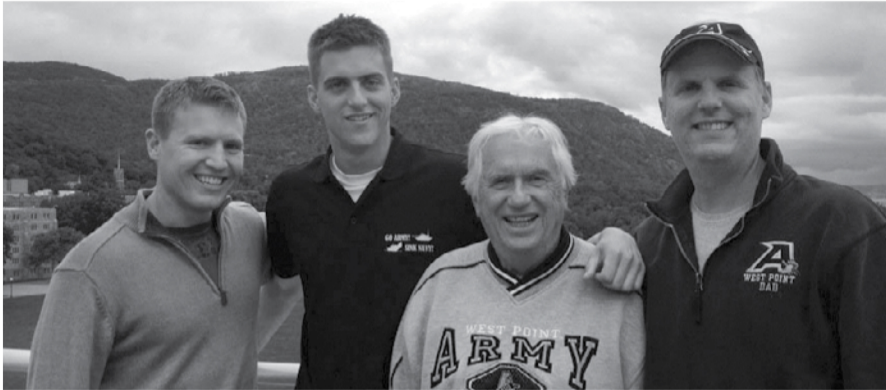


TRIBUTES

THE TRIBUTE NEWSLETTER OF THE FOUNDATION FOR BARNES-JEWISH HOSPITAL | Recognizing Third Quarter 2013

Tributes recognizes all gifts made to The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital in honor or in memory of a loved one. Your gifts do make a difference.

Shining Light on Melanoma Research



Jack Leskera (third from left) with grandsons Nicholas and Jordan and son, Jay (right).

John “Jack” Leskera, of Collinsville, Ill., was a man who enriched his hometown with his charm and wit.

In 2011, at the age of 80, Jack was diagnosed with melanoma, an often deadly form of skin cancer. The melanoma was caught by chance when Jack made a trip to the emergency room following a minor bicycle accident while in Florida. The emergency room doctors noticed an unusual mole on Jack and did a biopsy as a precaution.

He quickly went home to be treated at the Siteman Cancer Center at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University School of Medicine. “The entire family took a great deal of comfort in knowing we lived within 15 miles of Siteman, which has experts in the field of treating melanoma,” says his son, John “Jay” Leskera.



The Leskera family surprised Jack with a family trip to the Dominican Republic for his 80th birthday.

Celebrating a Life

Jay says Jack didn’t let the diagnosis and treatment slow his pace. Jack’s knack for telling fascinating stories and his theatrical ability made him an outstanding trial lawyer. “When facing an incurable diagnosis, my father continued his work as a trial attorney,” Jay says. “He even appeared in court to argue a case just one week before we lost him.”

Jack, preceded in death by his wife, Adele, was known for being a fun-loving fellow and the life of the party. Jay chuckles when he recalls a time in 1978 when Jack made national headlines for obtaining an order of contempt against striking teachers in Collinsville who wouldn’t return to work. Jack listed Adele—who was also a teacher—as one of the selected teachers to be jailed for contempt. “They got a good laugh out of that one!” Jay adds.

A father to three children and grandfather to eight, Jack had many passions, but the most important was spending time with his family. He was a very proud grandfather, buying season tickets to the MUNY so he could watch a granddaughter perform on stage. Jack also loved to watch his grandchildren compete. In 2010, when one grandson was attending West Point and another was at the Naval Academy, he traveled with Adele to the Army-Navy Football game. According to Jay, “To maintain neutrality, Mom and Dad each wore a shirt with Army on one side and Navy on the other.”

Receiving Exceptional Care and Much Needed Answers

Jack’s family is grateful for the exceptional health care they found at Siteman, but they are also thankful for the extraordinary way in which care was delivered. “I cannot give high enough praise to Dr. Gerald Linette, Dr. Jeffrey Moley, and everyone on their team—they were so helpful,” Jay says.

Jay was particularly impressed by the attention the entire family received when they would bring Jack in for an appointment. “We were very pleased with the care our father received at the hospital,” Jay says. “Everyone was so accommodating—explaining treatments to us and making sure all our questions were answered.”

He continues: “Melanoma is such an insidious disease. It’s hard for someone to think that a sunburn you received as a child could take your life as an adult. Our entire family was lucky to have found such compassionate doctors and staff who understood our wishes to not continue with unnecessary treatments when the disease was finally deemed to be irreversible. The doctors and staff were truly amazing.”



Adele and Jack Leskera

Creating a Legacy

The family didn’t realize the depth of support others would offer after Jack passed away in July 2013, when they asked that donations in memory of their father be made to The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital. Friends and colleagues responded by donating more than \$1,150 to the Melanoma Research Fund through the Foundation.

The incidence of skin cancers continues to escalate worldwide, and metastatic melanoma, in which the cancer spreads from the skin to the lymph system and organs, remains incurable. Donations made to the Melanoma Research Fund advance groundbreaking discoveries in skin cancer treatment and outcomes.

Currently, these memorial contributions support a study by Gerald Linette, MD, PhD, at the Siteman Cancer Center. Dr. Linette’s research involves creating personalized vaccines for patients with advanced melanoma in order to trigger the body’s own immune system to fight cancer. These studies, along with others like them, are bringing researchers that much closer to one day making lasting remissions possible for late-stage skin cancer patients.

Beth Going, Jack’s daughter, took Jack to all of his appointments at Siteman. “After his appointments, my father often said he was grateful for Dr. Linette’s calm, assuring advice and treatment,” Beth says. “He was impressed and hopeful each time Dr. Linette discussed his melanoma research.”

To make a gift to support Dr. Linette’s research through the Melanoma Research Fund (B1348) at The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital, please use the enclosed envelope. If you have questions, please call 314-286-0600 or email GivingBarnesJewish@bjc.org.

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