NEW CASES ARE DIAGNOSED AND MORE THAN 49,000 PEOPLE DIE FROM THIS DISEASE EACH YEAR, ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY. THE TRAGEDY IS THAT MOST OF THESE DEATHS COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED BY EARLY SCREENING.

continued on page 2
Colorectal cancer is a disease in which cells in the colon or rectum become abnormal and divide without control, forming a mass or tumor. Colorectal cancer cells may also invade and destroy the tissue around them. In addition, they may break away from the tumor and spread to form new tumors in other parts of the body.

When colorectal cancer spreads outside the colon or rectum, cancer cells are often found in nearby lymph nodes. If cancer cells have reached these nodes, they may also have spread to other lymph nodes or other organs. Colorectal cancer cells often spread to the liver and are one of the most common causes of death from this disease.

**John Stehlin: Pioneer in Surgery & Screening**

Dr. John Stehlin had established a reputation as a pioneer in the field of colorectal cancer when he founded the CHRISTUS Stehlin Foundation in 1969. His late 1950’s article entitled “Treatment for Cancer of the Colon,” contained detailed surgical techniques for effectively removing both the affected parts of the lower intestine and the associated lymph nodes in colorectal cancer patients (see illustration).

“Dr. Stehlin was a pioneer in organizing the information and documenting the complex surgical procedure — state of the art at the time — which improved the patient's chances for recovery,” remarked Peter de Ipolyi, M.D., a surgical oncologist at the Surgical Oncology Consultants of Houston.

Summarized Dr. de Ipolyi, who was mentored by Dr. Stehlin and who serves on the CHRISTUS Stehlin Foundation Board of Trustees, “John Stehlin was a great surgeon who studied under other great surgeons, and was entirely committed to teaching others.”

Even in this mid-20th Century article, Stehlin stressed the value of early detection and screening, which is still critical in the prevention and treatment of colorectal cancer.

The spectrum of best practice screenings include:

- **Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT)** - which detects hidden blood in fecal material.
- **Sigmoidoscopy** - which uses a lighted instrument called a sigmoidoscope to examine the rectum and lower colon.
- **Colonoscopy** - which examines the rectum and entire colon using a lighted instrument called a colonoscope.
- **Virtual Colonoscopy (Computerized Tomographic Colonography)** - which uses special x-ray equipment to produce pictures of the colon and rectum which are assembled by computer into detailed images that show polyps and other abnormalities.

Your personal physician can recommend the screening that fits your health care profile. As most veterans of colorectal screening will tell you, it’s not a pleasant experience, but it’s not horrible either. And it truly can save your life!
of colorectal screening in enabling early diagnosis and treatment, which greatly improves a patient’s chances for survival. “Screening remains to this day the most effective weapon against colorectal cancer,” commented Dr. de Ipolyi.

“This cancer is practically impossible to detect early without medical technology,” de Ipolyi continued. “When symptoms do appear, the disease is often at an advanced state. There are many reasons why people don’t get tested, but here’s what we know: When patients get screened and we take care of any polyps that appear early, survival and recovery rates improve dramatically.”

Promising Research

Beppino D. Giovanella, Ph.D., Laboratory Director for the CHRISTUS Stehlin Foundation, calls colorectal cancer the “bugaboo” of cancers because of its firm ranking in the chemotherapy statistics as one of the most resistant to treatment. “That’s one of the reasons we became interested in the Camptothecins,” he recalls. “We knew that if we found something that was effective against colon cancers, it would work with almost any other.”

The first paper published in 1989 by Dr. Giovanella and Stehlin staff in Science magazine presented an early Camptothecin derivative, 9AC, showing remarkable results in colorectal tumors growing in immuno-suppressed mice. “People questioned our results when we first started publishing because the Camptothecins were so effective,” said Dana Vardeman, Laboratory Supervisor. “Honesty, even we were surprised at the results. They showed so much potential.”

To date, the CHRISTUS Stehlin laboratory has collected 46 different strains of human colon cancers, which are either frozen or growing in one of the lab’s signature nude mice. Research projects are ongoing in the quest to determine the most effective compounds in the battle against the disease.

Animal testing with CZ48, the Camptothecin compound currently in clinical trials with the FDA, has been extremely promising against colorectal cancers in the nude mice, showing results in 4 out of 4 different colon tumors. As of yet, its effectiveness has yet to be proven in humans.

“We have great hope that we will be able to thwart this deadly cancer with CZ48,” summarized Robert Anderson, Executive Director of the CHRISTUS Stehlin Foundation. “We know that if we can be effective against this disease, we have reached a huge milestone.”

PREVENTION IS THE BEST MEDICINE

Several lifestyle guidelines have been shown to reduce the risk of colorectal cancers — perhaps the best solution of all to battling the disease.

DIET: Studies suggest that diets high in fat (especially animal fat) and low in calcium, folate, and fiber may increase the risk of colorectal cancer. Also, some studies suggest that people who eat a diet very low in fruits and vegetables may have a higher risk of colorectal cancer. Low fat, high fiber diets may have a preventive effect.

EXERCISE: Evidence suggests that a sedentary lifestyle may be associated with an increased risk of developing colorectal cancer. In contrast, people who exercise regularly may have a decreased risk of developing colorectal cancer.

CIGARETTE SMOKING: A person who smokes cigarettes may be at increased risk of developing polyps and colorectal cancer.
On November 15, 2008, the Friends of the Stehlin Foundation held its 28th annual fundraising gala and celebrated another great success. The crowd of 550 danced to the beat of the Fab Four, a Beatles tribute band, and the Motown sound of Collector’s Item. They also witnessed a mid-evening artspectacular put on by Dan Dunn.

Through contributions, ticket sales and auction proceeds, the event netted $530,000, raising the total donated by the Friends of the Stehlin Foundation since 1981 to $10.8 million. All funds support the research and clinical projects of the CHRISTUS Stehlin Foundation.

Andrea and Paul Stewart, chairs of the 2008 gala, are members of the Young Texans Against Cancer (YTAC), a dynamic group that has been actively supporting the Foundation since 2002. A big “thank you” goes out to everyone who participated in the gala, volunteered time and talent, and helped to support this worthwhile effort.

Once again, this gala was FUN!

Dear Friends,

We were so blessed and honored to serve as chairs of the 28th annual Friends of Stehlin Gala! We truly had a great time, as always, and we know all of you did as well. The Fab Four, Dan Dunn and Collector’s Item continued the tradition of unique and unforgettable entertainment for which the gala is known.

To be able to contribute so much to the Stehlin Foundation, especially when the money goes directly to the Phase I trials, is such a great honor. We are grateful for the many people who contributed despite the difficult economic times and the challenges of Hurricane Ike just prior to the event.

The tireless work and dedication of the doctors, researchers and foundation staff certainly give us reason to celebrate! It is an exciting time to be involved with the Stehlin Foundation. We know that you will help us continue to build on the success of last year’s spectacular event.

Sincerely,
Andrea and Paul Stewart

Friends’ 2008 Gala Celebrates the British Invasion with Style
The CHRISTUS Stehlin Foundation wishes to thank the following contributors for their generous support of the 28th Annual Gala. Our good works could not be accomplished without “A Little Help from Our Friends!”

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Stehlin’s Angels: Dedicated to Science

As part of its Educational Scholarship Program, the CHRISTUS Stehlin Foundation for Cancer Research offers high school and college students the opportunity to participate in cancer treatment and research first hand, previewing a career in the medical or biological sciences.

In addition, the laboratory also employs recent grads — some former interns — to provide daily assistance with cancer research, often at times when they are making important life decisions.

This spring, the laboratory has three top-notch assistants to help with everything from cleaning mice cages to conducting complex research experiments. In a twist on the popular TV series and movie “Charlie’s Angels,” the staff jokingly and endearingly refers to them as “Stehlin’s Angels.”

Carey Koppenhaver is a recent graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a dual degree in biology and Spanish. She is trying to decide whether to pursue an advanced degree in public health or as a physician’s assistant. In the meantime, she appreciates the hands-on nature of the work at the Stehlin laboratory. “This is an ideal situation for me at this point in my life.”

Alexa Olszewski graduated in May 2008 from Emory University with a pre-med major in psychology. She came home to Houston to apply to medical programs and discovered the Stehlin organization, whose Tripartnership approach synced with her own philosophy. Now, working with Constantine S.A. Markides, Ph.D., she is helping to conduct CZ48 research; she was recently included as second author on her first scientific publication. “History is being made here, and yet everyone is so supportive and encouraging of our goals. Stehlin has truly affected the way I think about medicine, my career and my life.”

Megan Foxworth, a graduate of the University of St. Thomas and a former intern for the Stehlin lab, has submitted applications for a competitive physician’s assistant program at Texas Tech University. In the meantime she is involved in several research projects - and she’s proud of the role she and other interns played in the summer of 2008 preparing the 2,800-page FDA application for CZ48. “There’s a real sense of community here, and these are great people to work for.”

YTAC Brings New Energy to Stehlin

Q. How did YTAC first become involved with the CHRISTUS Stehlin Foundation?
A. We formed YTAC in 2001 and began researching local cancer fighting causes that needed additional funding to carry on their important work. The Stehlin Foundation was brought to our attention by one of our members, and we began our due diligence by making an onsite visit to the Stehlin Foundation lab. During our tour we met Bobby Anderson and forged a wonderful relationship motivated by the cause to fight cancer.

Q. What do you think are the synergies between the two groups?
A. Our first donation to the Stehlin Foundation was in 2002 and our enthusiasm for its great work and people grew into a long-term relationship that has included co-hosting the Stehlin Foundation/YTAC black-tie gala, volunteer events and introducing the efforts of the Foundation to other interested individuals and institutions.

Q. How do you decide which groups to assist?
A. Any cancer-related foundation or research hospital can fill out our grant application, and then the Charity Selection Committee votes. We consider this one of the “perks” of being a member of YTAC: you can join the Charity Selection Committee and have a say in where our money goes each year!

Q. What events are planned for this year to benefit Stehlin?
A. We have a full calendar: On Sat, May 30, we are having our 5th Annual BBQ at Armadillo Palace from 12-4pm. This event is a big hit with our members; it’s an afternoon of live music and great BBQ with all of our members, friends and supporters. Information is available on our website, www.ytac.org.

In August (date TBD) Capital Grille will host a luncheon for YTAC which will host a speaker that no one will want to miss! We’ll have more information on this soon on the website.

Our largest fundraiser for 2009 is our YTAC Golf Tournament, which is on Monday, October 19 at Wildcat Golf Club. We have sold out in the past, so anyone interested should be sure to sign up early! The website is www.ytachouston.dojiggy.com. We are currently looking for sponsors as well.

If anyone is interested in any of our events or needs more information, they are free to contact me, Amy Donovan at pres-houston@ytac.org.
The traditional launch party for the 29th annual Friends of the Stehlin Foundation Gala was held May 7, 2009, and had a new twist. The event, hosted by Sherry & Ken Levy, took place at their upscale boutique Dimensions, located at 6100 Westheimer (www.dimensions6100.com).

Strolling (and shopping!) amongst the latest women’s fashions and accessories, guests sampled delicious hors d’oeuvres and cocktails and heard about gala developments as well as CHRISTUS Stehlin Foundation news.

This year’s co-chairs, Ashley Anderson and Sara Strohmeyer, have selected a country western theme for this year’s gala.

Consider the 29th Friends gala launched!