



**Two Pennies Worth:
Advice from Charles "Butch" Severino, four year survivor of lung cancer**

Charles "Butch" Severino, a 68-year old lung cancer survivor from East Northport, NY began his battle in 2007 when he experienced breathing problems. As an active man Butch regularly enjoyed workouts and physical activity, but noticed it took longer to recover and he was often short of breath. After a visit to his physician, an X-Ray revealing spots on his lungs and a week wait for the results of a CAT-scan, Butch and his wife Lorraine finally had a diagnosis. Stage IV lung cancer.

When asked to share one single piece of advice with others facing lung cancer, Butch says, "It's simple. Do not wait a single day. Treatment has to be early."

"What stands out in my mind," said Lorraine "is the inefficiencies I saw all around me. Lung cancer is a progressive disease and all that was offered to us was delays—weeks to get results, hours in the waiting room. We decided we would not let inefficiencies and delays steal away our time. Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA) at Midwestern Regional Medical Center in Zion, Illinois provided an entire diagnosis in the time that it took others to do a CAT-scan."

"My wife looked over at me and said, 'Butch, time is against us'," he said. "And I knew she was right. She's always right and it's a good thing too because Lorraine fought for me when I couldn't fight for myself."

Butch had seven rounds of chemotherapy before complications forced him to a local emergency room, where he soon went into respiratory arrest. "I was choking on everything I ate or drank—little did I know the fluids were building up in my lungs—and after going into cardiac arrest, the doctors put me into an induced coma on the eve of Thanksgiving. When I woke up, it was Christmas Eve."

When asked for a second piece of advice, Butch responds "Remember, it is just as hard to *watch* lung cancer as is it to have it."

"For loved ones, I think it is important to get all the information, not just about the disease, but about how to cope yourself because watching cancer is no joke. Chemo is not joke," said Butch. "When I looked like a lawn sprinkler, in a coma, Lorraine fought to get me back to CTCA, where we knew we could get the best treatment."

In June 2012, Butch will have been in remission for five years.

"I owe my life to CTCA," he says. "I wasn't in good shape but thanks to Dr. Levin's cocktail I've been in remission for four years. My wife asked me once, 'Are you going to make it?' Of course I said yes, but without her and without CTCA the story might have been different."