



TREASURE COAST DERMATOLOGY

Specializing in the Treatment of Skin Cancer

January 2, 2013

DEAR FRIENDS:

Our practice has seen its fair share of changes over the years, but one thing that has remained a tradition is the yearly patient letter.

As many of you know, each year I write a letter to talk about things that have gone on in the practice and personally, comment on some current issues, and of course, announce the date and time of our appreciation party.

This annual event is called an appreciation party for exactly that reason, and every few years, I like to tell the story of how it came about.

Several months after I first opened my practice, I had a party for the local physicians. I had been in the community for some months and wanted to show off our new, more modern office. Only one physician attended the party. I was pretty shocked. Worried too. I was in the midst of learning the hard way that a medical practice is also a small business with all that it entails.

I later relayed my story to a patient, and he posed this question: "Why are you having a party for other doctors when it's your patients who decide to choose you for their care?"

This really hit home with me. Within a couple of months, we had our first party, for our patients. About two hundred people showed up. I had someone come and cook hot dogs, and barbeque. Two local entertainers set up a small stage and played classic oldies as well as popular modern tunes. The weather was great.

It went so well that I decided to have this event every year to show our patients how much we appreciate them.

Though some things have changed, we still have BBQ, and believe it or not, those same entertainers are still playing for us, just like they did the very first year.

So, this year, **our party will be held on ~~Saturday, February 16th~~ between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. at Digital Domain Park (formerly Tradition Field) – 527 NW Peacock Blvd. Port St. Lucie, FL 34986.**

On a personal note, my wife and I had our first child in September of 2011. A daughter named Cammy Andrea Ioannides (we call her CC).

People have asked how we ended up naming her after my wife, who is also named Cammy.

I'll be honest: it was all my idea.

My wife did not, at first, want to name our child after herself, so I wouldn't really agree too enthusiastically to any of the ideas she had. When she was eight months pregnant, and time was growing short, she asked me why I wanted to name our first baby after her.

I told her this: "I want to name the girl I love after the girl I love."

Whether it was because she was eight months pregnant or because she saw how moved I was to be starting a family with her, she agreed.

My wife and I tried for years to have a child and got nowhere. We were not sure we would ever have children together. And though we always knew adoption was an option, we sought some help, and to our delight, Cammy became pregnant.

Our daughter is doing great, and I'm happy to tell everyone that we're expecting our second child in July. We are so thankful for our health and our family.

ON TO SOME PRACTICE NEWS:

As many of you are aware, Dr. Sanders and I are now operating separate offices. We have been friends for a long time, and I am proud to have helped him start his practice. He is a fine physician, and we wish him the best.

Our newest physician, **Dr. Laura DeStefano**, is also doing well. She is becoming busier and busier, and her positive reputation in the community continues to grow. Dr. DeStefano is double Board Certified in both Dermatology and Internal Medicine.

Dr. DeStefano's husband, Scott, has been managing Treasure Coast Dermatology's (TCD) computer needs for many years now. I consider him a close and good friend. Please make an effort to meet Dr. DeStefano and Scott at the party.

I would also like to mention another physician who has been part of the TCD family for many years, **Dr. Cindy Golomb**. She has been, more or less, in the background running our dermatopathology laboratory.

As we have gotten busier, Dr. Golomb has offered to help see patients on the Treasure Coast.

She is double Board Certified in both Dermatology and Dermatopathology and is a professor at the University of Miami, where she assists in training future dermatologists. We're so glad to have her on board in a more active role.

As I mentioned earlier, I usually like to comment on current issues. These views are not always seen as politically correct, but I feel the issues are important.

First, medicine is changing in this country. Many doctors' practices, especially dermatology practices, have switched to prioritizing cosmetic services such as collagen and Botox in order to bolster their bottom lines. Even the representative from my malpractice insurance carrier lectured me on the importance of practicing cosmetics from a "business perspective."

It's gotten so bad that the waiting list in some offices is tomorrow if you want Botox and three months if you think you have a skin cancer. When I first came to the Treasure Coast, I worked for a plastic surgeon. I did those cosmetic procedures and more.

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I left that practice, and since the early days of TCD, I have chosen to stay away from cosmetics.

Don't get me wrong, the money is great in a cosmetic practice. It's cash. People pay up front, and you don't have to deal with insurance companies. But I quickly realized that I didn't go to medical school to do liposuction and lip plumping. I went to help sick people get better.

The other doctors who have worked with our practice have shared my feelings.

We are a MEDICAL dermatology practice. Not a cosmetic one.

We specialize in the treatment of skin cancer. We will stay that way for as long as we can. Our goal is to be the best doctors for you to see when you have a problem with your skin. We understand we cannot be all things to all people and we don't want to.

If you are a patient and do want Botox or something like that, ask us, and we'll do our best to find you someone who specializes in that cosmetic service, not someone who took it up as a sideline to bolster their revenue.

ON TO THE NON PC PART:

In last year's letter, I encouraged you to vote for those you thought would represent what you felt was best for you, your neighbor, and your country.

Our country just went through a bruising election. Whether you were pleased with the results or not, no one can be proud of the way this election was run. Personally, I think both sides wasted millions of dollars running negative campaigns. If either side was truly concerned, they could have spent half as much and used the rest to help our fellow citizens. But politics is politics.

Many of you don't know this, but when I was in high school, I had the opportunity to go to Washington D.C. as a congressional page. As a page, I was like a fly on the wall. People, powerful congressmen, talked openly, as if I wasn't there.

Afterwards, I was often asked what I learned from the experience.

I spoke frankly. I would say that I learned I never wanted to enter politics. I thought it was too dirty, even then.

And I am not so idealistic to think it has changed much.

I was disappointed with some of the things I saw after this most recent election. People talked of secession, of leaving the country, of splitting the country.

WE ARE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Our countrymen, our fellow citizens, our forefathers freed this country from a monarchy, sustained us after the Civil War, won World War I, lived through the Great Depression, beat a horrible dictator in World War II, faced down the Russian nuclear threat of the 50s and 60s, fought in the Korean War, fought in the Vietnam War, the Iran-Iraq War, the War in Afghanistan, survived the horrible attacks of September 11, 2001...

And some want to split up because they don't like the president? Well, hang around for four more years and vote for someone that you like better. World War II lasted more than six years. Do these secessionists think they are sacrificing more than the citizens of that time did?

If you don't like the politics in this country, fine, but don't give up on the sacrifices of the men and women who have fought for this country and given so much. Many of those people are around us every day, and we take them and the freedom they have given us for granted.

I know I'm your doctor, and not a politician, but the next time someone around you talks of leaving this country, or asks you to sign a secessionist petition (as some of my patients have) ask them what they think the people who have given their lives for this country would want.

We owe those who came before us.

In that same spirit, we, as a people, cannot cast off our debt to the generations above.

I hear politicians want to cut Medicare and Social Security. The people on Medicare and Social Security are owed a debt for building this country and keeping it together. They were made a promise. If keeping the generation above me in Medicare means mine will start at the age of 67 instead of 65, that's okay by me. The politicians in this country can make this work.

This is part of the commitment I am talking about. We can't cut out of our commitments because it's convenient. Again, we owe those who came before us. We have a debt to care for them and sustain what they have given to us.

IN CLOSING, I'M GOING TO QUOTE ABRAHAM LINCOLN, GETTYSBURG, 1863:

"It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

As the United States, we can conquer any difficulty. Divided, we fall.

I believe this country's best days lie ahead.

I look forward to seeing you at the party.

Sincerely,

Tim Ioannides, M.D.

TIM IOANNIDES, M.D.

P.S. I wrote this letter between Christmas and New Year's Day. Just after I sent it off to the printer, my mother was diagnosed with lung cancer. Please keep her in your thoughts.