

Cancer from page 2

they constituted a “cluster.” This was in response to several concerned citizens who had come to her over the six years she served the town.

We decided a good place to start would be to host a series of forums with some of the specialists involved to find out more about what the overall statistics show and to further educate ourselves. Our first forum was held on June 6 at the Andover Town Hall. Our featured panelists included:

Brook Dupee, Chief of the Bureau of Public Health Statistics and Informatics, who presented an overview of how cancer clusters are investigated

Dr. Monawar Hosain, New Hampshire State Cancer Registry Epidemiologist, who discussed a recent report on the cancer burden in New Hampshire. You can see the slides at AndoverBeacon.com/Cancer_Clusters.

Laleh Talebian, Director of Community Health Education and Cancer Prevention at Norris Cotton Center, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, who spoke about how cancer develops and covered strategies for reducing the risk of cancer. You can see the slides at AndoverBeacon.com/Cancer_Prevention.

Whitney Hammond, Comprehensive Cancer Control Program Manager and State of New Hampshire Chronic Disease Coordinator, who introduced the services her office provides and spoke about the New Hampshire Comprehensive Cancer Collaboration, an organization open to anyone interested in helping to eliminate cancer in New Hampshire. For more information on how to get involved, visit NHCancerPlan.org or call 415-4276.

We learned that since 2005, cancer has become the number one leading cause of death in New Hampshire, over heart disease. The cancer rate in New Hampshire is significantly higher than the national rate. 75% of cancers occur in people over the age of 55. (The fact that New Hampshire has a higher median age overall could partially explain the higher rate.) 80% of cancers are preventable, caused by lifestyle choices such as tobacco use, poor diet, and lack of exercise.

When analyzing data in search of a possible cluster of cancer cases, the specialists from New Hampshire’s Chronic Disease Office look for a higher rate of a specific type of cancer in a specific geographical region that is affecting people outside of the typical age group for that specific cancer. The New Hampshire cancer registry (records of cancer cases from all New Hampshire hospitals reported to the state) as well as survey results and anecdotal information from citizens are analyzed. Further steps are taken depending on the findings.

In August, Dr. Hosain and Mr. Dupee plan to return to Andover to discuss the results of their study of Andover cancer rates, after they have had a chance to analyze the statistics and survey results. Stay tuned for a date to be

determined.

In the meantime, a July meeting will be set to discuss the latest research and current treatment options for breast cancer. The meeting will feature Laleh Talebian and a breast cancer surgeon from DHMC. The date is still to be determined.

Overall, the June 6 meeting was a success in that we had good attendance, and it was very informative. Questions were welcomed throughout the four presentations, and the speakers were impressed with the knowledge and interest of the participants.

We thank the speakers for taking the time on a Friday evening to speak to concerned citizens in our community, and we look forward to further opportunities to learn about this issue that affects so many of us. For more information about the June 6 meeting, you can watch it on our Andover Cable TV channel, read the Powerpoint slides at AndoverBeacon.com/Cancer_Prevention and AndoverBeacon.com/Cancer_Clusters, contact Vicky Mishcon at VLMishcon@comcast.net or 735-6402, or contact Cindy Benson at CindyBenson@tds.net or 321-9231.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection in Franklin and Bristol

Andover residents invited to participate

Press release

On Saturday, July 26, and again on Saturday, August 2, twenty-four area communities, including Andover, will participate in one of the most successful household hazardous waste collection programs in New England.

Four collection sites will be open each day from 8:30 AM to noon. On July 26, Belmont, Franklin, Gilford, and Meredith will be open. On August 2, Bristol, Laconia, Moultonborough, and Ossipee will be open. Residents and property owners in the 24 participating communities may bring up to 10 gallons or 50 pounds of household hazardous products in for safe disposal.

Information on collection sites and accepted materials can be found at AndoverBeacon.com/LRPC_HHW or by calling 279-8171. Please note that latex paint is not considered a hazardous product.

Common Problem, Simple Solution

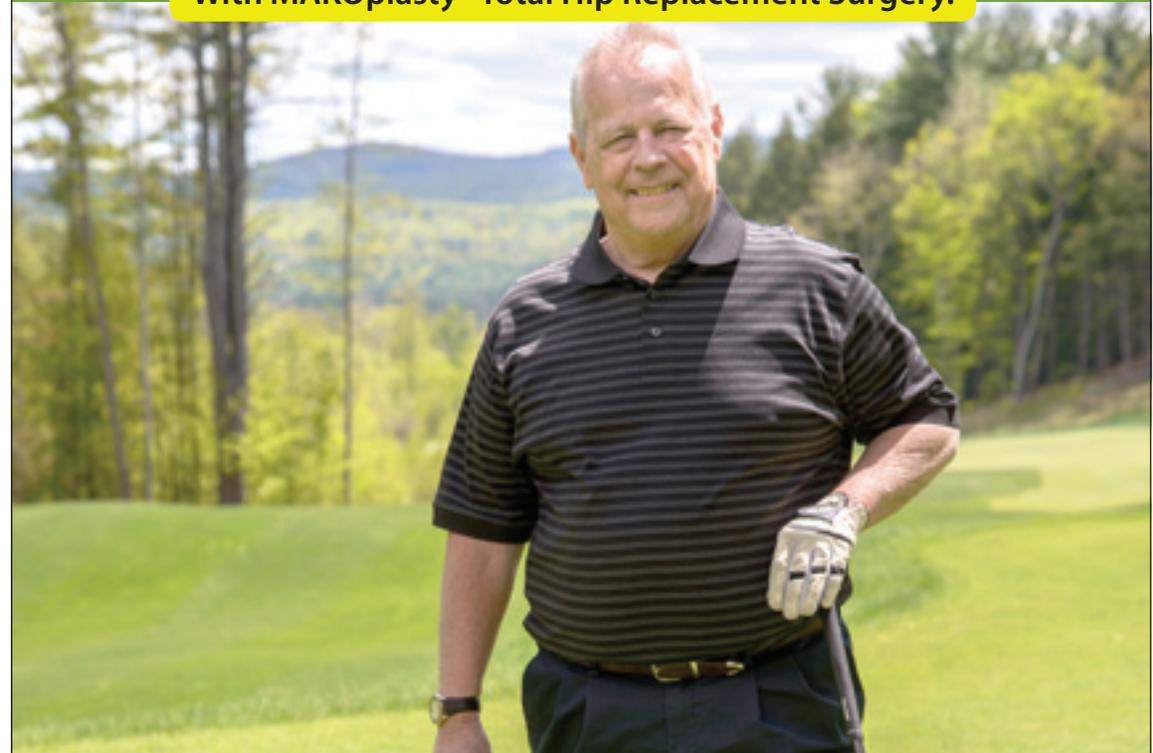
Household Hazardous Waste is a common problem with a simple solution. “Hazardous wastes” are substances that poison or contaminate the environment; they may be flammable, corrosive, or reactive.

Look under your kitchen or bathroom sink, at the basement workbench, in the garage or garden shed – wherever you store cleaning products, home and vehicle maintenance items, or garden chemicals. If a product label says “danger,” “warning,” “poison,” or “caution,” the product contains ingredients that are flammable, poisonous, will burn the skin and eyes, or react violently with other chemicals. These items, if disposed of improperly, are a very real threat to our natural environment. Municipal treatment plants and leachfields are incapable of processing these chemicals. Landfill disposal poses the same risks, and the result

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