

### Our Volunteers: Glittering Jewels in a Regional Treasure Chest -By Tracy Brown

Since we launched our regional outreach in the fall of 2015, we've learned a lot about the areas we're leaning into. One lesson is that with such a big territory to cover, we can't be everywhere at once. We certainly can't be in two places at the same time. So what's the solution? We dip our hands into a magnificent treasure trove of regional volunteers!

Who are Coalition volunteers? They are breast cancer survivors, family members, friends of survivors, colleagues, organization supporters, students of all ages – and passionate advocates! Volunteers have staffed booths and tables at health and wellness fairs, they've greeted attendees at our regional evening educational seminars, signed in participants of regional Gentle Yoga classes, and they've helped us by delivering our materials to physicians, local agencies, and other community stakeholders.

Regional volunteers – those precious jewels from Central and Western New York – are on hand to make a special delivery on our behalf, attend our programs, and refer survivors back to the Coalition. Some have taken our peer mentor training and joined Coalition committees – like Peg Jacobs, a breast cancer survivor



Regional volunteer and breast cancer survivor Laurie Miller represents the Coalition at a wellness fair in Williamson, NY

spotlighted in this newsletter.

Colleagues who volunteer to share our information and help us “spread the word” when we launch a new regional program or offer a regional evening educational seminar are invaluable. As we learn the best ways to reach regional survivors, we're grateful we can count on these Coalition supporters to help us deliver our messages.

BCCR.org/regional

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### Regional Breast Cancer Survivors: We need YOU!

Would you like to learn more about becoming a volunteer? We'd love to hear from you! Contact Tracy Brown directly at [tracy@bccr.org](mailto:tracy@bccr.org) or call 585-473-8177.

Let's talk about the ways you can support the Coalition's outreach and programs in YOUR area.



Covering such a large area has its challenges. (Don't worry, we're up for it!) And with your help, we'll be everywhere we need to be at just the right time. So let's hear from you. How would you like to help us reach more regional survivors and give them the support they need? There are many ways you can help. Call us! ☺

### Regional Programs -By Tracy Brown

**Fulfilling YOUR Needs** – After piloting a successful Gentle Yoga program in Dansville, we scheduled a 4-week pilot of Gentle Yoga for Bath!

#### Healing Arts - Gentle Yoga Continues

In May, we started another free 6-week session of Gentle Yoga classes for breast and gynecologic cancer survivors in and around Dansville. Classes are led by yoga instructor Kate Drake, RYT/OTR, and focus on reducing stress, fatigue, and pain.

#### A Second Healing Arts Pilot

In June, we began a free 4-week pilot session of Gentle Yoga classes for breast and gynecologic cancer survivors in and around Bath. These classes, also led by Kate Drake, foster a supportive and therapeutic environment for survivors to meet.

#### June 9: Healthy Choices -

Breast Cancer Survivors & Nutrition (Batavia, NY)

Rochester Regional Health - United Memorial Medical Center's Amy Miller, a registered dietitian, presented on how eating a healthy diet and getting the right amount of exercise could help lower the risk of breast cancer recurrence.

#### Community Co-sponsors:

Senator Michael H. Ranzenhofer (New York State 61st Senate District)

Rochester Regional Health - United Memorial Medical Center

Learn more about the Coalition's regional activities.

Call 585-473-8177 or visit our website at [www.bccr.org/regional/](http://www.bccr.org/regional/)

Regional breast cancer survivor Maureen Kingston; her son, Luke; and her friend Carolyn Sheild - who traveled all the way from Boston to join Maureen at our Pink Ribbon Run & Walk, held annually on Mother's Day in Rochester!



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### Survivor Spotlight continued

Coalition works for a good cause. “Anything we can do to help people [someone who is newly diagnosed] get through this time is important,” Peg said. “So many people helped me.”

A member of the Coalition's newly formed Regional Community Outreach Committee, Peg remarked that “Breast cancer gives you a new perspective, and you meet a lot of interesting people along the way. Being a part of the Breast Cancer Coalition is a very positive thing, and I tell people to come here when they are just beginning because the Coalition can walk them through things.”

Peg makes her home with her husband, Howard. Their daughter lives close by, while their son lives out of state.

As our conversation came to a close, Peg shared that, in retrospect, her breast cancer became her “winter nuisance” – a winter of doctors' appointments and treatment. But she does not let breast cancer define her, and continues to paddle, hike, and travel. In fact, every two years she goes on an international hike with friends, and has hiked in Scotland, Austria, and Italy.

“You can't start out with the real negative [when you receive a breast cancer diagnosis]. You've got to start out with ‘I'm going to take care of this,’ and then get on with life.”

And today, whether by paddle or on foot, Peg “gets on” very well. ☺

### Save the Date! 'Tee'd Off at Breast Cancer Golf Tournament

Our 14th annual golf tournament will take place on July 25 at the Brook-Lea Country Club in Rochester. Call us at 585-473-8177 if you would like to learn more!

## Survivor Spotlight -By Tracy Brown



**Peg Jacobs** – We met Peg Jacobs at a survivor round table discussion hosted by State Senator Cathy Young in Dansville last fall. Peg’s an active lady, a hiker and paddler who had little time for a breast cancer diagnosis. Her boundless energy is inspiring.

In October of 2014, Peg Jacobs of Dansville went for her routine mammogram. Faithfully keeping a promise to a close friend who was lost to breast cancer years ago, Peg had made this appointment every year since turning 40. As usual, the mammogram appeared normal. Due to her dense breast tissue, Peg’s radiologist always followed up with an ultrasound. This time, the right breast was fine, but the left revealed a problem. A biopsy was performed immediately, and the next day her doctor confirmed her suspicions: it was breast cancer.

A whirlwind of medical appointments began. Peg’s primary care physician fast-tracked her paperwork, and she was quickly sent to Rochester for an MRI. She called the office of a breast surgeon who agreed to see her early the next morning. Peg learned that, with her diagnosis, she could opt for either a lumpectomy or a mastectomy. She chose the lumpectomy, and that was scheduled for the following week. The surgeon removed the tumor and three lymph nodes; thankfully, the nodes were clear. After her morning surgery in Rochester, Peg was home in Dansville by lunchtime.

In less than three weeks, she had moved from diagnosis through surgery. “It was like bing-bing-bing!” Peg shared at the survivor round table.

After consulting with her medical oncologist, Peg decided to have the OncotypeDX test to determine if she might benefit from chemotherapy. A low score was returned, so she felt safe in foregoing this treatment. Her radiation oncologist presented three choices: one week of radiation (twice per day); three weeks of radiation; or six weeks of “less intense, but more drawn out” radiation treatments. Peg opted for the three-week protocol.

“I had wonderful friends who drove me to treatment,” Peg said. “We shopped and had lunch afterward. Sometimes we’d go hiking, even in the bitter cold.” Radiation treatments ended in late January 2015. A very uncomfortable rash

appeared under her breasts after treatment, but went away in a few days.

Through everything, Peg kept up with her active lifestyle. In February, she went snowshoeing with friends in the Adirondacks. “It was a pivotal point for me. I still was hurting, and I was tired, but I was able to keep up. I knew I would be okay.”

Because Peg’s breast cancer was hormone receptor positive, she was prescribed exemestane (brand name Aromasin), an aromatase inhibitor. When she developed hives, Peg stopped the medication briefly. The hives disappeared, returning when she resumed taking the exemestane, so her doctor prescribed a different aromatase inhibitor: anastrozole. This time, there was no skin reaction.

When asked about her experience with the aromatase inhibitor, Peg confirms that she has joint pain and feels achy at times. She practices “motion and (the occasional) Motrin.” A firm believer that it’s important to keep moving, Peg hikes, paddles, and takes yoga classes. And she is one of our regional volunteers who helps with the Coalition’s Gentle Yoga program offered in Dansville.

“You can get frustrated and confused because everybody tells you all kinds of things [they think you should do]. I think at that point you have to sit back and say, ‘I’m going to trust my doctors.’ If you feel comfortable with your team of people,

you need to listen to them and tune out everyone else,” Peg added.

A retiree from the Finger Lakes Developmental Disabilities Service Office, Peg is a volunteer CPR trainer for the Red Cross, helps out at her local library, is a part of Silver & Fit, and leads a weekly paddle group for the Adirondack Mountain Club. Earlier this year, she decided to participate in the Coalition’s Peer Advocates Lending Support (PALS) training held in Rochester. She’s “happy to help” others as a trained peer mentor, and feels the



*Peg on one of her many hiking adventures*

*Continued on back cover*

## What Can Regional Breast Cancer Survivors Access Now? -By Tracy Brown

The Coalition offers free educational opportunities, networking events, and supportive programs for breast cancer survivors. Gynecologic cancer survivors are welcome to join us, too. We also hold several important receptions every year.

While most events take place at our Rochester location, some programs can be adapted to meet the needs of our regional survivors. Learn more about these opportunities: call 585-473-8177 or email [info@bccr.org](mailto:info@bccr.org).

**Breast Cancer 101 (BC101)** allows a newly diagnosed person to pause and take a breath, to sit down and talk one-to-one with one of our trained staff members who can help review the available options and empower the individual to move forward in the best possible way. BC101 consultations usually take place at our facility, but our trained staff is available to talk on the phone if travel is difficult.

We’ve said it once, and we’ll say it again! **Young Survivor Soirees** are a GREAT way for younger breast cancer survivors to unwind, be pampered, and network with each

other. Held four times per year on a Friday evening, past Soirees have included wine, chocolates, and cheese tastings; juicing for better health; meditation and massages; and more! **Upcoming Soirees will be held on Friday, September 16, and on Friday, November 4.** Email [info@bccr.org](mailto:info@bccr.org) and request to be added to our invitation list – *RVSPs are required!*

**Our Thirteenth Annual Terri Schmitt Legislative Reception** will be held on August 10, 5:00pm - 7:00pm. This reception is held in honor of one of our beloved friends and fearless leaders, Terri Schmitt

– former Supervisor of the Town of Rush. Terri worked tirelessly in support of our mission to make the eradication of breast cancer a priority through education and advocacy, and to promote and focus research into the causes, prevention, treatment, and cure of breast cancer. This reception provides an opportunity to discuss how we can work together to realize Terri’s dream. *RSVP required.*

*Join us! If you have any questions, we are here to answer them! Contact the Coalition at 585-473-8177 or visit our website at [www.BCCR.org/programs/](http://www.BCCR.org/programs/) to learn more about all of our free programs for survivors. ☺*



*Colleen Schiedel from Cancer Services Program of Livingston & Wyoming Counties, and Lisa Franclemont from Cancer Services Program of Genesee & Orleans Counties - wonderful colleagues who help us "spread the word" about our regional activities!*

*Regional volunteer and breast cancer survivor Patty Bellohusen engages a health fair attendee in Lyons, NY*