At the Breast Cancer Coalition’s annual Holiday Open House in December, an astonished Melisande ("Mel") Bianchi was presented the Above and Beyond Award.

This yearly award is given to someone in our organization that always goes the extra distance to help others with breast cancer, volunteer at our fundraising events and is an active participant in the BCCR cause.

Mel’s generosity in all of these areas is exceptional. She never fails to attend committee meetings for our fundraisers, doing anything and everything needed. Her help with the annual ARTrageous Affair is legendary.

The Advocacy Committee is Mel’s favorite part of BCCR and she heads this committee. An empassioned spokeswoman for the legal and political needs of those coping with breast cancer, Mel puts many, many volunteer hours into Advocacy, going to Albany and Washington every year as an advocate and activist.

Presented to Mel, along with the award plaque, was another one of her favorite things - a signed Ramon Santiago print. She had been overheard saying how much she loved these prints, so it was the perfect gift!

Executive Director Holly Anderson presented the award, citing Mel’s ability to stretch beyond the limits.

Mel is a 5 year breast cancer survivor. She and her husband Richard have one daughter, Josette.

Advanced Breast Cancer Annual Seminar
April 4, 2008
see page 18 for details
Aspire, Inspire and Perspire*

As we near the end of the first quarter of 2008, the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester leaders have been hard at work. At the top of the agenda? A quick look back at the last ten years and a fresh look toward the next as we set the course for the future. During the process, our mission has been carefully evaluated and, as a result of many dedicated hours and cautious contemplation, we made some difficult decisions. The bottom line is that we came away with more resolve and more enthusiasm than ever about the future of our organization.

Our new mission statement is shorter, crisper and reflects what we do best:

“The Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester’s mission is to provide support to those touched by a diagnosis of breast cancer, to make access to information and care a priority through education and advocacy, and to empower women and men to participate fully in decisions relating to breast cancer.”

The next ten years? We envision a concentrated commitment made by staff, volunteers, advocates and activists, all impacted by a diagnosis of breast cancer in some way, as we work towards providing exemplary support programs to all those coping with breast cancer. We aspire to build upon our vibrant, compassionate community of survivors so that others will have a place to find solace. By doing so, we aim to inspire and enhance the lives of those coping with breast cancer by helping them face demanding and challenging situations with knowledge and strength. Sound like a plan? Perspire. We’re working on it! As always, send your thoughts, ideas and suggestions to us at the Coalition. And, yes, we know “cure it” is at the top of the list!

* The theme of our annual Pink Ribbon Run & Family Fitness Walk “Aspire, Inspire, Perspire” applies to everything we do! Save the date for our run/walk on Mother’s Day 2008! ☀️
News on Clinical Advances in Breast Cancer

The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) recently published its 2007 report on Clinical Cancer Advances. Excerpted here is their section on breast cancer. ASCO can be found online at www.asco.org and www.plwc.org, where you can read the entire report and more. Remember to consult your own oncologist for the treatments that are best for you.

Breast Cancer

Over the past few decades, improvements in early detection and the development of more effective treatments have led to significant declines in breast cancer deaths and improved outlook for women living with the disease. Increasingly, breast cancer is being treated as a group of diseases rather than as a single disease. The molecular characteristics of each person’s tumor cells are taken into account when treatment options are considered. For example, identifying whether specific hormone receptors are present in a patient’s cancer cells can help determine whether therapies targeted at those receptors will help an individual patient. Improved prognostic methods also help determine how aggressive a patient’s treatment should be.

This year, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) was recommended for breast cancer screening in specific groups of patients. In addition, a decline in breast cancer incidence rates was linked to a reduction in the use of hormone replacement therapy. Another large trial looked at the best way to deliver radiation therapy to patients after they have had surgery for early-stage disease.

Major Advances

MRI for Breast Cancer Detection

The use of MRI to detect breast cancer has generated significant debate. While some studies have suggested that MRI may be better able to detect some breast cancers compared with mammography, the cost, high rate of false-positives, and inconsistent standards for performing MRIs have limited its potential usefulness. This year, findings from several studies led to new guidelines about the use of MRI for breast imaging:

The American Cancer Society (ACS) released guidelines recommending routine MRI screening for women with a 20 percent or greater risk of developing breast cancer over their lifetime. The ACS said that in addition to mammography, annual screening using MRI is recommended for women who:

- Have a BRCA 1 or 2 mutation
- Have a first-degree relative with a BRCA 1 or 2 mutation, but who are untested themselves
- Have a lifetime risk of breast cancer of 20 to 25 percent or more using standard risk assessment models
- Received radiation treatment to the chest between ages 10 and 30, such as for Hodgkin’s disease
- Carry, or have a first-degree relative who carries, a genetic mutation in the TP53 or PTEN genes (Li-Fraumeni syndrome and Cowden and Bannayan-Riley-Ruvalcaba syndromes).

A study suggested that patients recently diagnosed with cancer in one breast may benefit from MRI of the other breast to increase the chance of detecting additional cancers that may have been missed by mammography or clinical examination.

Another study found that MRI is significantly more sensitive than mammography for detecting ductal carcinoma in situ (a noninvasive, precancerous condition in which abnormal cells are found in the lining of a breast duct), especially those tumors that are more likely to be biologically aggressive.

Despite the benefits of breast MRIs for women in high-risk groups, however, MRI is not yet recommended for the majority of women as a screening tool for breast cancer because of the cost and inconsistent standards for performing MRI. MRIs are also highly sensitive and not very specific, resulting in a high rate of false-positives, which can lead to unnecessary biopsies. It has not yet been shown that MRI screening improves overall survival or other outcomes.

Decreasing HRT Use Linked to Declines in Breast Cancer Incidence

Two studies this year reported a link between the recent reduction in breast cancer incidence and the decline in the use of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) in menopausal women. HRT use declined beginning in 2002, following a report from the National Institutes of Health (NIH)-sponsored Women’s Health Initiative that linked the use of estrogen plus progestin during and after menopause with a number of adverse effects, including an increased risk for invasive breast cancer.

In 2007 one large study found that rates of breast cancer declined by 13 percent from 2001 to 2003. Both studies found that declines in breast cancer occurred.

Continued on next page
only in women aged 50 years or older, and were more significant in breast cancers that are estrogen receptor-positive, the type of cancer whose growth could be fueled by the use of additional hormones.

Both studies analyzed large databases of patients and examined other factors that could have played a role in the decreased incidence, such as mammography screening rates and changes in diet. While those factors could not be completely ruled out as additional contributors, the association with HRT was strong, warranting further study. 1,6

Other Notable Research

Less Radiation Appears to Be as Effective as Standard Dose in Early-Stage Cancer

In an effort to reduce radiation exposure and side effects, a multicenter phase III clinical trial found that a type of therapy called hypofractionated radiation (fewer, larger doses of radiation) appears to be as effective as conventional radiation in reducing the risk of cancer recurrence among women with early breast cancer, with no greater detrimental effects to healthy breast tissue. The study—called the START Trial, for Standardization of Breast Radiotherapy—was the largest to date to explore the safety and efficacy of this approach in women with early-stage disease.

Conventional radiation therapy for women with early breast cancer is typically given at a consistent dose, delivered in 25 installments (fractions), five days a week over a period of five weeks. Physicians hypothesized that it may be possible to reduce the overall radiation dose and the treatment period without compromising the safety or effectiveness of therapy. This trial comprised two different studies that looked at different variations in radiation dose. After an average follow-up of five to six years, the incidence of local recurrence remained very low among all patients in both trials (3.4 percent of patients had local relapse with no significant difference between radiation regimens). 7

References

What I Know Now That I Wish I Had Known Then...

This past October, members of the Tuesday evening Breast Cancer Support Group posed the following question that was picked up by the Democrat and Chronicle newspaper, appearing in “Your Health”. What follows are just a few of the responses received from that request, as well as from others in our wider breast cancer community including bclist.org.

I wish I’d known: that the dispirited feelings I had would pass. ~ Marcy

I wish I knew: what to do with all of these hats. I am afraid to pass them along for fear of angering the Gods. I wish I had known to stop using shampoo when my hair was nearly gone. I kept lathering up in the shower each day when, suddenly, I realized there was nothing there to shampoo! I wish I had known that if you are slated for chemo and have always wanted to try a new hair color, especially something dramatically different, go ahead and do it before the hair falls out because it’s going to fall out and you’ll get to know what the dramatic thing will look like. ~ Kate

I wish I had known:

• that even if your surgeon says he/she has shown your pathology report to four other surgeons, you’re still justified in getting your own second opinion.
• that just because you’re stoic and brave before, during and after the biopsy and the hearing the bad news and having the mastectomy, everything’s going to catch up with you in a few months and throw you into sheer panic and anguish.
• that there will be members of your family who won’t want to talk about the whole thing unless you bring it up and force a discussion.
• that if you show up for work a month after the surgery because you’re going mad at home, unable to do anything, and you figure you might as well save your sick days, they’re going to expect you to WORK!
• that one simple act of unexpected kindness will have you weeping for hours.
  − Hilde

I wish I’d known: that the majority of women diagnosed with breast cancer DON’T die of it. Someone may have told me this, but all I heard was the word CANCER so I spent four days planning my own death before my surgeon told me I had a reasonable chance, at this stage, of a normal life span. ~ Caroline

I wish I had known: that my siblings and some of my friends would be more scared then me. ~ Debbie

I wish I had known:

• that it’s really normal (and okay) to crash emotionally at the end of treatment.
• that some people close to you might not cope well.
• that some people are demanding about doing stuff for you that you don’t want them to do and that by allowing them to do it is really about making THEM feel better.
• that you have a right to ask questions of medical persons until you are clear about the answers. ~ Anne

I wish I had known: that it is okay to feel despairing, and that this won’t affect your response to treatment.
  − Hazelanne

I wish I had known:

• that all dental work (including regular teeth cleaning) should be completed before starting chemo.
• that a small soft pillow can alleviate underarm discomfort from lymph node removal.
• that all that fatty tissue (boobs) was great insulation that kept my chest warm and it would take time for my body to adjust.
• I wish I had known that I could ask for other anti nausea meds if the first one didn’t help. ~ Marj

I wish I’d known:

• that other people’s reactions would become part of the problem.
• that a lot of people can’t cope with cancer at all (probably with good reason - a lost friend or parent).
• that a few people (very few) would try to deny that I was sick, or set me up as the grateful recipient of their sympathy. I wish I’d had the confidence to tell them to take their problems somewhere else.
• that there’s light at the end of the tunnel.
• that there is a tipping point - you get through some of the fear and anger, and find that life has new and better things to offer.
• that I’d still be alive and (touch wood) healthy six years down the track. ~ Caroline

I wish: I had access to support groups in the beginning. ~ Carla

I wish I had known: that I would be okay… and that I would learn to laugh again. ~ Berry

I couldn’t believe: that I would get to a point were breast cancer would not define me. I am no longer, “Carol; she has/had breast cancer.” I am, again, “Carol, Jim’s wife, and the mother of Caron and Catherine, and the mother-in-law of Matt.” It is a good feeling. It is nice to know that the “cancer” tape that plays 24/7 when you are first diagnosed (and lasts for some time) goes away! ~ Carol

I wish I had known: that I have to MAKE time for myself happen… that I deserve to stop running from cancer and relax sometimes. ~ Lallie

Join the discussion! What do you wish you had known? E-mail us your wisdom at susan@bccr.org.
The 2008 Pink Ribbon Run and Family Fitness Walk will take place again on Mother’s Day, Sunday, May 11th. Are you getting your troops rallied?

The 2008 event will be held at Ontario Beach Park, rain or shine. Meetings for run/walk volunteers are beginning, hoping to plan the best Pink Ribbon Run/Walk ever!

As soon as 2008 forms are printed, you will receive them in the mail, if you are on our regular mailing list.

Forms will be available at www.bccr.org, Wegmans customer service and Starbucks locations, or if you would like to be added to the mailing list, please call BCCR at 585-473-8177. See you there!

Running? Walking? Get Your Sneakers Ready!

Imagine using your favorite search engine online and donating to a worthy cause too! Or do your Internet shopping and your favorite charity receives a check!

This is now possible via an organization called GoodSearch. Launched in 2005, it began by partnering with search engine Yahoo, to make online charity donations possible by using its search engine.

GoodShop.com came soon after, offering the same ability, in this case, to shop and donate simultaneously.

At this point, more than 50,000 organizations are on board and more are joining every day.

Check out these imaginative helpers at www.GoodSearch.com and www.GoodShop.com. BCCR recently received a donation from those who are already using this link.

Thanks in advance for thinking of the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester while you search and shop on the Internet!

Spring is just around the corner.

Sign up now to help with our booth at the Lilac Festival.

The festival runs from May 9th - 18th from 10:30am to 8:30pm

For more information please contact Niki Machtyre at 473-8177 or e-mail her at niki.bccr.org.

“Every woman who heals herself helps heal all the women who came before her and the women who come after her.”

-Christiane Northrup, M.D.
two days later, a phone call from the radiologist with the biopsy results confirmed what I knew in my heart. I had breast cancer. The tears came now in uncontrollable sobs. Andy made another rush trip from work, this time coming home, and we held each other and cried. This happened on a Friday afternoon, and was followed by an agonizing Mother’s Day weekend. I told my children as much as they could understand, which was (and still is) a great deal. I told my family and friends. I needed their healing energy and didn’t want to keep my diagnosis a secret. One of the hardest things for me to do was to tell my mother, a tender hearted soul who was strong in spirit but in frail health. She lived far from me and was unable to be at my side. It was excruciating to give her the news, but I knew that she would say some powerful prayers such as only a mother can pray, and as a believer in such things, I truly needed them.

When that long weekend was over, it was time to schedule an appointment with a surgeon. My midwife recommended a good, compassionate one. She also suggested that I call a former midwifery student with whom she had worked; Holly Anderson of the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester. I made both calls, and each turned out to be life changing.

A few days later, Andy and I sat in the surgeon’s waiting room. On the wall was a framed picture of people of many nationalities, and at the bottom was printed the golden rule. After being led to the examining room and speaking with the surgeon, we agreed that this doctor was a person who lived by the words, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” He explained the rationale for his preference of a mastectomy over a lumpectomy in my case, but assured me that he would abide by my choice if I preferred a lumpectomy. His reasoning made a lot of sense to me and I felt that his willingness to listen added a great deal of weight to his words. Here was the person who would hold my life in his hands, the one who would remove the cancer from my body. I began to wrap my head around the prospect of losing my breast.

At the end of that week, I walked into a Brown Bag Lunch, an informal group for breast cancer survivors that meets weekly at the office of the Breast Cancer Coalition. I met a lively group of women at various

continued on the next page
stages of treatment and beyond; some were survivors of many years, some were still in active treatment. A few wore wigs or scarves. All were sharing their stories along with a good deal of laughter, and a few tears. I felt a kinred spirit with these women, whatever their stories were or wherever their breast cancer journeys would lead them. They knew firsthand how I was feeling, and I began to feel that I would get through whatever was in store for me in the coming weeks and months. If they could do it, so could I.

There were many times during those weeks and months when I felt like I was on one of those roller coaster rides in the dark, never knowing what was around the next turn of the track. It’s an understatement to say that the choices I was facing were incredibly difficult. There was much to learn about a disease that has many facets and variables. But I live by the adage that knowledge is power, so I read and researched, absorbing every bit of information I could find.

Six weeks after my diagnosis, I had a mastectomy. The surgery and recuperation were painful, but went without any complications. A positive lymph node was discovered, and after an agonizing decision for me, I underwent chemotherapy. My family and friends stood behind me throughout the ordeal. My oldest two children, my daughters, were there for me when I was too sick from treatment to cope and Andy was at work. One stayed with her younger brothers during my treatments and the other made the sixty-five mile drive from college every other weekend to take charge of the household after my chemo sessions. Not only did my mother keep praying, she turned to a prayer group at her church, and they prayed for me, too. A home schooling friend who was working on her license as a Reiki practitioner offered her services to me, which I gratefully accepted. These sessions turned out to be times of renewal for me, and helped me gather the strength to face upcoming chemo treatments. I kept going to Brown Bag lunches through it all, no matter how rotten I felt. It helped to share tears and giggles with this group of incredible women that no one wants to join. I learned things that no book could possibly teach, although I did keep on reading everything I could find.

My chemo regimen lasted four months, and as much as I looked forward to getting though treatment, it felt strange when it finally happened.

The frequent doctor visits and all the monitoring of active treatment were behind me now. I had the feeling of being an unanchored ship. All I had to do was take a pill every day, a hormonal treatment to prevent my estrogen-driven cancer from recurring. I felt as though life should return to normal now, but I didn’t feel normal.

That feeling has abated with the passage of time, but normal doesn’t mean the same thing to me that it used to. The pain and scarring from the surgery has faded and my reconstructed breast feels numb. My family is still the driving force in my life. Dealing with past family crises had taught me how precious and fleeting life is. But this time, in facing my own cancer, I wasn’t the caregiver. I had to learn to let myself receive. I wasn’t facing the threatened loss of a loved one, but the fear of losing my own life. I saw what that would mean to others. It’s given me a better understanding of my place in the scheme of things.

I’m still a regular at Brown Bag, and somewhere along the way I’ve become one of those who are looked on by the newly diagnosed, in all their pain and confusion, as a survivor who has come through breast cancer treatment and can still smile. Emotions run the gamut during these times of sharing, and I’ve seen everything from the uncontrollable release of pent up tears to the healing power of a good belly laugh. Often these occur within moments of each other. I learn a great deal at that table every week and treasure the friendships I’ve made there. To be able to give hope to women who are reeling from the shock of diagnosis is an incredible feeling, and humbling at the same time. I see the courage and inner strength of these women, and I’m in awe of every single one of them.

“...I live by the adage that knowledge is power.”

Since breast cancer upended my world, I’ve come to feel gratitude for the small gifts of life; the sound of the birds chirping outside my window in the morning; the incredible array of shades of blue in the sky; seeing my children’s pride in their accomplishments and knowing that their greatest accomplishments are their gifts of self; music; good books; conversations with loved ones at home and far away. The rough places in life’s pathway don’t bother me as much now. I listen more often and with more understanding. Laughter is sweeter, and tears come from deeper places. I see each day, each moment as a precious gift. And I see each person as a precious gift as well, remembering with special affection all of those who showed me their love and let me lean on them during my cancer year.

I can’t honestly say that breast cancer has made me a better person. But in facing this crisis, I had to dig deep within myself to draw on strength that I never knew was there. And I found that to draw on the strength of others is empowering. I see myself in an altered light, with more understanding and love. Breast cancer may have rocked my world to its foundation, but it will never get the better of me.
Who

It's anybody's guess
She was tired of her long hair
She's unconventional
She's an artist
She likes a buzz cut
She's a lesbian
She's from New York City
She's a movie star
She's cool
She has cancer
Depends who's looking

-Lisa Flaxman

This poem is taken from Lisa Flaxman's book "Glances at Time, A Young Mother's Journey with Breast Cancer". Diagnosed with breast cancer in September 2003 at age 38, Lisa has rekindled her passion for writing and singing and hopes to connect with readers, one at a time, as they make their way through painful days that also are the very life they crave. Lisa Flaxman lives with her husband and 3 children in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

"Glances at Time" is available for $12.95 at the Breast Cancer Coalition or at www.musikids.com/glances.
Program Coordinator’s Update

What a wonderful way to wind down 2007 and start up 2008! My first few months as Program Coordinator for BCCR have flown by. I have met so many great ladies – and a few neat guys too – and count myself among the lucky to have joined such an amazing team.

We celebrated the holiday season with our Open House and it was a fine opportunity to meet so many of our community members. The turnout was incredible! I hope everyone enjoyed the festivities as much as I did. I was able to put faces to many names and I had a ball!

In January I sensed the BCCR staff would “hit the ground running” and indeed we have. Plans for our educational seminars, programs, and special events are on our minds and growing under our fingertips every day.

I want to talk about one of our amazing programs here at BCCR: Brown Bag Friday. For those of you who might not know, Brown Bag Friday is a “no- RSVP required”, staff-hosted, lunchtime gathering for women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer. For some, it’s the first visit to our Center after being newly diagnosed; for others, it’s a great way to connect, comfort, and converse with new and longtime friends who “have been there”. Women from all legs of the journey attend – and all are welcome.

Ladies arrive about noon on Fridays, some with brown bag lunches, others with snack packs, and the chatting begins. Discussions range from surgery decisions, to conversations about favorite “goodies” during chemo, to “what I wish I would have known back then!” – and more! Of course we also pass around the dessert tray!

At Brown Bag, there’s an abundance of kindness and concern that flows so freely, it’s truly a unique afternoon event here at BCCR. I am privileged to witness the compassion, the strength, the laughter, and the love that the women give to one another on these Fridays. Come join us some afternoon. Come share in the beauty that these women bring to BCCR!

An Integrative Approach to Breast Cancer Treatment

Dr. Marilyn Ling, a radiation oncologist from the Wilmot Cancer Center, recently spoke at BCCR about the use of Integrative Medicine as an approach to treating breast cancer. Integrative medicine combines conventional medicine and Complimentary and Alternative Medicine (CAM). CAM is often integrated into conventional treatment, particularly when there is some high-quality evidence of safety and effectiveness. CAM might include whole medical systems such as homeopathy and naturopathic medicine; mind-body approaches such as meditation, yoga, prayer, art, music and dance; biologically based practices such as nutrition, herbs or vitamins; manipulative and body-based practices such as chiropractic or osteopathic manipulation; and energy medicine such as qi gong, Reiki and Therapeutic Touch. This list is not comprehensive. The lecture was very well-attended, demonstrating a strong desire by patients for a more holistic approach to treatment. A DVD copy of Dr. Ling’s talk is available for loan from BCCR’s Resource Center. Call 473-8177 for more information.

Are you on our mailing list?

Is your e-mail address and/or phone number a part of our listing? Please send us your information for our mailing list so that we can offer e-mail news as well as print news.

Send your information (full address or just your other details) to Tracy Brown at Tracy@bccr.org.

Thanks!
Advocacy Day in Albany
Tuesday, April 8, 2008
Join us. You DO make a difference!

A charter bus will leave the “Park and Ride” lot adjacent to St. Fisher College at 5:00 am, with a little sleep in our eyes and fresh coffee in our cups! Breakfast on the bus, a relaxing ride, good conversations, plenty of talk pertaining to Advocacy Day, and even a little time to snooze will be provided.

Once in Albany we will gather with members of Breast Cancer organizations from around New York State. The morning program consists of a featured speaker on this year’s topic “Access to Care” and a brief training in advocacy.

The relaxing trip home begins around 3:30pm and includes plenty of beverages and munchies. After a long, fully-packed day you would think we’d be tired but the mood on the bus trip home is always invigorating, informative and inspiring.

Cost: $20.00* per person
Seats are limited!
Please call BCCR (585-473-8177) with questions or to sign up.

*Scholarships available

Get On The Bus!

Advocacy Training Conference in Washington DC

The 2008 Conference will take place at the Renaissance Washington DC Hotel, located at 999 9th Street NW Washington, DC 20001

Find more information on this conference at: www.stopbreastcancer.org

April 26-29 2008
Our Fundraising Friends...

Beauty inside and out ...

Brianna Justina Harmon won cash prizes for placing first runner up in the National American Miss pageant, as well as first prize for the talent division. Knowing several people affected by breast cancer, she decided to donate a portion of those winnings to BCCR. Her family, inspired by her generosity, added to it, bringing the total to $300!

Brianna feels that giving to her community is important and her hope is that her donation will contribute to the efforts in breast cancer research, prevention, treatment and a cure.

She also has donated her time to the Eastside Retailers’ Show at The Lodge at Woodcliff, which also benefited the Breast Cancer Coalition.

Our thanks to Brianna for thinking of BCCR!

Surmotech Donates “Bail Money” to BCCR

In honor of October’s Breast Cancer Awareness month, two Surmotech employees, Jan Hopkins and Patty Capwell challenged their co-workers to “bail them out” at their first annual Halloween party, earmarking donations to BCCR.

The ploy was successful, with more than $1,000 in donations coming to BCCR.

Many thanks to Surmotech’s jailbirds for their fun idea and to the Surmotech employees for their generous donation!

What could be EZ-ier?

EZ Bottle and Can Return at 1259 Fairport Road in Fairport makes returning bottles and cans for deposits and donating a snap!

You can take your bottles and cans to their center and request the returnable fees be donated to the Breast Cancer Coalition. If you have a business that has a high volume of returnable bottles and cans, you can even arrange for EZ Bottle and Can to pick them up on a regular basis. Residential customers can make similar arrangements.

The Breast Cancer Coalition is one of many charities and groups that can benefit from this service.

To date, BCCR has received nearly $250 of donations from EZ Bottle and Can’s program.

EZ Bottle and Can can be contacted via email at czreturn@frontiernet.net or by phone at 585-377-9140.

See their website for more information: www.ezreturn.org. Our thanks to EZ Bottle and Can for their help!

Supercuts helps the Breast Cancer Coalition

Supercuts, a hairdressing salon chain in the Rochester area, held a fundraiser for BCCR the entire month of October. They offered each patron the chance to donate, putting their names on pink paper ribbons and displaying them in their stores.

As we featured in our last Voices of the Ribbon, a local sorority was asked to help cut out the 1,500 pink paper ribbons required. They happily complied and Supercuts was able to proceed with their plan.

In addition to the pink paper ribbons, Supercuts also participated in a Jeans Day, raising more funds. By the end of October, Supercuts raised nearly $1,600 for the Breast Cancer Coalition!

Our deepest thanks to everyone at Supercuts who helped raise money that will go to our programs, research, education and support for families in the greater Rochester area who are affected by breast cancer.
The Eastridge High School’s S&E Marketing Class, under the guidance of Mr. Patrick Flanagan, have once again chosen the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester as the recipient of their charitable donation from their senior project. The project, based upon the TV show ‘The Apprentice’, has been a wonderful learning experience and outreach to women and families in our local community raising over $8,300.00 with 3 projects since 2005. This year’s project so far has involved a Pink Pong Classic, t-shirt sales, glow stick sales for the senior night basketball game, ribbon cut-out sale covering the gym wall and a silent auction raising over $1,000!

Still to come is their basketball 3-on-3 Tournament in late February, Breast Cancer Olympics in early March with classes competing against each other in several events, a Madden ’08 Tournament, and culminating with a 5K walk. These students, and Mr. Flanagan, have been VERY busy!

We are thrilled with the enthusiasm of these seniors and can’t say thank you enough! We know that the experiences learned with this project are invaluable and will stay with these students for a lifetime, but knowing that they are reaching out to others because they can …….. priceless!

A heartfelt “thank you” to our 2007 United Way donors

Beth Abdallah				Ann Boerman
Marbud I. Abdul-Al-Haqq				Jamie Boerman
Barbara & Michael Abraham				Maria Bokman
Martanne Abraham					John Border
Stacey Ackerson					Josephine & Simon Braithman
Mafalda Agostinelli				Dawn Brenn
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Laura & James Allen				Patricia Briars
Gloria Anderson					Thomas Brice
Elaine Angello					Jennifer Brockaw
Janet Anthony					Nicholas Broisi
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Kathleen Dean				Patricia Dell’Anno
Raymond Dearth				continued on the next page 20
Joyce Wichie, left, surprising Above and Beyond Award recipient Melisande Bianchi with an angel print by Ramon Santiago.

A big THANK YOU to all our ARTrageous Affair contributors!

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Memories From Our 2007

Installation plans for our horse are underway!

If you haven’t already done so, please contact the BCCR to verify the correct spelling of your name to be placed on the plaque. Thanks!

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Young people of all ages at the Open House took turns making and hanging ornaments for the tree.
Holiday Open House

Remembering Harriet Susskind Rosenblum

Kelli Schwert enjoying the Holiday Open House

Kim Baker and Jill Schreppel, BCCR Interns for the Fall 2007 Semester
Our Programs at the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester

**Brown Bag Fridays**

At the Breast Cancer Coalition! Any given Friday at noon finds a group of women conversing over whatever they brought to eat and a delectable dessert provided by BCCR. This is a non-traditional support group, which is exactly what many of us have been looking for. Brown Bag is a drop-in program. There is no need to call ahead.

**Gentle Yoga**

On Monday evenings, you can find women stretched out on BCCR’s floor doing Gentle Yoga taught by Susan Meynadasy, a registered yoga trainer. Yoga sessions began in Spring 2005 and have been in high demand ever since. Sessions run in six week cycles. The class starts at 6:30 p.m. and finishes at 7:45 p.m. The class is limited to 15 breast cancer survivors.

**Voices & Vision: A Writing Seminar for People with Breast Cancer**

This exciting program gives people with breast cancer an opportunity to explore and express their feelings through writing. The warm and supportive group is led by a professional instructor. Not only has writing proven to be very therapeutic for breast cancer survivors, but this program is getting rave reviews! Workshops run in six week cycles and advanced registration is required.

**BC 201**

Modeled after Breast Cancer 101, these are one-on-one sessions for those who have been rediagnosed with breast cancer. New issues arising about diagnosis of breast cancer are dealt with on the same one-to-one basis as in BC 101. Maintaining a nurturing and supportive environment while providing a sounding board for treatment modalities and other issues is all part of BC 201.

**The Sister Sak Project**

The Sister Sak Project was started by a group of young survivors who wanted to help each other in their journey with breast cancer. This project provides young women diagnosed with breast cancer a gift bag filled with comfort items delivered by a young survivor and a network of support dedicated to their unique concerns. Please call for a referral and Sak of your own!

For more information or to register for our programs, please call the BCCR at (585) 473-8177
Living with Metastatic Breast Cancer Support Group

The Living with Metastatic Breast Cancer Support Group is designed to lend support to those who are coping with a diagnosis of advanced breast cancer. The group is led by a psychologist, Dr. Nancy Cooper, who is a breast cancer survivor as well. The group meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday mornings each month at the BCCR. Participation in this group requires pre-registration.

Peer Advocates Lending Support: P.A.L.S. SM

Peer advocacy is at the core of the philosophy behind the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester. Women supporting women, partners supporting partners, families supporting families, all are central to this organization that is unique to the western New York region. Breast cancer survivors reach out to those who are new to the disease and also to their significant others, helping them connect to resources in the community, providing a foundation of caring and working hard to instill confidence and comfort in the face of a difficult time.

Young Survivor Networking Group

The Young Survivors Networking Group is a hopping! Co-facilitated by Miriam Iker, a clinical psychologist who specializes in children, adolescents and adult women and Amy Weetman, a young survivor specializing in peer support. Together they address issues including the impact of breast cancer on families and children. The Young Survivors Networking Group meets on the third Thursdays at Noon of every month.

Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester Support Group

This discussion-based support group, led by Claire Gladwell, RN, meets regularly here at the BCCR. Join with others coping with a diagnosis of breast cancer, share your experiences and lend your support. We meet every three weeks on Tuesday evenings from 5:30 to 7 pm. Though no registration is required, please call BCCR for the next meeting date.

Men’s Night

Facilitated by Jay Nittoli, MSW, this group is for men whose wives, daughters, mothers or significant others have been affected by breast cancer. It meets on the 4th Thursday of every month from 7 to 9pm at the BCCR Center, 840 University Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607. Please call (585) 473-8177 for more information and to register!
Annual Seminar Set for

April 4, 2008

“Advanced Breast Cancer: Tools for the Journey”, the 5th Annual Cindy L. Dertinger Seminar, will be held Friday, April 4, 2008 at the Memorial Art Gallery’s M & T Ballroom. This half-day seminar will feature speakers Dr. Susan Bukata, Dr. Jennifer Griggs, Cecilia S. Lawlor, M.S., N.P., Dr. Timothy Quill and women living with Metastatic disease.

Few resources have addressed this important issue; in fact the subject of advanced breast cancer is often avoided. Very little discussion of the impact of recurrence and advanced breast cancer appears outside of the medical literature. The emphasis on breast cancer is still, almost universally, on mammography, early detection, survivorship, and a tiny pink ribbon.

This event receives rave reviews from participants year after year because it not only provides participants with cutting edge information, but it also allows women and men with advanced breast cancer, as well as those who provide their care and support, an opportunity to network with others coping with advanced disease.

Friends and family members are also invited. Please call (585) 473-8177 to reserve your seats, as reservations are required.

Support for this program is provided by M & T Bank, in memory of Cindy L. Dertinger, a long-time employee who died of breast cancer in March 2003 at the age of forty-nine. Because Cindy Dertinger believed that every event should be fun, the seminar concludes with a reception in honor of our esteemed presenters. It is always fun-filled and food-packed... and a fitting ending to a perfect day.

Written in honor of the memory of Lavon Smith

By Doris Adamek

The fifth anniversary of the death of my good friend, Lavon Smith, is approaching in April, 2008. I thought that as time went by I would miss her less frequently. But there are so many reminders everywhere I go. I drive towards Webster on Rt. 104 expressway and I see the bike path we rode on routinely. I see North Ponds Park and remember the days we carried our bathing suit and towel in the bike baskets so we could stop for a swim there. I drive past Ellison Park and I recall the day we cross country skied there. Our skis broke through some ice that covered a big puddle and we had to give up as our ski boots were soaked. A movie will appear on TV and I realize that she and I saw it at a theater together. She was a great traveling buddy and we shared several ski week adventures in Colorado. The last time at Vail in 1999, we found ourselves stranded at the bottom of a bowl that was a dead end. The chair lift that was supposed to take us back up, had broken down. We couldn’t imagine walking the distance uphill on our skis. How delighted we were when huge snow groomers appeared to shuttle people out. Lots of groomers as we were a crowd by now.

In June 1995 we shared an amazing journey in Europe, Munich, Salzburg, Zermatt, Grindelwald, Lauterbrunnnen and Murren. There we discovered that Heaven was a place at the very top of Kleine Matterhorn, on a platform looking out at the Matterhorn peak with blue skies behind it. And yet, a few minutes later on a June day, as we descended on the tram, it was snowing and we could see nothing.

We both shared the breast cancer diagnosis, she in 1997, I, in 2000. We both got to know and love Dr. Chris Caldwell but she had to also get to know Dr. Asbury of Finger Lakes Oncology. I was the lucky one!! I’m an almost 8 year survivor. I pray that she has the heavenly Matterhorn view now without pain and suffering.
Friends
Remembered...
Rebecca Axtell
Anita DiPiazza
Richard Schmeer

Tributes Welcomed
Would you like to write about someone you have lost to breast cancer? We welcome submissions from friends and family members and are particularly interested in hearing stories about how they have touched and changed your lives.
Please send your submission with a digital photograph to Susan Meynadasy, BCCR Voices of the Ribbon Newsletter Editor, at susan@bccr.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

Passages...
Judah Folkman, M.D.
Dr. Folkman, a world famous cancer researcher whose insights led to a whole new field of medicine collapsed and died at Denver International Airport on January 14, 2008 while traveling to a medical conference in Vancouver, British Columbia. The news traveled quickly through the research and medical communities, and on to the advocates and activists who considered Dr. Folkman to be a tireless soldier in the war against cancer. For over 36 years, sometimes in the face of deep skepticism, the renowned Children's Hospital Boston researcher stuck by his belief that tumors could be stopped by cutting off the blood supply they need to grow even when his experiments sometimes fizzled.

Internationally renowned as a pioneer in the field of angiogenesis research, Dr. Folkman's landmark discovery that cutting off a cancerous tumor's blood supply inhibited its growth and ability to spread revolutionized cancer treatment. Dr. Folkman's laboratory was the first to purify angiogenic protein from a tumor, basic research which led to the discovery of the first angiogenesis inhibitors and ultimately to clinical trials of anti-angiogenic therapy. Today, angiogenesis inhibitors such as Avastin, Tarceva and Macugen have received FDA approval in the U.S. and similar regulatory approval in 27 other countries for the treatment of cancer and/or macular degeneration. Dr. Folkman's research provides a firm scientific foundation for the pursuit of anti-angiogenic therapy, not only for the treatment of cancer, but for many non-neoplastic diseases.

Dr. Folkman was a scientific Spiderman…a true super hero. Our condolences go to his entire family, but especially to Joy Moss, his sister, of Rochester. Those interested in learning more about the extraordinary odyssey of a surgeon-turned-researcher can watch “Cancer Warrior,” at the PBS- Nova website: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/cancer/ This program originally aired February 27, 2001.

This tribute contains information provided by Paul Levy, President and CEO of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

Andrew Pluta
Andrew Pluta, a local businessman and Founder of the Pluta Cancer Family, died January 2, 2008. First known for beginning General Circuits, Inc. with his two brothers, he is best known for his philanthropic support and personal commitment of the cancer center that bears his family’s name.
The Pluta Cancer Center was first established at Genesee Hospital in 1975 by a grant from the Pluta family. The hospital’s very first cancer treatment facility, the Pluta Cancer Center flourished and grew, becoming a valuable resource for comprehensive, multidisciplinary cancer care in the Rochester community. Following the closing of Genesee Hospital in 2001, Mr. Pluta and his family members assisted the cancer center in its efforts to obtain a state license for the purpose of operating the center as a separate entity. Today, the Pluta Cancer Center operates out of its Red Creek Drive home as the only free-standing, nonprofit cancer center in New York State.
A debt of gratitude is owed to Mr. Pluta and his family for their support of the Breast Cancer Coalition. Since our inception, the Pluta family has supported our mission through sponsorship of our support programs and special events, and has attended the ARTrageous Affair fundraiser year after year. No tribute can do justice to his contributions as a visionary, mentor, colleague or human being. We send condolences to his beautiful wife of 57 years, Helen, his two daughters, Barbara Pluta-Randall and Sharon DeGraff, his son Ron, and his many grandchildren. Rest in peace, Mr. Pluta.
YOU can help too!

Please choose Choice #4 on your United Way form

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continued on the next page
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The name of the individual honored or remembered is shown in bold type.
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Oggi Domani Salon & Spa  
One Hip Chic Optical, Inc.  
Stephen Papke  
Park Printers  
Park Avenue Realtors  
Sallie Parsons  
Kurt Pfeiffer  
Erin Pomerantz  
Pomodoro Restaurant  
Possibilities  
Q The Medical Spa at Lindsay House  
Jessica Ranalletti  
Todd Randall & Mrs. Barbara Pluta  
Randall  
Pat Rechlin  
Kathy Reilly  
RIT Printing Applications Laboratory  
Pat Rini Rohrer Gallery  
Allison Roberts & Eric Cady  
Rochester Americans  
Rochester City Ballet  
Rochester Museum & Science Center  
Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra
Save the date

‘Tee’d Off at Breast Cancer’ Golf Tournament

Monday, July 21, 2008
Shadow Lake Golf Course

Local funds & support for local women and families

Kathleen Rouvina
Andrea Sands
Barbara Sanko
Savvy Sense, LLC
SC Fine Art
Kelli Schwert
Jody Selin
Judy Selman
Seneca Park Zoo Society
Sara Silvio
Shabby Chic Boutique
Shear Ego
Karen Shuttleworth
Starbucks Partners
Sticky Lips BBQ
Susie Smith
Adam Spector Studios
Maura Steed
April Stein
Strella & Associates
Studio 34
Martha Sweeney
Tantalo Photography
Claudia Tesa
Paul Thatcher
Thelma’s
Thirteen WNET New York – PBS
Anne Townsend
Tuthill Lighting
Urban Essentialz
Anne Vaclavik
Dave Valvo
Beth Van Dyne
Susan Vetter
2 Vine Restaurant
Virgin Island Photography
Vitoch Interiors, Ltd.
David Walker
Walker’s Celtic Jewelry
Elly Wane
Jim Wehtje
Joan Welch
Philip Welch
WHAM Channel 13
Vi White
Wine Sense
Robin Yates

East-Side Retailers’ Show & Sale Donors
All That Glitters
American Laser
Babies R Us
Big Kid Productions
Carol’s Apparel
Casa Larga
Center for Dermatology at Lifetime Health
Chef’s Outlet
Collage Boutique
Elegant Photography

Katy Heneghan
Mary Therese Friel, LLC
Jasmine’s Asian Fusion
Havah Kuhn
People Pottery
Pettis Pools
Rochester Athletic Club
Selective Memories
Shear Ego
Sheila Rae Productions
Silpada Designs
Simply Crepes
Tastefully Simple
The Pampered Chef
Tiny Hands Talk To Me
Whimsy By Design
Zonta International

Schutt’s Apple Mill
‘Take a Trip Camp’ to honor
Mary Beth Carey & Caroline Ronten
Nick & Jessica Frankovich

Tee’d Off at Breast Cancer Golf Tournament
Ontario Offshore Performance, Inc.

The Scarlet Thread
Lauri Aquino
Karen Cona
Alpha Daly-Majors
Peg Ehman
Roben Finley
Rhonda Halstead
Cindy Janczak
Sally Maier
Marilyn Malloy
Paula Melino
Donna Noble
Sue Oakden
Janice Picardo
Joan Sadler
Becky Torres
Lisa Whirlow
Charlotte Winkelbauer

Material Donations
Linda Gaylord
Connie Lenden
Rhuel McElhatten & Julie Schwetz
Jean Reiter
Tory Rothenburgh

Volunteer Service Donors:
Lifetime Assistance
Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester
March - May 2008 Seminars

Wednesday, March 26, 2008
7:00-9:00 P.M.
“Understanding Sentinel Node Biopsy”
Christopher Caldwell, M.D.

Friday, April 4, 2008
1:00 P.M.
“Advanced Breast Cancer: Tools for the Journey”
5th Annual Cindy Dertinger Seminar at the
Memorial Art Gallery
Reservations required

Wednesday, April 23, 2008
7:00-9:00 P.M.
“Nutrition Nuts & Bolts: Optimizing Diet During
and After Breast Cancer Treatment”
Jennifer M. Kerr, MS, RD

Friday, May 2, 2008
After Hours
“Young Survivor Soiree”
Hey, you young Breast Cancer Survivors:
Come join us for an evening of socializing,
networking and FUN with your peers!

Wednesday, May 28, 2008
“Family Matters: Helping Families Cope with Breast
Cancer”
Miriam Iker, PhD, Elizabeth Russell, LMSW, Jay
Nittoli, MSW

All seminars unless otherwise noted are at:
THE BREAST CANCER COALITION OF ROCHESTER
840 University Avenue
(Between Culver and Goodman)
Questions? Contact the BCCR at 473-8177
Wear our pins proudly!

Our larger pin, above, is in color on wood and measures 2 inches square. The smaller pin, shown below, measures 1 1/2 inches square and is also in color on wood.

Both pins are designed and handmade by artist LisaBeth Weber and available only at the Breast Cancer Coalition!

Stop by at 840 University Avenue in Rochester or call us at 585-473-8177 for more information or to order one or more! We do accept Paypal as well as most major credit cards. 🌟

Take Action!

Become a Supporter of the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester by making a donation today!

Your donation will ensure that you will receive a subscription and invitation to all general meetings, educational forums, and special events. Additionally, you will help support our goal of creating an active voice in the Greater Rochester Region in the fight against breast cancer through advocacy, education, and support.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Phone

Fax

E-mail

☐ $5000 Founder’s Circle
☐ $1000 Visionary Circle
☐ $500 Advocate’s Circle
☐ $100 Pink Ribbon Circle
☐ $50 Friend’s Circle
☐ $25 Contributor’s Circle
☐ $ Other

☐ I cannot afford to make a donation at this time but would like to be on your mailing list.

I would like to make an additional gift of $

In ☐ Honor of ☐ Memory of

Please send acknowledgement to: (name and address)

Payment Choice

☐ Check, Money Order ☐ Visa/Master Card/AmEx

Amount Enclosed $

Credit Card No.

Expiration

Signature

Name on Card

Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester
840 University Avenue
Rochester, New York 14607

Remember the BCCR Library:

Browse,

Borrow,

Read!

Gifts of $100 or more receive a free Comfort Heart.
As we move into 2008, it is appropriate to look back fondly on the successes of the past year. We had some very successful events: The Pink Ribbon Run and Walk, Tee’d Off at Breast Cancer Golf Tournament, and The Artrageous Affair, to name a few. We have loyal and generous sponsors and are blessed with dozens of dedicated volunteers. Many experienced personal success in the past year as they faced cancer head on, for that we are especially thankful.

It is also appropriate to look forward to the challenges that BCCR will face in the coming year. As an organization, we have a need to continue with successful fundraising and more volunteers to keep our programs growing and available to the community.

Joyce Witchie

As I think about these challenges, I am reminded that the fundraisers, volunteers and even this publication are all just a means to an end. One “end” is providing a support system for the hundreds of individuals in our community who are faced with breast cancer. These activities and dedicated people are all the enablers that combine to allow BCCR to advocate for all who will have their lives changed by a diagnosis of breast cancer.

Soldiers often say that if you haven’t been in a war, it’s impossible to understand what war is really like. Those who have been in battle typically find it difficult to talk about their experience with those who have not lived it themselves. Expressing one’s feelings about living with cancer is very much a personal battle. Providing individuals that camaraderie, that sense of shared experience, shared uncertainty, shared pain and shared triumph is one of the many great services that BCCR provides.

Joyce Witchie
From the Chair of Our Board of Directors...