

# SCRIPPS PROTON THERAPY

# CONNECT

A quarterly newsletter for Scripps Proton Therapy Center patients, their families, and others interested in proton therapy treatment.

Winter 2016 Vol. 1, No. 1



Credit: Greg Barnette/Record Searchlight

Joyce and Joe Hampton both had cancer treatment at Scripps Proton Therapy Center.

## Couple Shares Gratitude for Proton Therapy

### Meet Joe and Joyce Hampton

Joe and Joyce Hampton enjoy many activities together as husband and wife, such as traveling the country, exploring museums, and taking in the latest movies.

*"Just being at home together is the best of all," said Joyce.*

This past holiday season found the longtime Redding, California residents feeling appreciative for a totally different sort of shared experience. Both recently underwent proton therapy at Scripps to treat their cancers. And both returned to full health in time to celebrate the holiday season with a family that includes 17 grandchildren.

Last May, Joyce finished her treatments for breast cancer. Due to her pre-existing

heart condition, Joyce's case was especially sensitive; conventional X-ray radiation to treat her breast would have also likely damaged her heart. Joyce instead chose proton therapy knowing that the extremely precise form of external beam radiation treatment effectively kills tumors, while sparing more of a patient's nearby healthy tissue than conventional X-ray radiation.

Joyce said she experienced minimal side effects during her treatments. Today, she keeps active by scrapbooking, serving as a member of the California Highway Patrol's senior volunteer program, and serving with Joe as a greeter at their church, Redding First Church of the Nazarene.

Before choosing it for herself, Joyce gained an up-close look at proton therapy. She was by Joe's side when he was treated for prostate cancer at Scripps in 2014.

Joe, who served in the U.S. Navy for 21 years and spent part of that time as a radiation technologist, was already familiar with the accuracy of proton therapy. He completed his treatments just before Thanksgiving 2014. During therapy, Joe felt well enough to join Joyce on frequent visits to San Diego landmarks including the USS Midway Museum, Cabrillo National Monument, the San Diego Zoo and Balboa Park.

*"I'm as healthy now as I was before the treatments," said Joe, 75, who personally maintains the landscaping at his home's 5-acre property, which is lined with giant oak, pine and manzanita trees.*

Scripps Proton Therapy Center holds a special place in the Hamptons' hearts.

*"One thing really stuck with us when we were both going through our treatments," Joyce said. "We met so many other patients who were also there to be treated for cancer, but everyone seemed so upbeat. The atmosphere was more like a party than a medical facility."*

**SPTConnect** is a quarterly newsletter for Scripps Proton Therapy Center patients, their families, and others interested in proton therapy treatment. We invite you to stay up to date with the latest proton news and developments, both here at Scripps and around the world. We hope you enjoy the newsletter, and we welcome your comments and suggestions for future issues. Email us at [SPTConnect@scrippshealth.org](mailto:SPTConnect@scrippshealth.org).



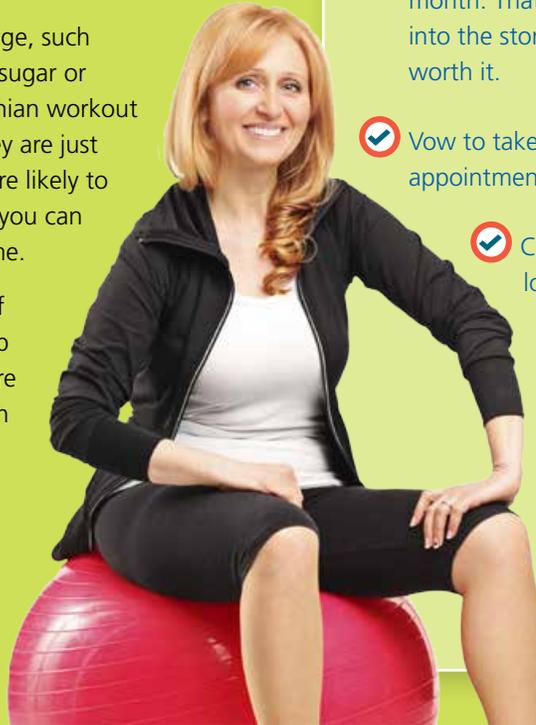
# Healthy Living | *Make a Fresh Start for Spring*

If your New Year's resolution didn't survive for more than a couple of weeks, spring is a great time to make a fresh start. Scripps family medicine specialist Christen Benke, D.O., shares tips to make it easier to succeed.

"Many people end up abandoning their goal, often because they set rules for themselves that are simply not realistic," says Dr. Benke. "This leads to frustration, discouragement and, eventually, giving up."

If you're trying to make a lifestyle change, such as dropping a few pounds, eating less sugar or exercising more, crash diets and draconian workout regimens likely won't stick because they are just too hard to maintain. You're much more likely to succeed if you start with changes that you can make right away, and build on over time.

Set an achievable goal. Avoid biting off more than you can chew. Don't sign up for a marathon if you've never run more than a few miles for exercise. Start with something more appropriate, like a 5K or even a one-mile "fun run." Choose something that almost seems too easy, like walking for 10 minutes, so that you can do it and feel successful almost immediately.



Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- ✔ Instead of giving up all sugar, give up sugary soda or pastries for two weeks. "I've found that after a week or two without sugar or simple carbohydrates like doughnuts, my patients lose their cravings for them," says Dr. Benke.
- ✔ Refuse to buy any food from a fast-food drive-through for a month. That way you have to get out of your car and walk into the store or restaurant, and you may decide it isn't worth it.
- ✔ Vow to take the stairs instead of the elevator — even if your appointment is on the 10th floor.
- ✔ Challenge yourself to park at the other end of the lot, as far away from your destination as possible.
- ✔ Every night, write down three things you are grateful for.

"It's really all about psychology and tricking your brain into accepting a new habit that you can maintain, Dr. Benke says. "You'll likely find that once you start practicing these new behaviors, they'll stay with you."

## In the News

### Scripps Proton Therapy Center to Host First Advisory Committee Meeting

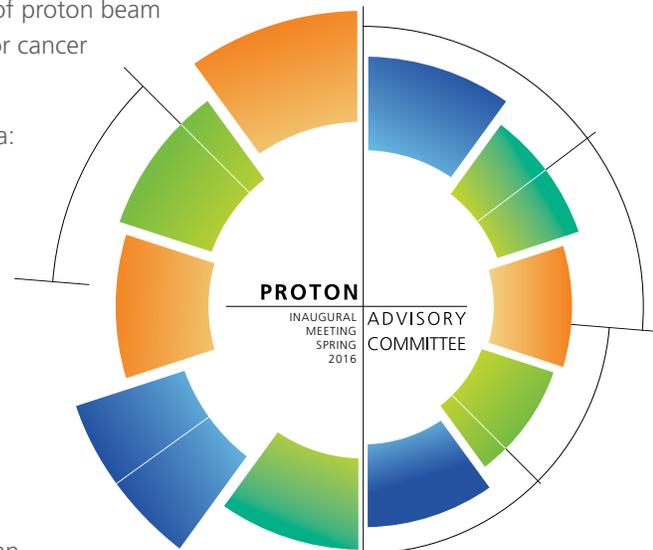
Scripps Proton Therapy Center is pleased to host the inaugural meeting of the Proton Advisory Committee on March 4-5, 2016. Held in collaboration with UCSD, Rady Children's Hospital and Varian Medical Systems, the event will bring together radiation oncology thought leaders in the Western United States to meet and exchange developments in proton beam therapy. In addition, it will provide a forum to discuss opportunities

to promote greater acceptance of proton beam therapy as a treatment option for cancer patients.

Among the topics on the agenda:

- An overview of current and pending proton beam treatment technology
- Ongoing and future proton beam research and clinical trials
- Update on proton beam therapy national insurance policy coverage and trends

The meeting will take place in San Diego, California. Stay tuned for a report.





Dale James holds two of the masks he has crafted for pediatric proton therapy patients.

## The Man Behind the Masks

When pediatric patients come to Scripps Proton Therapy Center for treatment, they're welcomed by a familiar cast of characters, including Superman, Spider Man, Power Rangers, Scooby Doo and Ninja Turtles.

The faces adorn the masks our young patients wear during proton treatment to keep their heads in the proper position. By transforming the plain masks into a collection of popular superheroes and cartoon stars, tech Dale James finds a unique way to connect with the kids. He says it helps alleviate fears and brightens their day a little.

*"The reaction and response you get from the kids when they first see their mask is*

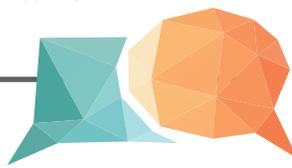
*what it's all about," James says. "I think it also helps put the parents at ease too. They see the mask and think, 'Wow, if they're going to these lengths, I know we're really going to get great care."*

Not only do his fellow staff members support him, they play an important role in what has turned out to be a kind of team-building activity. When new

pediatric patients come to the center, the staff will ask questions about their likes and interests. They relay that information back to James, who uses it to figure out which character he's going to create. James says the great leadership and camaraderie he and his coworkers enjoy makes it possible for him to do the masks, and he credits his colleagues for relieving him when possible to give him time to finish his creations. He incorporates different materials into the masks, creating an ever-increasing number of characters. Recent masks include: Hello Kitty, Captain America, and the Incredible Hulk among others.

James also realizes the role his artwork plays in helping make everyone's day a little better.

*"When you're talking about cancer and kids, it can get really draining on you," James notes. "This is something that helps make it less traumatic and lightens things up. It helps lift the spirits of the kids, and the spirits of our staff as well."*



Is there someone at Scripps Proton Therapy Center whom you'd like to know more about? Email us at [SPTConnect@scrippshealth.org](mailto:SPTConnect@scrippshealth.org), and we may feature him or her in a future issue.



### Proton Therapy: Did You Know?

Proton therapy has been used for cancer care in the U.S. since the 1950s and has gradually become more prevalent in recent decades. There are currently 20 proton therapy centers for cancer care in the United States, and only two in Southern California. Scripps is the only center in the region to use pencil-beam scanning technology exclusively in every treatment room.



## Join Us for Our First SPTConnect Event!

We invite you to meet and connect with other patients and SPTC staff. Hear from our physicians regarding health and wellness following proton therapy, and learn about "The Power of Positivity" from Michael Campbell, EdD, MBA, CEAP. Appetizers and beverages will be served.

**Thursday, March 31  
4:30 - 6:30 p.m.**

Scripps Proton Therapy Center  
9730 Summers Ridge Road  
San Diego, CA 92121

Visit [scripps.org/SPTConnect](https://scripps.org/SPTConnect) to RSVP

## Become a Scripps Proton Therapy Champion!

Because new patients and those considering proton therapy can greatly benefit from hearing your story, we invite you to serve as a Scripps Proton Therapy Champion. Our Champions are willing and available to speak with new and potential patients to share their experiences with proton therapy, offer insights and answer questions. Visit [scripps.org/SPTConnect](https://scripps.org/SPTConnect) to volunteer.



If you are interested in staying connected with the Scripps Proton Therapy Center, join **SPTConnect** online at [scripps.org/SPTConnect](https://scripps.org/SPTConnect).



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