

INSPIRATION

in(t)-spe-'rā-shen *n* 1. a divine or supernatural influence 2. to be an animating, enlivening, or exalting influence on another; to spur one to act 3. to draw forth or bring out



Polly Letofsky, Adventure Walker

She has talked the talk. Now it's time to walk the walk. All the way around the world.

Polly Letofsky, 39, hopes to be the first woman to walk around the world in her World Walk for Breast Cancer, which began on August 1, 1999 in Vail.

Averaging 15 miles a day for four years, Letofsky's trip will cover 18,000 miles, 23 countries, four continents and roughly 50 pairs of shoes.

Excerpts from Polly's Periodic Journal January 9, 2002

Songkhla Road is all smiles

Songkhla, Thailand – The south of Thailand is poor. Very poor. Trekking up the rural coastal Songkhla Road introduced my eyes to a new meaning of the term poor. There was a constant flow of people—not two villages in 150 kilometers as my map indicates.

There were old men gathering on the front porches inviting me up for a drink of whiskey. Old women were pushing heaping food carts down the road dodging trucks and endless streams of motorbikes. Barefoot children chased each other through mud, long grass and heaping mounds of garbage that accumulate in front of each home. And they were all smiling.

There are poorer places in the world than southern Thailand's Songkhla Road. There is no famine here. Food is one thing that the Thais have plenty of. But there is little else.

And an odd thing was happening on Songkhla Road. These poor but smiley people were running after me giving donations towards my project – starting a breast cancer center in Thailand.

PraYoon, my driver has been driving patiently behind me all day, every day.

We have a banner on the van explaining

in Thai what I'm doing and why, but we have had no plans to actively pursue fundraising while here in the poorest part of Thailand. At the very least we wanted to get the word out that there is such a disease as breast cancer and to be aware of it.

There aren't many statistics on breast cancer here in Thailand. No cancer registry means no efficient statistics. No statistics imply that breast cancer is not a problem here. If it's not a problem there's no education in fighting it.

Consequently women don't go to the doctor until the very last stages at which point are told to home and prepare to die.

They go home, no records are kept and the silent cycle continues. This scenario doesn't apply to everyone as some cases are caught early, but no one knows that percentage.

My mission here in Thailand is to get the press to list the symptoms in the newspapers. We'll also explain that the earlier you get in to see the doctor with these symptoms the better your chances of survival.

All funds raised here in Thailand benefit the Lampang Regional Cancer Center. It will use the donations to start a new breast cancer department.

This is the very beginning of an awareness campaign in Thailand. It's not going to be easy, but as they say, "a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step." And I'm not talking about my walk.

Letofsky encourages anyone, especially breast cancer survivors, to join her for any segment of the trip

To follow Letofsky's progress, check out her periodic journal entries on the Global Walk for Breast Cancer's website at www.globalwalk.org, and get your walking shoes ready; she expects all of Denver to join her for the last leg to Vail in 2003. *Source: Vail Daily; Vail, Colorado*

OA Announcements

Oncology Associates, a division of RC Medical, Inc. is pleased to announce a series of internal promotions, along with the announcement of the hiring of new personnel.

Joseph Lewarski has been appointed Chief Operating Officer and managing partner. Mr. Lewarski is one of the founding partners and previously held the position of Vice President of Sales and Marketing. Mr. Lewarski has over 17 years of health care and business management experience.

Brent Evans has been promoted to Vice President of Sales and Marketing. Mr. Evans has been with Oncology Associates for over two years and previously held the position of executive manager. In this role, Brent will be responsible for all marketing and sales activities, contracting, and client support. Mr. Evans has over 16 years of health care sales and marketing experience.

Stephanie Chapman has joined Oncology Associates as the Administrative Manager. Ms. Chapman is responsible for all administrative operations, contract analysis and account reconciliation. Ms. Chapman has over 10 years of office management experience.

John Christopher, President and co-founder of Oncology Associates said, "We are pleased to enter into 2002 with such an outstanding management team. I feel strongly that these strategic personnel initiatives will help us to better meet our client's present and future needs."

Please send your stories to OA so that others who read them can be filled with hope and inspiration to press on against cancer. Send your stories to bevans@rcmed.com or fax to 216.486.7456 marked *Attention Editor*.