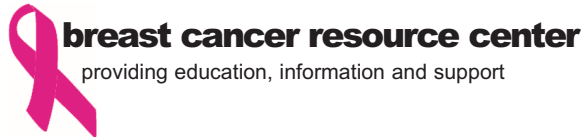


the source



bcrc happenings

100 Women, 100 Ways, 100 Days Project

Help BCRC celebrate community, energy, and the incredible spirit of women! The 100 Women,



100 Ways, 100 Days project is a fundraising endeavor all about getting people involved, doing something fun, being creative, turning the ordinary into the extraordinary, and showing how many small contributions can

result in one very big accomplishment!

Prompted by the need to inject additional funds into several key services provided by BCRC free of charge to women coping with breast cancer, the project challenges **100 women (or groups), to each raise \$100 (or more), in 100 days (or less)**, for a total of \$10,000!

Participating is as easy as choosing and registering your activity, picking up your Project Pack, holding your activity, and making your donation! The sky's the limit when it comes to deciding what your **100 Women** project will be, but it should focus on something that you enjoy and that others can get behind to support. Activities already registered include jewelry sales, art classes, bake sales, pet sitting, pretzel sales, a wig-out party, a cocktail party, a book reading, and zumba and belly dancing party's. You might also consider a mothers day brunch, a garage sale, or a donation jar at the office coffee pot to name only a few (100 suggestions are available on the project webpage). And although the project is titled "100 Women", we encourage girls, boys and men of all ages, individuals, schools,

Continued on page 2

feature article

The Genetics of Breast Cancer

Written by Norma Jean DeVico

In May 2008, when she was 36 years old, Gina of Cedar Grove, NJ was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Somehow she'd skipped her regular mammogram, which she had been getting every year since she was 27 because her grandmother had breast cancer. Then during her annual gynecologic exam, her physician felt a lump; the subsequent mammogram showed a round tumor with clean edges. "I bet it's benign," said her surgeon who didn't try to get clear margins or take any lymph nodes.

Three days later Gina learned the tumor was a Stage I, Grade III, triple-negative malignancy. She scheduled a re-excision.

Before the second surgery Gina also had BRCA testing and learned she's BRCA-1 positive. "I figured I'd have a lumpectomy, chemo, and be done with it," says Gina. But when her oncologist gave her the odds of a recurrence—"I guarantee you'll be back here in six months to a year"—she decided, "I'm not going through this again!"

Curiously, she had genetic counseling after she received all the bad news. "The counselor gave me a clearer picture and we went over my options. With her help, I decided on the bilateral mastectomy and chemo. She said it would make sense to save my ovaries until I'm 40 because I wanted a child."

She worked as an operating room nurse through four months of chemotherapy, which ended in November 2008. After a Christmas rest, and with the support of her husband, she had a nine-and-a-half-hour, skin-sparing mastectomy with latissimus reconstruction. She had nipple and areola reconstruction in January 2009.

Continued on page 3

BCRC Happenings continued from page 1

churches, clubs, teams, mom's groups, scout troops, corporations, small businesses, community groups and industry associations to join in the fun! After all, everyone has a special woman in his/her life who is at risk for developing breast cancer.

The funds raised through your activity will help BCRC provide local women affected by breast cancer with support groups, counseling, peer support, wigs & prostheses, mind/body wellness classes, financial assistance, lectures & teleconferences, and more to help them live with, through, and beyond breast cancer. The project will run from January 29 to May 9, 2010 - 100 days culminating on Mother's Day! For more information, or to register your activity, visit www.ywcaprinceton.org/100women or call BCRC at 609-497-2100 ext. 349.

Collaborative Effort Underway To Increase Understanding of Possible Environmental Links to Break Cancer

We are very excited to announce that BCRC has entered into a new collaboration with the Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences Institute's (EOHSI*) Center for Environmental Exposures and Disease (CEED). This unique partnership is part of an effort to help translate and disseminate results of environmental health research (and in this case specifically breast cancer-related research) to community stakeholders. Under the auspices of a five-year grant, BCRC will work directly with CEED's Community Outreach & Education Core to coordinate an annual informal research discussion session bringing together breast cancer patients/survivors and CEED researchers working to answer questions about possible environmental links to breast cancer. The goal of the discussion session is to enable the patient/survivor community to share their concerns about environmental health issues with researchers and to increase awareness and understanding of environmental health research within the patient/survivor community. The collaboration will also make it possible for a CEED researcher to present a guest lecture at BCRC each year, and for an environmental research focused article to be included in an issue of BCRC's newsletter each year.

Continued on page 4

from the director's desk

As I'm writing this piece, the Winter Olympics from Vancouver are on and I keep hearing some very powerful words being woven through the commentary. *PASSION. COMMITMENT. SPIRIT. WILLPOWER. JOY. PRIDE.* And although I'm actively (well, from the sofa) cheering for the athletes from my home country of Canada, and my adopted countries of Australia and the US, I find myself subconsciously thinking of how these games, and the mindset of the athletes seem to so accurately reflect the traits I see in those who I encounter at BCRC every day.



The *PASSION* for life and fun that members of the Zumba class show as they move about the room so freely to pulsing Latin rhythms. The *COMMITMENT* of family members and caregivers to find the best information, the best medical team, the best support programs to help their loved one get through the breast cancer journey as easily as possible. The *SPIRIT* of the many volunteers who give selflessly of their time, energy and expertise to support BCRC's staff and ensure that programs and services are of the highest quality and meet the needs of as many women as possible. The sheer *WILLPOWER* of women undergoing treatment as they strive to just get through it in the short term, or live life to the fullest in the long-term. The *JOY* of survivors when they hit a milestone they sometimes thought would never come – last day of treatment, a 1 year or 5 year anniversary, seeing the next generation of strong women in the family be born, graduate or be married, even running a marathon or completing a triathlon!

And *PRIDE*. Well *PRIDE* is my word. I find myself *proud* to be surrounded by these passionate, committed, spirited, strong-willed, joyful, women every day, and *proud* to be able to, in some small way, help them on their breast cancer journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kara Stephenson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kara Stephenson, BCRC Director

in loving memory

We remember and honor the lives of the friends we have lost.

*Aileen Cramer
Cheryl Nixon
Norma Cinque
Judith Harrison
Laura Owens*

Feature article continued from page 1

Although Gina's mother Paula, who lives in Holmdel, NJ, intended to be tested when she learned her daughter was BRCA positive, she didn't rush. "I couldn't deal with both of us having surgery and chemo at the same time." Finally, while Gina was having chemo, at the urging of the breast surgeon she'd been seeing for years, Paula took the plunge. She had the BRCA test in July 2008; two weeks later, her mutation profile proved to have the same numbers as Gina's.

An oncologic gynecologist recommended a laparoscopic oophorectomy. "Why not a total hysterectomy?" Paula, a medical office manager, said. "You can still get ovarian cancer in your fallopian tubes; that was a no-brainer." She had surgery in October 2008 through 'five little holes.'

And although Paula's breasts were 'in perfect condition,' she didn't want to play Russian roulette. "I reached 57 without getting breast cancer, but it doesn't mean I wouldn't get it. My husband said, 'You have no choice' and I made up my mind to do this." In April 2009, after two months on prophylactic Tamoxifen, Paula had a seven-hour skin-sparing mastectomy with TRAM flap reconstruction and a clean sentinel node biopsy. "When I first looked at my body after surgery, I thought, 'Oh my God! I'm sorry I did this. I look like a monster with my stomach and breasts all cut up.' But I decided to wait it out, and just have faith," says Paula.

Would she do it again? "It was a hard decision," says Paula. "My sister-in-law said, 'Why maim yourself?' But you need to get the whole picture—more information. It's better to be safe than sorry. Now I have a 1% chance of getting breast cancer in the chest wall versus the 85% chance I had as someone with a BRCA mutation prior to the surgery. Do I want to wait 'til I'm 65 to deal with this?"

"My daughter basically saved my life," says Paula. "If Gina had gotten the cancer when she was older, I wouldn't have known I was positive. And maybe I wouldn't have caught the cancer in time...or maybe at a later stage."

Continued on page 4

research

African American Women Needed in a Breast Cancer Study at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey

Breast cancer is a serious public health problem, accounting for approximately 27% of all female cancer diagnoses. According to the American Cancer Society, more than 6,440 new cases of breast cancer are expected in New Jersey in 2009. Breast cancer in African-American women occurs at an earlier age than in Caucasian women and is more likely to have aggressive features associated with poorer prognosis, regardless of age at diagnosis. The mechanisms underlying these differences are as yet unknown. To address these issues, researchers at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey and Roswell Park Cancer Institute are conducting a population-based case-control study, the **Women's Circle of Health Study**, in collaboration with the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services. Women newly diagnosed with breast cancer are identified at all major hospitals in Passaic, Bergen, Hudson, Essex, Union, Middlesex, and Mercer counties through rapid case ascertainment by NJ State Cancer Registry staff. Controls residing in the same counties are identified by random digit dialing and invited to participate. Through new collaborations with breast cancer advocates, and in particular, the Sisters Network and the Breast Cancer Resource Center, **the study has just been expanded to include more African American women by recruiting through the community. African American woman recently diagnosed with breast cancer (within 9 months) and residing in Passaic, Bergen, Hudson, Essex, Union, Middlesex, or Mercer counties and African American women without a history of cancer residing in the same counties are needed in the study.**

Continued on page 9

click on it

www.cancerandcareers.org



The Cancer and Careers website is an absolute treasure trove of information about every aspect of cancer and employment. This site is easy to navigate and has something for everyone – patients/survivors, supporters, co-workers, employers and healthcare professionals!

For the patients, survivors and supporters there are free publications like the "Living and Working with Cancer Workbook", a Collective Diary in which stories can be shared and read, an interactive Career Coach bulletin board, downloadable charts/checklists/question lists/forms, a blog, and a newsletter. For the employer, a discussion of relevant laws and best practices is available, and for co-workers tips and hints about how a co-worker can help. Doctors will be able to brush up on ways to help patients understand their legal rights, and how to cope with treatment side effects that might affect their work.

Everyone can take, and read the results of, interesting daily polls on work and cancer related questions.

BCRC Happinings continued from page 2

While spaces at the 2010 roundtable discussion have been filled and registration closed at the time of printing, all those interested in exploring this topic further are invited and encouraged to attend BCRC's May Networking Night.

BCRC Networking Night: Environment & Breast Cancer – What are the Links?

Guest Speaker - Dr. Daniel Wartenberg, Professor and Chief, Division of Environmental Epidemiology, UMDNJ-RWJMS Dept. of Environmental & Occupational Medicine

Tuesday, May 11, 2010. 6:30 – 8:30pm. Bramwell House Living Room, YWCA Princeton. Light dinner served.

To RSVP call 609-497-2100 ext. 303 or email: draines@ywcaprinceton.org.

**Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHSI) is a joint institute of UMDNJ – Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, and Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.*

BCRC Reaches Out to Local Corporations

BCRC is extending an invitation to the many national and international corporations with offices in the Princeton area to utilize BCRC as a resource for their employees. When statistics show that 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime, and 46.5% of the US workforce is made up of women, today's business leaders must take the well-being of their employees to heart. BCRC can help HR Departments and Employee Wellness Programs educate their female employees about the importance of early detection with breast cancer awareness presentations or health fair displays; support those who are diagnosed with breast cancer with direct referrals to BCRC's information and support programs; and assist co-workers to know how to best help their colleagues through a challenging period. Recent beneficiaries of BCRC's corporate outreach programs include Cegedim Dendrite, Munich Re America, Educational Testing Service, and Retail Decisions. To find out more about how BCRC can support your company, contact us at bcrc@ywcaprinceton.org or 609-497-2100 ext. 349.

Continued on page 5

Feature article continued from page 3

One resource for women like Paula and Gina is the Cancer Institute of New Jersey (New Brunswick) LIFE Center, where Kim Ranieri serves as the genetic counseling program supervisor. The LIFE Center—LPGA I in the Ffight to Eradicate Breast Cancer—helps to raise awareness of breast cancer in young women so they can be their own advocates.

In an ideal situation, a genetic counselor would see patients before a BRCA test. Genetic counseling can help a woman explore how a genetic test result could affect her medical care, as well as how it could impact her family; what information she should give her relatives. Should she tell her kids? What about family dynamics and discrimination once a positive test result is on her medical record?

“We talk about what the test is and what it is not. Of all breast cancers, less than 10 percent are due to an inherited predisposition. A negative test result does not mean, ‘Ahh, I don't have to worry.’ This is not necessarily the right reaction,” says Ranieri. The BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes account for about 80 percent of inherited breast cancers. There is no test for the other 20 percent. Before the blood is drawn, a woman must be clear about why she's having the test, and what information it may provide to her and her doctors. She must give informed consent, and hopefully have a discussion with a genetic counselor or other qualified provider about current genetics anti-discrimination laws so she understands where the laws are clear, and where they vague.

A genetic counselor organizes the blood draw and communicates with the lab and the patient's doctor. Results, positive or negative, are given in person—preferably with a close family member or friend in the room to provide support. At the LIFE Center, a medical oncologist, gynecologic oncologist, clinical psychologist, and breast surgeon are immediately available, in addition to the genetic counselor, when test results are given.

“If the test is positive, I do put prophylactic mastectomy on the table. It's fair to understand what doors the genetic testing opens for these women,” says Ranieri. She stresses that for people with a genetic predisposition to breast cancer, prophylactic mastectomy is not a woman's only course of action.

“Increased screening is one option—amp it up a notch,” she says. “Mammograms alternating with breast MRIs every six months starting at 25, breast exams by a doctor three or four times a year, and self breast exams.”

Continued on page 6



survivor stories

Mary Randall, Breast Cancer Survivor On-the-Go

Written by Pat Summers

Mary Randall could just squeeze in time to talk about her breast cancer experience with me after her Water Wellness class and before catching a bus back to her home in Trenton. She had been busy with myriad activities before her mastectomy in January '09 – and if it's possible, she's even busier now, a year later.



Mary, who turned 78 right before her first-ever surgery, seems philosophical about breast cancer turning up after nearly 40 years of mammograms. "These things happen as you get older," she comments. Her stage 1 cancer required neither radiation nor chemo, she takes one pill daily and says matter-of-factly, "I feel fine – I don't feel any different." It may be that the biggest change brought about by cancer is her coming to know – and frequently coming to – the Breast Cancer Resource Center.

In a case of perfect timing, she found out about Princeton's BCRC during the Trenton Heritage Days in June '08, while she was waiting for results of tests that followed her positive mammogram that year. "They had a table set up," Mary remembers. She asked some questions and that was the beginning.

Before her surgery in January, she was given a check from BCRC's Patient Assistance Fund that helped cover some expenses, and afterwards, she received free services such as mastectomy bras and a wig. "And all of this just by me calling up," she says now. "I didn't know there was such a place!" A BCRC staff member got her a bus schedule so during Fall Session, she could travel to Princeton three days a week – for Positively Pink Pilates, Wellness Workout: Strengthen and Stretch, and the Water Wellness.

Continued on page 9

BCRC Hapenings continued from page 6

5th Annual "In the Pink" Fashion Show

BCRC's "In the Pink" Fashion Show has become the "must see" event of Central Jersey's Breast Cancer Awareness Month calendar, and the 2009 show was no exception! It truly was a celebration – of survivors, of supporters, of healthcare professionals, and of the memory of those no longer with us.

Twenty-nine models graced the pink runway on October 2nd, in fabulous fall and winter collections from J. McLaughlin, The Dandeline Shop, Eastern Mountain Sports, CAbi (Sally Wood), Incredible Me, and Kiki D's, with hair and makeup by Metropolis Spa & Salon. The evening's 330+ guests bid generously on 93 spectacular silent auction packages, and live auction items included a round of golf donated by Trump National Golf Club in Westchester NY, a week-long stay at a Vermont vacation home donated by Beth Krefsky, and a David Yurman gold and silver bracelet set with lemon citrine gems donated by Hamilton Jewelers. The Super 50/50 Raffle winning ticket was also drawn and a total of \$4,804 was split between Mary Ann Lally of Middlesex, NJ and BCRC. The second annual Floral Centerpiece Competition, which ensured that every table was graced by a stunning, original centerpiece by a local designer, was won by Kris Khan of Ambrina Rose Designs.



All together the event raised over **\$38,000** to benefit BCRC's free breast cancer support, information and education programs! Our heartfelt thanks to all those who made this evening possible:

Sponsors - David Jack/UBS Financial Services, University Medical Center at Princeton Breast Health Center, American Disabilities Corporation, Howard Design Group Inc., Mercer County Woman, and Xerox Corporation; **Gift Bag Sponsors** - Cancer Consultants, Capital Health System, GEMarketing, J. McLaughlin, Johnson & Johnson Consumer Products Company, Revelations Perfume & Cosmetics Inc., and University Medical Center at Princeton Breast Health Center; **Floral Centerpiece Donors** - Ambrina Rose Designs, Bloomers 'N Things "To Do", Dahlia Floral Concepts, Flower Station, Le Fleur., Monday Morning Flower/Balloons, Petal Pushers, Quality Florals, Plants & Landscapes by Makrancy, Signature Florals by Ooi, Simcox Flowers, Spruce, and Wildflowers of Princeton Junction; **Supporters** - Brown Dog Marketing, FASTSIGNS Lawrenceville, Herbstone Design, Michael Lally Photography, Mercer County Community College Culinary and Pastry Program, McCaffrey's (West Windsor), Orange Flower Connect, Thirteenth Level Productions, and Triangle Copy (East Windsor); **Benefactors** - Marie Matthews, and the Geltzer Family Foundation; **Patrons** - Capital Health System; **Friends** - On-Site Automotive Services; and of course the many **Volunteers and YWCA Staff** who worked tirelessly behind the scenes.

Feature article continued from page 4

The second option is chemoprevention. This is not chemotherapy, but a medication that can be taken by healthy women to lower the risk of developing estrogen responsive breast cancer (which would be ineffective for triple-negative patients). However, "Taking Tamoxifen can lower the risk of developing breast cancer by as much as 50% in the general population," says Ranieri.

"Prophylactic mastectomy is the third option. It's an elective surgery for people who are healthy. Some people just won't opt for surgery unless it's necessary. It's a personal decision." For some women, it's the right decision. But it certainly comes with its own risks—physical and emotional. "Society places so much emphasis on women's breasts and women's appearance. There's a big difference between a prophylactic removal of ovaries (which is something that isn't necessarily obvious to others) and of breasts," says Ranieri. In fact, women who work with a genetic counselor at the LIFE Center and opt for mastectomy must meet with a clinical psychologist twice before the procedure. "They should bring a partner or important person so they can talk about body image and self-esteem issues. The psychologist helps these women anticipate their reaction when they wake up from surgery without breasts or with breast reconstruction."

Ranieri realizes some women base their decision on studies that show a BRCA-positive woman has an 85 percent chance of developing breast cancer. "They're hung up on this number. The range is 'up to 85 percent,' which is a lifetime risk, not the risk a woman has at any given moment. Furthermore, different research studies have different breast cancer risk estimates, with newer studies suggesting the lifetime risk to develop breast cancer may be much lower than 85 percent for women with a BRCA mutation."

In 1994 when the BRCA mutation was first found, researchers were studying women with a striking family history of breast cancer at young ages, which likely overestimated the actual breast cancer risk in women with a BRCA mutation. Furthermore, not every woman with a BRCA mutation will develop cancer. Unfortunately, the genetic test can not tell us who will develop cancer, when they will develop it, or even what type of cancer they will develop. The genetic test simply allows us to identify those people who have a higher than average lifetime risk to develop cancer, so that we can offer them all of the available medical management strategies to modify that risk.

Ranieri is optimistic that ongoing research will tell us more about the relationship between genetics and cancer. "Look how much more information we have learned in the last 20 years."

in the news



Researchers Identify Key Gene in Deadly Inflammatory Breast Cancer

Aggressive, deadly and often misdiagnosed, inflammatory breast cancer (IBC) is the most lethal form of primary breast cancer, often striking women in their prime and causing death within 18 to 24 months. Now, scientists from The Cancer Institute at NYU Langone Medical Center have identified a key gene—eIF4G1—that is overexpressed in the majority of cases of IBC, allowing cells to form highly mobile clusters that are responsible for the rapid metastasis that makes IBC such an effective killer.

The new findings could lead to the identification of new approaches, therapies and a new class of drugs to target and treat IBC. This would be a critical development in the fight against IBC, which respond poorly to chemotherapy, radiation or any other current treatments for breast cancer, according to the study's lead authors Dr. Robert Schneider, associate director for translational research at The Cancer Institute, co-director of breast cancer research, and the Albert B. Sabin Professor of Molecular Pathogenesis at NYU School of Medicine, and Dr. Deborah Silvera, a postdoctoral research fellow.

"The tragedy of IBC is that it is often misdiagnosed and misclassified. Rather than presenting as a 'typical' lump, IBC looks like an inflammation of the breast and is frequently mistaken for an infection. Physicians often prescribe antibiotics, losing valuable time for treating this fast-moving killer," says Dr. Schneider, noting that while IBC accounts for just a few percent of all breast cancer cases, it takes a high toll on mortality, and has an incidence that is 50 percent higher in African American women. He adds that there has been little progress in treating IBC over the past two decades, and there are no drugs specifically for this form of cancer. "In fact, IBC has only recently been recognized as a unique, genetically distinct form of breast cancer."

Dr. Schneider and his colleagues found that the overexpression of the gene eIF4G1 reprograms how the IBC tumor cells make proteins. Other researchers have identified genes associated with IBC, but this is the first gene shown to orchestrate how IBC tumor cells form special structures—unique to this disease—known as "tumor emboli." These small clusters of highly mobile tumor cells are responsible for the rapid metastasis of IBC. Because these cell clumps are not stationary or fixed, they can quickly travel to other areas of the body.

Continued on page 7

In The News continued from page 6

"The good news is that we're beginning to understand IBC at both a molecular and genetic level," says Dr. Schneider. "We believe this gene is a target for new drug discovery, and we also believe it is possible to silence the gene without hurting normal cells. Our next step will be to focus on the genetic basis of this disease and look at the genetic changes underlying IBC to reveal more targets at the genetic level."

Source: Newswire - New York University Langone Medical Center, 6/10/2009



Eat, Drink & Be Healthy

Lasagna is the perfect dish to have in the freezer for impromptu gatherings or busy weeknight dinners. This meatless version of the Italian classic is a healthy one-dish meal that you can feel good about serving to your guests or your family. The meaty eggplants provide a hearty texture for as little as 20 calories per half cup (when prepared without added fat). When shop-

ping for eggplants, choose those that have a fresh-looking cap and shiny skin.

Roasted Vegetable Lasagna

- Canola oil cooking spray
- 2 eggplants (about 3 lbs.), quartered lengthwise
- 6 medium zucchini (about 3 lbs.)
- 1 lb. whole-wheat lasagna noodles
- 15 oz. low fat ricotta or low fat cottage cheese (or a combination of both)
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 4 cups low-sodium tomato sauce
- 3 cups low fat mozzarella cheese

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Grease a 13x9x2-inch baking pan with cooking spray. Slice eggplant and zucchini in 1/2 inch slices. Layer on two baking sheets and coat both sides of vegetables with cooking spray. Roast for 20 minutes. Turn over and continue to roast until well browned and soft, about 20 minutes more. Transfer vegetables to a large bowl.

Reduce oven temperature to 375 degrees.

Cook lasagna noodles according to package directions. Separate the noodles and let cool slightly.

In a medium bowl, mix together ricotta and/or cottage cheeses, eggs, parmesan, nutmeg and garlic powder.

Spread a thin layer of tomato sauce over bottom of pan. Cover with a layer of pasta (noodle strips slightly overlapping). Spread with one-third of ricotta mixture. Sprinkle one-quarter of mozzarella over ricotta. Place one-third of roasted vegetables on top. Top with 1/2 cup of tomato sauce and continue until you have 4 layers of pasta and 3 layers of filling. Spread remaining tomato sauce on top and sprinkle with remaining mozzarella cheese.

Cover pan with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and continue to bake until golden and bubbly, about 15 minutes more. Let stand for 15 minutes before serving.

Makes 12 servings. Per serving: 360 calories, 11 g total fat (5 g saturated fat), 45 g carbohydrate, 23 g protein, 11 g dietary fiber, 310 mg sodium.

Source: AICR Health-e-Recipes www.aicr.org

so many ways to give

As a program of the non-profit YWCA Princeton, BCRC relies a great deal on the generosity of individuals, groups, and businesses in the community for support. Contributions come in all shapes and sizes, and we are constantly amazed by the generosity, creativity, and thoughtfulness of those who give. In this section, we highlight just a few of the many* contributions we've recently received, and say thank you to all of those whose kindness has touched our hearts, and had a positive impact on the lives of the women and families we support.

Several individuals and groups put a great deal of time and effort into hosting fundraising events to benefit BCRC. Homemade sushi, fiddlehead salad, grilled polenta rounds, and strawberry ribbon layer cake were just a few of the home-made delicacies Mickey Graham's friends and neighbors indulged in at her annual summer luncheon where she collected over \$2300 in donations. The Montclair State Red Hawks football team wore pink socks and wristbands to show their support for the cause, sold pink apparel items, and collected donations at their October 31st game against Western Connecticut. The team's kicker Marco Capozzoli and his mom Gabriella presented BCRC with a check for \$1015. St. Paul Catholic School of Princeton hosted a Breast Cancer Awareness Month Dress Down Day and raised \$600 for BCRC. The Indian Cultural Society of East Brunswick donated \$250 in proceeds from a September 13th production of *The Breast Chronicles* at Crossroads Theater in New Brunswick. Estella Rangel and the St. Bartholomew Columbiettes organized their 4th annual *Pink Luncheon* breast cancer survivors' celebration and donated \$1590.

Continued on page 8

body, mind & soul

Written by Nancy McCormack



Five Ways to Beat the Winter Blues

I can't remember the last time New Jersey saw so much snow, can you? If you're feeling blue, isolated or just behind the 8 ball, there are ways to reconnect with yourself and others to get you through the rest of these winter months. With spring still many weeks away and the stress of these winter storms, here are some helpful ideas to keep you going. By taking a holistic approach toward thwarting off your stressors you can take good care of your mind, body and soul. Here are a few helpful tips for you to stay balanced and healthy.

1. Take a **yoga** class. A study in the journal *Psycho-Oncology* revealed that after a 10 week program of once a week 75-minute yoga sessions, breast cancer patients yielded a 50 % reduction in depression and an increase in feelings of peace, relaxation and many other health benefits.

2. Learn to **meditate**. Excessive mental effort and chatter can interfere with you doing your best. Practice learning to become fully present in the moment. Close your eyes and visualize a white light traveling along the central channel of your body and bringing in healing energy with it, massaging your internal organs and lubricating all the tissues in your body, leaving you cleansed and peaceful. See if you can now clear your mind and just notice your breath coming in and your breath going back out. Sit for 10 minutes at a clip and see if you can gradually add on more time with practice.

3. Schedule in a **massage**. There are so many benefits to getting a good massage. Massage can release muscular tension, promote circulation of the blood and lymph, relax muscles, reduce pain, and free toxins held in the body. The great news is that you don't have to do anything but simply melt away into bliss. Your therapist does all the work. Trust me, it's worth every penny!

4. **Aromatherapy** can lift your spirits. The healing powers of aromatherapy have been known for centuries. These pure essential oils
continued on page 10

So Many Ways to Give continued from page 7

The Old Bridge Friendly's restaurant held a *Breakfast for Breast Cancer* event in conjunction with the *Pink Heals Tour* which visited the area on October 3rd, and donated \$325 to



BCRC. Pennington's iconic Cream King ice cream stand nominated BCRC as the charity of choice for their August 24th "Cream King Monday" fundraiser - 20% of the days' proceeds and all of the staff's tips raised \$375 for BCRC.

Not all donations come in the form of cash or checks - in fact some of the most important gifts we receive are in-kind donations. Since May '09, survivors and caregivers have

donated 41 new and gently used wigs, 10 wig stands, and 49 hats/scarves to the Wig Bank, and 9 books to the Resource Library. Dee Goldstein, breast cancer survivor and owner of GEMarketing donated 350 custom canvas tote bags for "In the Pink" Fashion Show guests. Volunteers Margaret Wong, Rochelle Hammer and Marian Young have given hundreds of hours of their time and administrative expertise to support BCRC's mission. Rochelle brings incredible attention to detail to her work with BCRC's Community Outreach team where she has become the resident expert in packing Breast Health Toolkits for Women of Wisdom programs! Margaret's friendly personality and can-do attitude brightens the BCRC office every Thursday as she files, faxes, makes phone calls, and helps with all manner of organizational tasks. Marian's attention to detail and preference for behind-the-scenes work lends itself perfectly to the Women of Wisdom data entry she does from home, particularly during our Community Outreach program's busy September - November period.

Corporations and Foundations also made significant contributions to BCRC in recent months. Unrestricted funds from the George H. and Estelle M. Sands Foundation (\$500) and the Lyle Foundation (\$1000) will help support many of BCRC key programs, and a \$10,000 grant from the Christina S. Walsh Breast Cancer Foundation will support BCRC's Patient Assistance Fund for another 12 months. Corporate donations came from Educational Testing Services' ETS Cares Fair (\$600) in which BCRC provided breast cancer information to employees; J.McLaughlin's post-"In the Pink" shopping party (\$250); Town Topic's 2009 Breast Cancer Awareness Month advertising supplement (\$1800); and Retail Decisions (\$300) in appreciation for a breast cancer awareness employee presentation.

**for complete lists of BCRC donors, see YWCA Princeton Annual Reports for the relevant fiscal year at www.ywcaprinceton.org.*

think pink

ABC Club spreads the word

BCRC is proud to have joined forces with the newly formed *Awareness of Breast Cancer (ABC) Club* at Princeton High School. Established at the beginning of the 2009/10 school

year by sophomore's Zoe Carril and Katie Hayes, the club's mission is to increase awareness of breast cancer among students at the school, and to raise funds to support BCRC's efforts to help local women and

families affected by breast cancer. Both Zoe and Katie's moms are breast cancer survivors, so the issue is close to their hearts. When asked what impact she hopes the group will have Zoe said "It is important to let people my age know that breast cancer doesn't just affect the person diagnosed, but the whole entire family. We all must work together to help support those diagnosed, and to raise money to try to find a cure."

Kara Stephenson, BCRC's Director agrees. "Breast cancer truly is a family affair, and anything that we can do to increase teenagers' awareness of the disease is beneficial. We want them to know that if their mom, or another woman in their family, is diagnosed with breast cancer BCRC is a resource that they can tap into for information and support."

The ABC Club has already raised \$367.45 from two bake sales to support BCRC's *100 Women, 100 Ways, 100 Days* project, and Zoe and Katie volunteered their time to help at BCRC's New Year's Party. Future projects for the club include more fundraisers and a breast cancer education activity for students.



Survivor Stories continued from page 5

She usually selects classes in the middle of the day, a good time for bus-commuting.

A social worker, Mary graduated from Mercer County Community College and Thomas Edison State College. With time out to work elsewhere for awhile, she spent most of her career with the State of New Jersey, retiring in 1993 with 30 years of state service.

Describing herself as "an athlete," Mary reports doing "lots of walking" – by the hour, by the mile. "I don't stay home and wait for something," she says; "I'm gone." To those who can't catch her at home and leave messages on her answering machine, she says, "I only sleep here!" But she also gardens there, and extensively too. Last summer's crop included tomatoes of all kinds, as well as squash, cucumbers, eggplants and still other veggies, most of which she gives away.

At home, Mary's near her six grown children, "four girls and two boys," all of whom live in Trenton and have keys to her house. Of her four grandchildren, two are still in college. Then there are five great-grandchildren.

Mary hasn't planned a trip or a party to mark her first year since surgery. She anticipates only the "same old thing, just enjoying my family." And she's eager to see the BCRC list of courses for the next session. Meanwhile, she may try to find more time for her new laptop, a gift from her family. It helps that one son's a former computer instructor.

In a way, though, it's hard to imagine Mary sitting still for that long, instead of being out and around!

Research continued from page 3

Data collection, through an in-person interview includes completion of several questionnaires, collection of a saliva sample, and body measurements. Interviews can be scheduled at a mutually convenient location. **Participants receive a \$50 gift card.** As of October 2009, 516 New Jersey African American women have participated in the study. We expect to continue recruiting women for one more year.

To request more information about the study or to participate please contact us at 732-235-8806 or kochje@umdnj.edu or visit http://cinjweb.umdnj.edu/bandera/breast_study.htm

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

– Maya Angelou

Body, Mind & Soul continued from page 8

are derived from plants for the promotion of health and well-being. Lavender is a good one to start with. It is known for enhancing relaxation and awakening your senses. Just place a drop of oil on an eye bag, lay down and let your worries disappear. These oils can be purchased at your favorite health food store.

5. Keep a daily **gratitude journal**. Just spending 10 minutes a day writing what you're grateful for can change your perspective on life, especially when you are having a bad day. You may discover that your life is rich with sweet, simple moments. By taking the time to review your day, you'll be surprised that when you consciously cultivate gratitude, you will become more connected to your self and able to focus on the many blessings that exist in your life.

The take-home message here is to schedule some time just for you. For the next few weeks, try adding blocks of personal time to your schedule such as "7PM to 8PM" each night, just as you would any other commitment. You can practice yoga one night, meditate the next, book a massage session the next. Penciling in personal time makes it easier to treat these relaxation sessions like any other appointment and makes them harder to skip. Remember, fulfilling personal time is crucial for managing stress, which can lead to disease, sleep disorders, exhaustion, headaches, stomach problems and many other health issues. Reducing your stress not only makes you a happier, healthier person, it can also increase your energy and productivity levels.

Nancy McCormack, Massage Therapist, Yoga Instructor, retired Research Scientist, and owner of One Spirit Family Massage and Yoga, located in Hopewell, NJ. www.onespirit-massageyoga.com.

a good read

Someone I Love is Sick: Helping Very Young Children Cope with Cancer in the Family

One of the most difficult challenges for those facing cancer is telling their young children or grandchildren that they are sick. Avoiding the conversation can be harmful. Approaching it without careful thought can leave scars that may never heal. Many young children learn well from being told or read stories, but the story must respect the specific developmental abilities of this age group. They are sensitive to changes in their families, but their capacity for understanding and coping with these changes is limited by their attention span, language level, understanding of time sequencing and retention abilities. For a story to be most effective it should be designed to be specific to that family, that child and that cancer diagnosis and treatment.



I feel really sad and mad

Someone I Love is Sick is a unique customizable book to use when talking with children ages 2-6 years old whose parent or grandparent has cancer. It is meant to offer educational information while initiating a safe, open conversation between parent and child during every point of the cancer journey, from diagnosis to treatment, recurrence, hospitalization, and end of life. Oft-addressed emotions and questions are explored, including "Can I catch cancer?" "Mommy will be getting a special treatment," and "Did I cause your cancer?" It uses colorful, age-appropriate illustrations and simple statements that focus on the feelings and realities of cancer situations in a non-threatening manner. The book's pages are unbound, so parents and professionals can arrange pages based on the stage of the cancer journey and the family's specific situation. If the child doesn't like a particular page, or a page makes him or her feel worried, it can be removed. If it feels right to create a new and different page for a specific situation, the back of the printed pages can be drawn on with dry-erase markers.

The book is authored by Kathleen McCue, the author of "How to Help Children Through a Parent's Serious Illness" and a child life specialist with more than 30 years of experience devoted to the mental health of children facing medical situations. "A parent's cancer diagnosis is more frequent than abuse, more widespread than natural disaster and more common than automobile accidents, yet resources designed to assist families and children are extremely limited and often not age appropriate," says McCue. "A severe parental illness can cause children distress and developmental problems, but when managed well, the family crisis can produce resiliency and strength."

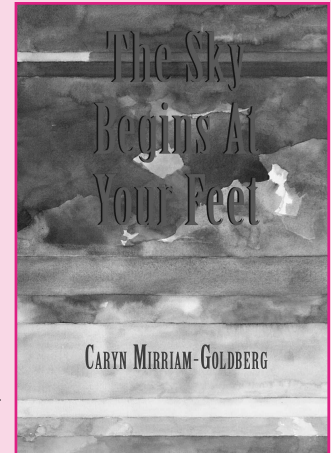
To purchase either the parents' or grandparents' version of the book (\$21.95) and additional tips and resources visit www.SomeoneILoveisSick.com.

save the date

“The Sky Begins at Your Feet” Book Reading

Monday, April 5, 2010. 7-8:30pm
All Purpose Room, YWCA Princeton

Join BCRC in welcoming breast cancer survivor, poet laureate of Kansas, and New Jersey native Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg home for a reading from her critically acclaimed memoir *The Sky Begins at Your Feet*. Reviewers write, “Anyone who reads this memoir (and you must!) will never forget it” and “this powerful, tender and humorous memoir about resiliency and love in the face of cancer focuses on how we can cultivate greater love and patience for our changing and aging bodies by re-awakening to community and life's beauty.” Enjoy coffee & dessert, and an opportunity to purchase signed copies of the book, following the reading. A portion of book sales from this evening will be donated to BCRC’s “100 Women, 100 Days, 100 Ways” project. Admission is FREE! **Please RSVP by March 29 to: 609-497-2100 ext. 349 or bcrc@ywcaprinceton.org.**



Nurturing Journey Breast Cancer Survivor Retreats

May 14-16, 2010 and October 15-17, 2010
Stella Maris Retreat Center, Elberon, NJ

The Nurturing Journey Retreat is a unique weekend experience at the oceanside Stella Maris Retreat Center designed especially for breast cancer survivors. It offers an escape from the stresses of everyday life and gives you permission to relax, share, nurture, and heal in a peaceful and comforting setting with new and old friends. The exceptional program, lead by a team of experienced women leaders, includes daily sharing circles, yoga and meditation sessions, writing exercises, exploration of creativity through art and music, complementary therapy sessions, a labyrinth walk, and much more.



The retreat fee is \$220, and a limited number of scholarships are available. Spaces are limited and priority will be given to first-time attendees. For more information about the May or October retreats, email BCRC at bcrc@ywcaprinceton.org or call 609-497-2100 ext. 346.

Paddle For Pink Community Dragon Boat Festival

Sunday June 6, 2010. 9am-4pm
Mercer County Park Marina, West Windsor, NJ

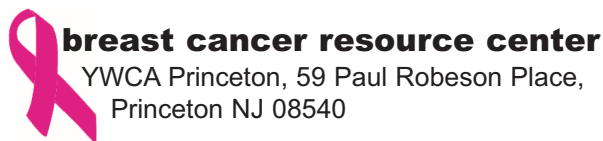
Why walk, run, or ride when you can PADDLE to support local women and families affected by breast cancer? Join the Machestic Dragons Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat Team for the *4th Annual Paddle for Pink Community Dragon Boat Festival*.

Register as a team, a group, or an individual for women’s, mixed, and community challenge races. If you already belong to a breast cancer survivor’s team – a BCS division is the highlight of the event. Paddle for Pink is free for spectators with fun on-shore activities for the whole family. Since 2007, this event has raised over \$21,000 to support BCRC’s programs and services, and BCRC will be the beneficiary once again in 2010.



For more information, visit www.paddleforpink.org. **If you would like to join the BCRC Paddle for Pink team (includes survivors and female/male supporters) email bcrc@ywcaprinceton.org.**

Continued on page 12



breast cancer resource center

YWCA Princeton, 59 Paul Robeson Place,
Princeton NJ 08540

609-497-2100, ext. 346

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PRINCETON, NJ
PERMIT NO. 180

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Publisher: Kara Stephenson

Editor: Patricia Orr

Production: Barbara Curtis

Printing: Mastergraphx

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

princeton

Save the Date continued from page 11

6th Annual "In the Pink" Fashion Show

Friday October 1, 2010. 5:30 – 9:00pm

The Westin Princeton at Forrestal Village

Join BCRC to celebrate the strength, beauty and spirit of breast cancer survivors, and the courage and compassion of their support network, at the **6th Annual "In the Pink" Fashion Show!** Fall and winter fashions from select local retailers will be modeled by breast cancer survivors together with their husbands, children, sisters, doctors and nurses – a moving reminder of the unified team that supports each woman as she battles this disease. "In the Pink" guests will also enjoy a sumptuous cocktail reception, fabulous silent and live auctions, a 50/50 raffle with a potential \$3000 prize, and a ribbon cutting ceremony to officially launch Breast Cancer Awareness Month 2010.



"In the Pink" is BCRC's signature awareness and fundraising event. This year, more than ever before, the funds raised at **"In the Pink"** will be crucial to our ability to meet the needs of local women and families affected by breast cancer. In the last 12 months BCRC has seen demand for many of its free programs and services including counseling, wigs & prostheses, wellness activities, and financial assistance, increase almost 25%!

Opportunities for Sponsors at the Diva Pink, Perfectly Pink, Powder Pink, and Confetti Pink levels are available, as are opportunities for program book advertising, silent/live auction donation, and underwriting.

For more information or to purchase your ticket, visit www.ywcaprinceton.org/inthepink