

## Jim Palsgrove

Jim Palsgrove says he's living proof of the value of routine blood tests.

The 78-year-old Troy native began 2010 with a welcome change in his daily routine. No longer dotting his calendar were the daily trips to the UVMC Cancer Care Center for radiation treatments. He'd driven to the center a few miles each weekday over eight weeks for the treatments following discovery of prostate cancer last summer. His cancer was diagnosed after one of his twice yearly blood tests showed an elevated prostate-specific antigen (PSA).

Palsgrove's 43rd and final radiation treatment came on Dec. 31, 2009. "I didn't have to go into a new year," he said with a smile. On his final day of treatment, Palsgrove was presented with a "diploma" from the Cancer Care Center staff.

"I had teased the girls (working in Cancer Care). I asked 'Do I get a certificate or diploma or anything for doing this?' They came out with a diploma and gave it to me. I got emotional," Palsgrove recalled.

---

### ADVICE from Jim Palsgrove

- Keep active.
  - Take care of your body and your health.
  - Have blood work done regularly.
  - Listen to the doctors and what treatments they say are necessary.
  - Go into treatment with a positive attitude.
  - Have faith.
- 

Jean Heath, Director of the Cancer Care Center, assured Palsgrove that tears are not uncommon as treatment concludes.

"We have a lot of patients who feel that way. You have cancer. You went through treatment. You are putting it behind you," she said.

Palsgrove mentioned by name each Cancer Care Center employee who worked with him. "They are great people.

They treated me wonderful," he said. "I never had to wait. I was usually in and out of here in 20 minutes. I never felt a thing."

Palsgrove, a Korean War veteran, retired from the CSX railroad after 43 years of service. He and his wife of 56 years, Shirley, have two children, three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

When he was told he had cancer, Palsgrove was scared. He discussed that reaction with Ronald Setzkorn, M.D., radiation oncologist and Director of the UVMC Cancer Care Center.

"I said 'You know what, cancer is a very scary word and it really scares me.'"

Dr. Setzkorn asked Palsgrove a series of questions, addressed his concerns and helped him settle on a treatment plan after Palsgrove read literature and checked out options by doing Internet research.

As he underwent treatment, he fielded a variety of questions from friends, such as whether the treatment hurt. He used the questions as an opportunity to educate about cancer detection and treatment.

"You need to get your blood work twice a year... for a PSA. Do not think that you might be the one who will not get it. Take care of your health because, if you don't, something could happen and it could be too late for proper treatment," he said.

Palsgrove said remaining active – he rides a bike, walks and works a couple of days a week at Baird Funeral Home - and monitoring his health have paid off.

"I hear people say, 'I never go to the doctor.' I do. I don't want something wrong, but I want to find out if there is something wrong so I can take care of my problem."

He also takes care of those who take care of him, treating the Cancer Care Center staff to Esther Price candy when his treatment had ended.

His accompanying handwritten note remains on the door of the center break room's refrigerator. It reads: "I really do appreciate how well you took care of me. You are a good team. Thanks, and enjoy."