



With Members in Mind

As I stood face to face with the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, PA, I could not help thinking of our country's forefathers. Seeing this icon of American history allowed me to imagine the immense challenge they faced roughly 228 years ago. A group of independent thinkers came together for the common good of an idea they could

LIB·ER·TY ('lib-ər-tē) *n*

- 1: a. The condition of being free from restriction or control.
- b. The right and power to act, believe, or express oneself in a manner of one's own choosing.
- 2: Freedom from unjust or undue governmental control.

Brent A. Evans

*Executive Vice President and
General Manager, Oncology Associates
bevans@rcmed.com*

all agree upon; Freedom. At press time, I couldn't help but reflect on the similarity to the situation that our members face today.

While recently in the City of Brotherly Love for the Oncology Associates Annual Physician Member conference, I had time to do a brief sight seeing tour with my family. Taking in the view of historical monuments like Independence Hall, by every estimate, the birthplace of the United States, I tried to put myself in the shoes of Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. What were their thoughts and feelings while writing the Declaration of Independence under the threat of loss of life and personal wealth?

We all know today that despite great risk, those determined leaders forged ahead to carve out the very principles we as Americans take for granted on a daily basis. On a hot August day, I concluded that it must have been impossible for our country's leaders to know then in 1776 where their words would take us as a nation today in 2004. But, they did what they thought was best at the time, without compromise.

Now in 2004, the independent oncologist faces the unknown rewards or ramifications to their actions in a changing

reimbursement environment. Many of you are pioneers in this field of private practice medicine, building from scratch just like the first leaders of our country. Where will your collective actions as individual physicians lead us in the future of medicine? Will the quality and depth of care we have come to take for granted

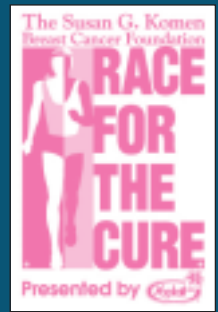
withstand the immense pressure of legislative action?

There is a choice to be made in your practice and it may be more out of a sense of duty than that of ensured gain. In Philadelphia, hearing our member's success stories, there is no doubt that they are impressive in their clinical significance. Even more impressive is how each story conveys the **power to act** that physicians have given to patients and families when faced with cancer. Were it not for your intelligence, concern and sheer guts of being in business, there may exist a much bleaker outlook concerning the outcomes of chemotherapy treatment.

Patients do not have a choice when it comes to being diagnosed with cancer. However, you do have liberties when it comes to treating those patients. I certainly hope that during these times of critical decision making, a group of independent and adventurous thinkers can come together for the common good and maintain the highest level of cancer care known to man.

OA is dedicated to your successful delivery of the finest cancer care possible. **OA**

OA staff members and their families will "suit up" in running gear on October 9, 2004 to participate in the Susan G. Komen Foundation's Race for the Cure.[®] This



race to fight breast cancer will be held at Voinovich Park at Northcoast Harbor in Downtown Cleveland.

"It thrills us that we can contribute to the global cancer community by participating in this race. We urge all of our members to get involved in a local race in your community," says Dennis Wollschleger, OA Chief Executive Officer.

For more than 20 years, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation has been a global leader in the fight against breast cancer through its support of innovative research and community-based outreach programs. Through The Komen Race for the Cure,[®] the Komen Foundation is fighting to eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease by funding research grants and supporting education, screening and treatment projects in communities around the world.

For more information on the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation or to find a race in your community, visit www.komen.org. If your practice is involved with unique events supporting the cancer community, please share your stories and pictures with us. We would like to feature you in upcoming issues of OA Member News. Email stories to kdesatnik@rcmed.com or fax to 440-995-1540.