

SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS

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Voices – Mukherjee Article Pg G2

Photo tells story at cancer center

The large entryway photograph captures the beaming faces of about three dozen young mothers and their joyful, if not completely cooperative, young children—all gathered for a summer picnic. The picture greets visitors to the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, where so many children with leukemia have come for treatment. The bright faces proclaim to all who enter that this is a place where children can be cured of cancer. But the true miracle of the photo—known only to those who take the time to read the caption—is that it was the mothers who long ago were patients on the ward for childhood acute leukemia; the children in the photo are the completely healthy generation these survivors have brought into the world.

I first saw this photo in 1986 when, as a young and recently married Yale internal medicine graduate I was interviewing for training fellowships in oncology. We all have our reasons for choosing cancer medicine as a career. That photo surely has been one of mine.

The story of the development of treatments for childhood leukemia and the revolution in cancer therapy that followed is an extraordinary tale of determination and courage. The very first clues to the treatment of this disease emerged in the late 1940s. Twenty-five years later, the cure rate for these children exceeded 80 percent.

This is a story that will forever belong to the patients and nurses and doctors who battled through doubt and

despair and whose gift to us is the hope and promise of ever more effective cancer therapy.

The amazing chapter in the history of medicine is told by Dr. Siddhartha Mukherjee in his Pulitzer Prize-

winning book "The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer." The book tells this complex scientific story with extraordinary clarity. It honors the struggles and sacrifices of patients who in their quest to survive also advanced the science for the generations to follow.

Dr. Mukherjee comes to Santa Barbara on Oct. 22 to present "Where We Are on the War on Cancer," courtesy of UCSB Arts & Lectures and an anonymous gift to Cancer Center of Santa Barbara. It's a talk patients and doctors alike will want to attend.

Also, today we celebrate those in our community who've been touched by cancer and raise money to support cancer research in our community at Cancer Center's 19th annual Walk/Run at Montecito Union School.

More than two decades after I first came to Santa Barbara, I marvel at how far we have come—how much has changed. At Dr. Mukherjee's talk, we will have an opportunity to reflect on how we got here. And at the Cancer Center Walk/Run, we'll have a chance to help ensure the progress continues. Both will be events that honor sacrifice and celebrate hope.

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VOICE FROM SANTA BARBARA

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GUEST OPINION

Flawed thinking and slaughter on Santa Rosa Island

The unnecessary and cruel killing of non-hunted and non-harmed deer on Santa Rosa Island is a tragedy that should be stopped. These animals are not pests; they are a vital part of the island's ecosystem. The island's deer population has been declining for decades, and the current culling is a desperate measure that will only exacerbate the problem. We need to find a sustainable solution that respects the island's wildlife and its unique environment.

LETTERS TO THE NEWS-PRESS

Flights still pricey at peaky new airport

It's been a year since the new airport opened, and the high prices for flights during peak travel times remain a significant barrier for many. The airport authority should explore ways to reduce these costs, such as increasing the number of airlines or negotiating better rates with existing carriers.

UNION MEMBERS ARE RAILED AT STATE

The state's treatment of union members is a disgrace. The laws that restrict their rights to organize and bargain collectively are outdated and unfair. We need to restore the balance of power between workers and employers.

A new Campbell bridge can't fail

The new Campbell bridge is a landmark project that will greatly improve traffic flow in the city. It's essential that the project be completed on time and within budget. We need to ensure that the bridge is built to last and meets the needs of the community.

WPA, wonderful sites at walking

The Walking with a Purpose (WPA) program is a wonderful initiative that provides a safe and enjoyable way for people to stay active. The program's focus on walking is a simple yet effective way to improve health and well-being.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Share your thoughts on local issues and events. We want to hear from you!

Peace Prize for an Arab woman

A young Arab woman has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in promoting peace and reconciliation in her region. Her courage and dedication are an inspiration to all.