



Key Updates

Unlocking A Mystery, Increasing Survival and Hope



Executive Sponsor's Message



Signs of spring are struggling with a winter that just won't end here in the Midwest, but we are nearly to April and a thaw! Since our last newsletter, I've learned that I may need to undergo another craniotomy; my Gamma Knife procedure was not fully successful in eliminating the tumor activity so I'll likely undergo the surgery soon; I'm also taking Avastin and expect to soon add CPT-11.

Despite this, I'm pleased to report about a lot of excitement at UnlockingBrainTumors.org. We are underway on some very targeted grant applications to help fund some specific projects for several researchers. We recently helped facilitate a \$5000 grant directly to The Musella Foundation for which we are very appreciative. And I made my broadcast debut with a 30 minute interview on The Christian Channel on SIRIUS radio. At this rate, winter will be over before we know it.

-Steve Coffman,
Survivor since 2005



UnlockingBrainTumors.org News

- [UnlockingBrainTumors.org](http://www.tjx.com/corprespons/commsupp_tf.html) helped to secure a \$5000 grant by the **TJX Foundation to The Musella Foundation For Brain Tumor Research & Information** to be channeled for research efforts. We can't thank TJX enough for believing in our mission, and specifically the work of The Musella Foundation and our community of researchers. Read more about The TJX Foundation at http://www.tjx.com/corprespons/commsupp_tf.html

- [UnlockingBrainTumors.org](http://www.unlockingbraintumors.org) has exceeded the \$75,000 mark in raised contributions since its inception! We have set a specific goal of \$10,000 for the [UnlockingBrainTumors.org](http://www.unlockingbraintumors.org) team for **ABTA's Path To Progress 5k Walk/Run** to support brain tumor research. Please visit our team page to join us or to make a contribution - http://hope.abta.org/site/TR/ABTAEvent/PathtoProgress?team_id=5140&pg=team&fr_id=1220



Medical Updates

- **Cedars-Sinai Medical Center** announced a "new gene therapy approach that attracts and 'trains' immune system cells to destroy deadly brain cancer cells also provides long-term immunity, produces no significant adverse effects and - in the process of destroying the tumor - promotes the return of normal brain function and behavioral skills, according to a study conducted by researchers at **Cedars-Sinai Medical Center's Board of Governors Gene Therapeutics Research Institute**".

<https://www.csmc.edu/3325.html>.

- **Lentigen Corporation** announced an exclusive licensing agreement with **Case Western Reserve University** to develop a novel stem-cell therapy for glioblastoma. CW and its primary affiliate, University Hospitals Case Medical Center, will lead the first in vivo clinical trial, and Lentigen will be responsible for further clinical development and commercialization".

<http://virtualtrials.com/news3.cfm?item=4182>

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Around The Community

- **The North American Brain Tumor Coalition (NABTC)** reports on an important victory for the brain tumor community as the Senate easily approved an amendment to a budget resolution to increase **NIH** funding by over \$2.1 billion, above and beyond the \$900 million already recommended by the Senate Budget Committee; as a result, NIH may receive nearly \$3 billion above FY 2008 funding levels. The NABTC site also links to the **Cancer Leadership Council's** endorsement of the amendment that added \$2.1 billion.
- **The National Brain Tumor Foundation** provides information about Brain Tumor Action Week, May 4-10, including how to get involved in the activities in Washington D.C.
- John Sampson, MD, ("The the effect of CTLA-4 Blockade on Immune Phenotype and Tumor Response in GBM," and Yiting Cao, MD, PhD, ("The Erythropoietin Regulation of Brain Tumor Stem Cells") of the **Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center at Duke University** were two of four researchers who received grants totaling \$270,000 from the **Southeastern Brain Tumor Foundation**.



Partners

UnlockingBrainTumors.org continues to believe that by partnering with other like minded organizations, we can work together to achieve a greater, faster and more lasting impact.

Steve Coffman has been in discussion with a large philanthropic organization about how it and UnlockingBrainTumors.org can collaborate to increase funding for brain tumor and brain cancer research. We hope to announce some joint efforts with this important organization soon.

We also continue to reach out to other foundations around the country about opportunities to work together, or to lend UnlockingBrainTumors.org's assistance to help them reach their goals. Our model is primarily about helping to raise funds for any important research efforts within the community, and we intend to be flexible to provide the maximum support we can.

Stay tuned for more partner news!

Beneficiaries

In addition to our ongoing support of **The Musella Foundation For Brain Tumor Research & Information** (and with their help), we are engaging in some focused efforts to solicit research grants.

At present, we are seeking funds to support the work of two teams: 1) Dr. Hideho Okada and his team, of the Brain Tumor Program at the **University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute**. Dr. Okada is seeking support for his development of a both pediatric and adult brain tumor vaccine solutions; he has pending requests for to the FDA for an investigational new drug application. 2) Dr. Jeffrey Raizer and his team of the **Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Center of Northwestern University**, including an examination of patterns of gene methylation in plasma of patients with brain tumors (such as MGMT), to see if this can be used as a surrogate marker of tumor activity and behavior, continued research on NFK-B as a modulator of resistance and many others. For more information or to add your support, please contact us.

Medical Updates *continued from page 1.*

- **The Musella Foundation For Brain Tumor Research & Information** links to an abstract of a research study entitled "Efficacy of stereotactic radiosurgery as a salvage treatment for recurrent malignant gliomas" by [Kong DS](#), [Lee JI](#), [Park K](#), [Kim JH](#), [Lim DH](#), [Nam DH](#) of the Dept of Neurosurgery, **Samsung Medical Center, Sungkyunkwan University School of Medicine**, Seoul, Korea. "The objective of this prospective cohort study was to determine the efficacy of stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) as a salvage treatment in patients with recurrent malignant gliomas". The study's results found: 1) The median overall survival from the time of diagnosis was 37.5 months for patients with grade 3 gliomas (according to World Health Organization criteria) and was 23 months for patients with glioblastomas. 2) The median progression-free survival after SRS was 8.6 months for patients with grade 3 gliomas and 4.6 months for patients with glioblastomas 3) With regard to treatment-related complications, radiation-induced necrosis was observed in 22 of 114 patients (24.4%). Compared with this historic control group, SRS significantly prolonged survival as a salvage treatment in patients with recurrent glioblastomas (23 months vs 12 months), but it was not found to provide a significant surgical benefit in patients with recurrent grade 3 gliomas (37.5 months vs 26 months). On univariate analysis of prognostic factors, tumor volume (<10 mL) and low histologic grade were found to significantly influence better survival (P = .009 and P = .041, respectively). The research concluded that SRS is a safe and effective modality in selected patients with recurrent small-sized glioblastomas. However, the efficacy of SRS for recurrent grade 3 gliomas needs to be further evaluated in well-designed clinical studies. Cancer 2008. (c) 2008 American Cancer Society.

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Feedback/Contact Us

For more in-depth discussions or to get involved in this very important cause, please call, write or visit us. You'll find that it's easy to help, and that your help will quickly be operationalized.

Whether you have a preferred beneficiary or project, level of involvement, or simply want to help our team in whatever area possible, we'll make it easy for you to do just that. *We're looking to expand our use of volunteers and partners, so if you have ideas or suggestions, please let us know!*

www.unlockingbraintumors.org
Stephen Coffman, Project Sponsor
stevecoffman@mac.com and
steve@unlockingbraintumors.org.

958 South Shore Drive - Holland, MI 49423. Office phone: (616) 335-9050 and (312) 375-8346 (cell).



How to Support Us

Your financial support, either one-time or ongoing, or helping to arrange for UnlockingBrainTumors.org to become a corporate beneficiary, is invaluable to our core mission to raise funds and redistribute them to our beneficiaries, and therefore, directly to research. We also have a need for volunteers who can support UnlockingBrainTumors.org in any number of ways, including fulfillment of fundraising campaigns, event support, marketing, speaking events and other channels. Even linking to www.unlockingbraintumors.org from your site will help to raise awareness for our organization and support our community.

For more information, please contact Steve at (616) 335-9050 (office) or (312) 375-8346 (cell).



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Newsletter content submission is due the 1st of each month. Send content to Mike Tancredi, Mike@unlockingbraintumors.org

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