



Environmental Research and Prevention: A Priority for the Bay Area Breast Cancer and Environment Research Center

Janice Barlow, MBCW Executive Director

As part of its mission to find the causes of breast cancer through community participation in the research process, Marin Breast Cancer Watch has played a pivotal role in creating the Bay Area Breast Cancer and Environment Research Center, one of only four centers in the country sponsored by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the National Cancer Institute. The goal of these centers is to advance our understanding of how chemical, physical, biological and social factors in the environment work together with genetic factors to cause breast cancer.

Each center has a Community Outreach and Translation Core (COTC) charged with educating the community on the Center's research findings and fostering communication among breast cancer advocates and researchers. Marin Breast Cancer Watch leads the Bay Area COTC, which includes representatives from the Alameda, Marin and San Francisco public health departments and community-based environmental and breast cancer organizations.

In this article, we seek to update our readers on the goals, activities and significance of the two research projects currently under way at the Bay Area Breast Cancer and Environment Research Center.

Currently there are two main areas of research focus:

Project One is studying the many aspects of normal mammary (breast) development, one of the few organs that is not fully developed at birth. The major goal is to identify critical biological steps in the development of normal mammary glands. The hope is that this new knowledge will

lead to a better understanding of breast cancer.

During the normal developmental cycle, the mammary glands display numerous tumor-like properties, such as invasion, proliferation, resistance to apoptosis (programmed cell death) and increased angiogenesis (blood vessel formation). Importantly, due to its continual developmental nature, the mammary gland retains many of these properties throughout its life span.

It is well established that "cross talk" or "signaling" among the epithelial and stromal cells found in the breast is a critical process in both normal development and the development of tumors. The researchers at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and UCSF involved in *Project One* are trying to identify the proteins and DNA molecules that are involved in the highly interactive signaling that occurs between these two types of cells.

Understanding the normal biology of the breast throughout the life cycle will provide insight into how cancer may take over this process and how exposures to specific environmental stressors (i.e., initial radiation) can alter the normal developmental process.

Project One will provide basic scientific insights that will, in the long term, discover clues to the prevention of breast cancer.

Project Two is a five-year prospective (going forward in time) study of young girls aged 6 to 7 years at the time of enrollment. The major goal is to identify factors that influence early sexual maturation in

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Profile: Carol Bartz

Marie Beichart

Autodesk CEO, president and chairman of the board, Carol Bartz has developed and led her team into the position as the world's leading supplier of design software. On her watch, revenues have grown from \$285 million to over \$1.2 billion.

The day after arriving at San Rafael-based Autodesk, Carol Bartz went for a routine mammogram and learned she had breast cancer. True to form, she immediately plotted a strategy to establish her executive team, live up to her commitments, and chart an initial course for Autodesk. One month into her administration,

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Message from the Executive Director



Janice Barlow

Research on the role environmental factors play in the development of breast cancer continues to be our number one priority. Marin Breast Cancer Watch is the only breast cancer organization in the Bay Area actively initiating and participating in research on breast cancer and environmental exposures. (See stories on page 1 and page 8). Research projects underway in the Bay Area Breast Cancer and Environment Research Center and a study of Serpentine rock, to be launched shortly by MBCW, will make a major contribution toward addressing the many unanswered questions regarding breast cancer and the exposure to environmental factors. We hope that the knowledge discovered from these studies will have significant impact on breast cancer research and prevention efforts both within the Bay Area and beyond.

I want to thank the many contributors who make our work and our continued success possible. We couldn't do it without your donations and your volunteer support – and we are so grateful.

I'd like to encourage all of you to become involved in MBCW's work, whether through your donations, or participation in one or more of our projects. Your ideas and contributions make a difference. Let us hear from you!

AVON Grants \$150,000 to MBCW

On July 10th, MBCW Executive Director Janice Barlow gratefully accepted a \$150,000.00 check at the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer San Francisco closing ceremony at Golden Gate Park. The Avon Foundation's support will help Marin Breast Cancer Watch to contract with a research consultant, continue with the Adolescent Education project, and cover specific operating expenses involved in the development of innovative research into the potential environmental links to causes of breast cancer. "This grant is a very generous contribution to our organization," says Barlow, noting that Avon's award departs from standard gifts both in the monetary amount and in the flexibility of use for MBCW programs. The grant will enable Marin Breast Cancer Watch to pursue new ideas and develop innovative pilot research and educational projects for which start-up funding is limited. "We are very appreciative to the Avon Foundation for including Marin Breast Cancer Watch as one of the many beneficiaries of the San Francisco Avon Walk for Breast Cancer." MBCW salutes the nearly 2,000 participants who raised funds and awareness as well!

Annie Fox Legislation

Approximately 11,000 women under the age of 40 will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, of which nearly 1,300 will die nationwide. Although breast cancer is the leading cause of death in women ages 15-40, most studies have concentrated on the disease as it affects middle-aged to older women. In February of this year, Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey introduced legislation that could dramatically improve the extent of clinical research on breast cancer in younger women. The Annie Fox Act (H.R. 987) would provide \$9 million a year for research and public education on aggressive cancers in younger women. A late member of the Marin Breast Cancer Watch Board, Annie Fox was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 29 and died of the disease at age 35. MBCW's dipsea hike/run honors the memory of Annie's life. We urge you to learn more about the Annie Fox Act and what you can do to help its passage by visiting our website (www.breastcancerwatch.com) or contacting Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey's office at (415) 507-9554.



Marjorie Bonner, mother of Annie Fox, urges support for the Annie Fox Act at the fourth annual Dipsea Hike/Run.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to find the causes of breast cancer through community participation in the research process.

Founder:

Francine Levien

Board Members:

Officers: Sandra Cross, President; Erica Heath, Vice President; Katie Beacock, Treasurer; Bill Stephens, Secretary
Members at large: Flavia Belli, Linda Duke, Ann Eichhorn, Fern Orenstein, Gail Paradise, Linda Spence.

MBCW Staff:

Janice Barlow: Executive Director
Marie Beichert, Development Director
Yolanda Nuñez, Outreach Coordinator
Susan Schwartz: Education Director
Adrienne York: Executive Assistant

info@breastcancerwatch.org

Honor Thy Healer 2005

Our annual Honor Thy Healer awards dinner on Thursday April 7th reminded us that healing occurs only within a community. We can't always prevent or cure breast cancer but we can often facilitate healing by coming together as a community to celebrate exceptional healers, helping professionals, researchers and advocates who have made a difference in the lives of those affected by breast cancer.

The 2005 Honor Thy Healer awards celebration took place at the Peacock Gap Golf and Country Club in San Rafael with close to 300 in attendance. This year's event was hosted by honorary chair Jeremiah Ridenour of Wildwood Natural Foods, a nationally known producer of organic foods that began in Marin County.

HEALING PROFESSIONAL AWARD: *Dr. Lloyd Miyawaki, Medical Director of the Marin Cancer Institute*

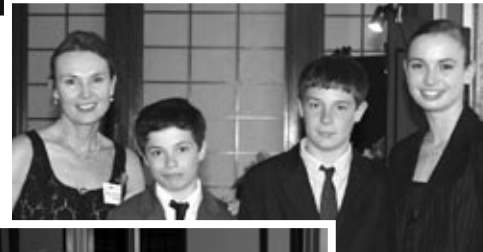


HEALING PARTNER AWARD: *Marin Man-to-Man, a men's support group whose wives and partners have been affected by breast cancer. Marv Edelstein, Woody Weingarten and Dan Goltz share the award and are shown here with Assemblyman Joe Nation.*



SHINING STAR AWARD: *Dr. Mary Mockus, attending surgeon and epidemiologist at Kaiser Permanente San Rafael. Dr. Mockus also served as President of the Board of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation Bay Area Affiliate. Dr. Mockus is shown here with her children Robert, Eddie and Laura.*

COMMUNITY BREAST CANCER RESEARCH AWARD: *Dr. Robert A. Hiatt, Director of Population Sciences at the UCSF Comprehensive Cancer Center and Director of the Bay Area Breast Cancer and Environment Research Center. Dr. Hiatt is shown here with his wife, June.*



FRANCINE LEVIEN ACTIVIST AWARD: *Tina Action Programs of West Marin (TAPS) represented by Gay Cain, Program Manager, Molly Edwards, Kathy Perkins, Joanne Sims, and Bonny White.*



SHINING STAR YOUTH AWARD: *Gabriela Yamilet Orantes, a former Student Body President of Sir Francis Drake High School in San Anselmo. Currently a junior at California State University Monterey, Gabby is a Breast Health Outreach Advocate for Sigma Theta Psi and acts as a translator for breast cancer awareness and detection programs. Gabby is shown here with her parents Ana and Pedro.*

“Informed Voices” Speaker Series: Stress and Breast Cancer

A complex relationship exists between physical and psychological health. Scientists know that many types of stress activate the body's endocrine or hormone system, which in turn can cause changes in the immune system. This highly specialized network serves as the body's defense against infection and disease and has been shown in studies to be affected by stress factors such as death of a spouse and social isolation.

As a part of our ongoing speaker series, "Informed Voices", Marin Breast Cancer Watch will present Dr. David Spiegel in an educational forum on Stress and Breast Cancer on Monday, September 26th at the Marin Civic Center at 7:00 p.m. Since beginning research on the effects of support groups for women with metastatic breast cancer in 1976, Dr. Spiegel has published numerous studies showing that group psychotherapeutic interventions have positive effects on mood, coping and pain among these patients.

A leader in the field of psychosomatic research, treatment and development, Dr. Spiegel will guide the listener to a better understanding of the stresses associated with cancer and the effects of cancer-related stress on patients and their families. He will also describe the various types of emotional and social support available and their effect on people surviving cancer.

In addition, Dr. Spiegel will share the results of a recently completed study, Breast Cancer and Psychosocial Factors: Early Stressful Life Events, Social Support and Well-Being. The sample for this study was 600 women from Marin County who participated in Marin Breast Cancer Watch's Adolescent Risk Factor Study.

Anyone concerned about the role stress plays in their health is encouraged to attend. This forum is made possible by funds received from the Andrea Fox Fund, established by the Marin County Board of Supervisors and administered through the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services. The forum is co-sponsored by Kaiser Permanente and the Breast Health Center of Marin at the Marin Cancer Institute.

What: *Stress and Breast Cancer: An Educational Forum*
featuring David Spiegel, M.D.
When: Monday, September 26th, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.
Where: Board of Supervisors Chambers – Room 330
Marin Civic Center, 3501 Civic Center Drive
Fees: Free and Open to the public
RSVP: 415.507.1949 info@breastcancerwatch.org

Eye on Research

Sandra L. Cross, MBCW President

The following updates and discussions of selected studies published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, media reviews and other sources are not intended to be a statement of final scientific truth. It generally takes several peer reviewed studies reaching the same conclusion before a theory is accepted as scientific truth. The summaries below are updates and reports on selected studies of interest to breast cancer advocates.

The Effects of Antidepressants on Tamoxifen

The Journal of the National Cancer Institute (2005: 97:30-39), published a preliminary finding that some cancer patients taking certain antidepressant drugs, i.e. selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) like Prozac, Paxil and Zoloft, often prescribed for their anti-hot flash effects, may be reducing their bodies' response to Tamoxifen. The researchers from Johns Hopkins University and the University of Michigan, demonstrating scientific caution, were quoted as saying that "There's no evidence from this study that a woman who is taking tamoxifen should automatically stop using a particular antidepressant if it is helping her...but it may be advisable to switch to a different antidepressant in some cases." Consult your health provider for more information.

The List Gets Longer

On February 1, 2005, the same day that the New York Times published an article by Jane E. Brody revealing that cancer has replaced heart disease as the leading killer of Americans, the San Francisco Chronicle reported that the latest Report on Carcinogens from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services added 17 new known and suspected carcinogens. Among the new and suspected carcinogens were x-rays, some viruses, lead and lead compounds, toilet bowl deodorants, chemicals in textile dyes, paints and inks. The list also includes heterocyclic amine compounds (byproducts of foods cooked at high temperatures from grilling or barbecuing), and furan (the substance that is released when non-stick pans are heated). The Report can be found on the website of the National Toxicology Program. (<http://ntp-server.niehs.nih.gov>)

The Good, The Bad, and the Plastic

Many of us carry those plastic water bottles, and we know they can leach carcinogenic chemicals into the water we drink.

The March Issue of the Green Guide lists Plastics to Avoid:
#3 Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), an endocrine disruptor and plastic softener;
#6 Polystyrene (PS), another endocrine disruptor; and
#7 Polycarbonate (contains bisphenol-A), which can leach out of heated plastic,

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Eye on Research

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and is unfortunately a common ingredient in baby bottles, sport bottles and five-gallon water jugs.

Listed as Better Plastics:

#1 Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET or PETE), the safest and common material for sport bottles. Concentrations of carcinogens in bottled spring water increase after 9 months of storage in a PET bottle.

#2 High density Polyethylene, and #4 Low Density Polyethylene,
#5 Polypropylene

Helpful Hints

For baby bottles choose tempered glass, or opaque plastic made of #5 or #1 which do not contain bisphenol-A. As a general rule, don't recycle sport bottles. Choose rigid reusable containers or for hot liquids, use thermoses with stainless steel or ceramic interiors.

Vitamin E Supplements: No longer the perfect antioxidant?

Many people religiously take their vitamin E supplements, frequently touted as a powerful antioxidant, and heart health protector. After reviewing recent articles on the efficacy of Vitamin E, the University of California Wellness Newsletter has removed the vitamin from its list of recommended supplements. The conclusions from its review were that there was no clear indication that the supplements provided any benefit, and in fact there was a slight indication of a higher death rate with long term consistent use. In summary, the article said that if the benefit was so hard to prove, perhaps the supplement should be

MBCW's New Home

Exciting new programs and future plans for Marin Breast Cancer Watch made a recent move a welcome necessity. We have relocated to a larger, sunnier suite in La Plaza at 4340 Redwood Highway, Suite C400 in San Rafael. The offices are graced by the inspired artwork of late board member Gail Paradise, who generously donated several series of paintings inspired by her experience with breast cancer. The facilities include a large, flexible conference room allowing for on-site community meetings and increased educational programming.



Honor Thy Healer Honoree 2005 Dr. Lloyd Miyawaki visits MBCW's new office in Terra Linda

Environmental Research

Continued from page 1

young girls, especially breast development. The areas of interest are broad and include lifestyle factors such as food intake and physical activity, developmental patterns such as growth history and birth weight, genetic influences such as family history, and environmental exposures. As part of the study, biological specimens (urine and blood) are being collected and will be evaluated in the future for environmental chemicals that may influence the onset of early puberty, a well-established risk factor for breast cancer. A sampling of the list of proposed environmental chemicals to be tested for in the blood and urine of girls enrolled in the study include:

Metals (such as lead, cadmium and mercury)

Cotinine (a breakdown product of nicotine that is currently regarded as the best biomarker of exposure to environmental tobacco smoke)

Phthalates (a name given to a group of chemicals that soften and increase the flexibility of plastics and vinyl)

Phytoestrogens (naturally occurring chemicals found in many plants used as foods such as soybeans, soy-based products, flaxseed, cereal bran and legumes)

Organochlorine Pesticides (DDE-a breakdown product of DDT)

Organophosphates (pesticides and herbicides)

Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (products of combustion, air pollution and diesel exhaust)

Bisphenol A (used in plastics and food can linings)

However, the exact environmental chemicals to be studied will be based on the results of a pilot study currently under way at the U.S. Center of Disease Control and Prevention.

The long-term goal of *Project Two* is to better understand the relationship between early sexual development and future risk for breast cancer. If factors including environmental exposures can be identified that influence this developmental process, this information will lead to new avenues for prevention of breast cancer.

Adolescent Peer Education Project MBCW works with Tam District Teens and Teachers

Susan Schwartz, MBCW Education Director

A second grant from the Marin Breast Cancer Council has enabled MBCW to begin the curriculum development phase of the "Adolescent Peer Education Breast Cancer Awareness Project." This unique undertaking involves the community – students, educators, breast cancer advocates and clinical specialists – in the development of a multi-phased pilot project scheduled to begin at Sir Francis Drake High School during the current school year. Project goals include introduction of age-appropriate information and increasing student knowledge of breast cancer risk factors, including the role of genetics, lifestyle, and emerging data on environmental exposures. Trained Peer Educators will be involved in creating youth-friendly media and messages. Student participants will be given resources to share with others. Results from the pilot project will be incorporated into an expanded field testing phase.

While breast cancer is not an immediate health threat for adolescents, many Marin teens know a family or community member who is affected by this disease. Reports in the local media and concerns about what can be done to reduce breast cancer risk frequently prompt student questions. MBCW's pilot education program will involve training a team of peer educators to present breast cancer information to high school students in health and social issues classrooms. This project is an outgrowth of MBCW's Adolescent Risk Factors Study. MBCW expects to expand this pilot project from one to three high schools, involving a total of 1000 students over a two-year period. Recent accomplishments include:

- Establishment of a collaborative partnership with the Tamalpais Union High School District
- Building organizational capacity to implement peer health education strategies
- Working side-by-side with a team of local Peer Resource students interested in breast cancer issues
- Establishment of the first School-to-Career internship at a breast cancer advocacy agency in Marin County
- Formation of a Community Advisory Committee to provide project guidance
- Creation of an interactive peer education breast cancer awareness lesson plan

MBCW's long-term goal with this project is to establish a model for teen breast cancer education with messages on environmental exposures and modifiable risks that can be used by Marin County schools and other interested communities.



Roberta Dossick, School-to-Career liaison for Drake High School, MBCW intern Emily Raab and MBCW Education Director Susan Schwartz.



Mary Beth Faustine, Nancy Boughey and Martin Forst participate in an educational advisory group organized by

Cancer Resource Center, and other specialists met with the MBCW staff to preview the objectives and content for the Peer Education Breast Cancer Awareness project.

Advisors include Dr. Francine Halberg, Dr. Opal Thornton, Cynthia Cantril, Elizabeth Crawford, Mary Beth Faustine, and Natalie Ledesma. Consultants include Ira Sachnoff, Meyla Ruwin, Dr. Marin Forst, and Nancy Boughey. MBCW Board member Fern Orenstein is serving as the breast cancer community advocate. Teachers Shelly Norstad and Yvonne Milham and Student Instruction Director Carol Eber from the Tamalpais Union High School District are collaborating with MBCW on this innovative classroom module. We thank these advisors for their contributions.

Celebrating

TEN MOMENTOUS YEARS

Marin Breast Cancer Watch will be 10 years old in 2006, and we're planning to celebrate all year long! We'd love to have you join our special anniversary group to brainstorm and plan for this momentous year. We invite you to make your stories part of our anniversary festivities.

We have many people to remember and thank and much to celebrate. We expect that there are stories out there that need telling, about Francine Levien and other pioneering men and women who have been important members of our community and our organization. We do hope you will share your stories and perhaps some of the memorabilia that you may have tucked away.

A Candlelight Ceremony is scheduled early in the year and other exciting activities such as house parties with special guests, theatrical events, and of course, another fantastic spring Honor Thy Healer and gala are on the agenda.

We welcome your ideas and participation -- whether you've been involved with Marin Breast Cancer Watch recently or a while ago -- in whatever way you are interested in being a part.

Your help will be instrumental in kicking off another terrific 10 years. Please let us know you're interested. Contact us by email at info@breastcancerwatch.org, or phone at 415-507-1949. We're looking forward to working together on a year of celebration.

Shshsh...It's a Secret

Come the New Year -- in honor of our tenth anniversary, Marin Breast Cancer Watch will have a brilliant new name and logo to accompany our new vision, thanks to the generous pro bono work of the internationally renowned corporate identification and branding company, Landor Associates.

The change was a six-month long process, involving MBCW staff, past and current board members and Landor, which is headed by Chairman and CEO Craig Branigan, a Marin resident.

The new branding represents "the creation of a new visual identity reflecting the values that underpin everything the organization does," explains Janice Barlow, MBCW executive director. "Changing our name represents our determination to look at our work with fresh eyes and accomplish even greater goals for women, our community and ourselves."

Stay tuned for the grand announcement in early 2006. Until then, our lips are sealed.

Carol Bartz

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she began a seven-course treatment of chemotherapy. She returned to work the next month. "I went through mastectomy and chemotherapy and fortunately it's twelve years later. You are never as naïve after you have it as you are before. Simply put, that's why I'm so adamant on the issue of cancer, especially breast cancer, because it certainly has no boundaries. It can strike anyone and we have to work hard to turn a bad experience into a positive experience for ourselves and for others."

"I think to be a legitimate citizen of a community, you need to give back to the community. Frankly, a community network supports all of us, so we in turn must give back. At Autodesk, giving back includes corporate contributions, encouraging employees to give and matching those contributions, and allowing employee time to volunteer at their favorite organization." Autodesk employee Anja B. Allison was instrumental in the design of the Marin Breast Cancer Watch website. "I think that's a perfect example of someone giving their time and their unique skills. Money can buy things, but most organizations have so much on their list that volunteers are instrumental in keeping the money targeted at the mission."

Autodesk has been a stalwart supporter of the research efforts at Marin Breast Cancer Watch. "While the numbers in Marin County are high, I don't think fretting about the numbers is as important as fretting about how to change and fix the problem, not just by curing it but by finding the causes so it can be prevented. Our speculations regarding lifestyle, chemicals, and body burden need to be answered by specific research. We don't know enough and we must find out more."

Kudos, Carol!

Linda Duke Joins MBCW Board

We are delighted to add the talents of Linda Duke to our Board of Directors. She has contributed to MBCW for over three years by working on our brochure design and soliciting some incredible donations. As a new board member, Linda lends her marketing expertise to assisting in business development, public relations and generating awareness for the organization.

Linda is CEO of her own marketing communications firm, Duke Marketing, and specializes in working with multi-unit organizations. Some of her clients include The Cheesecake Factory and Pasta Pomodoro, both of which have donated food to our organization's events this year.

Linda and her husband Michael have been personally touched by breast cancer. Her parents have been involved with fundraising for the American Cancer Society for over 20 years. We look forward to working with Linda; the skills and strengths that she brings to the organization will help us to meet our development goals.



MBCW responds to Community Concerns about exposures to Serpentine Rock

Janice Barlow, MBCW Executive Director

The prevalence of serpentine rock throughout the county is frequently mentioned at community forums and in newspaper articles as being a possible environmental explanation for the historically high incidence of breast cancer in Marin.

Extensive deposits of serpentinites are present in Marin County due to oceanic crust movement generated by the San Andreas Fault. Serpentinites migrate (much like a balloon through the air) through the earth's crust because of their comparatively lower density to most crustal material. As a result, serpentinites are located at high points such as mountaintops where strong winds may blow these aerosols over areas such as eastern Marin County. Additionally, the runoff including water and sediment from these serpentinites may be persistently deposited in the highly populated basins of Marin County's geography.

Over time, serpentinites and their sediments weather, producing soils, dust and groundwater containing elevated concentrations of trace/heavy metals such as chromium (Cr), nickel (Ni), manganese (Mn), iron (Fe), magnesium

(Mg), vanadium (V), cobalt (Co) and cadmium (Cd).

Exposure to these naturally occurring toxins and contaminants may occur through inhalation, ingestion and dermal contact from air, dust, water and soil. Ingestion of vegetation growing on soils containing trace/heavy elements may expose residents and other life forms to these suspected carcinogens.

In response to community concerns, MBCW has partnered with geologist Dr. Chris Oze and the Environmental and Soil Chemistry Group at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire to conduct a pilot study to investigate the distribution, concentrations and pathways of exposure to trace/heavy metals from serpentinites in the soil, water and air in selected areas of Marin County.

Funding for innovative exposure assessment studies such as this project MBCW is initiating is limited. However, the board and the staff of MBCW as well as the academic investigators involved in the development of this project believe that

this study is important if we are to advance our understanding of the environmental factors related to breast cancer.

MBCW views this as a "win-win" pilot project. If the results indicate that exposure to trace/heavy metals derived from serpentinites is unlikely to be a contributing environmental factor, we will have *ruled out* this potential exposure source and disease pathway. If this exposure assessment study suggests that trace/heavy metals may be an environmental factor, the study will provide important information that will inform future health studies.

All personnel directly involved in the project have agreed to contribute their time and professional skills. **However, financial support from our community is essential to fund the collection and analysis of samples and dissemination of results.**

Please join us as we take this important step forward in doing research on the role environmental factors may play in the development of breast cancer. **Please send your donations to Exposure to Serpentine, in care of Marin Breast Cancer Watch.**

In Memory

Virginia Gail Paradise

1939-2005

We mourn the loss and cherish the memory of the life of Gail Paradise, a member of the MBCW Board of Directors since 2002 who died from ovarian cancer on August 11, 2005. A world-renowned professional artist and sculptor, Gail shared the gift of her artistic expertise with our organization. A collection of her work is on display at the MBCW office, including original landscape and human figure “monoprints,” and a series of line drawings expressing Gail’s personal journey and nine-year battle with breast cancer. A civic-minded resident of Tomales in West Marin, Gail served as a member of the MBCW community advisory committee for the Adolescent Education project. She believed in the healing force of art and strived to create a world without breast cancer and a more hopeful future for her children and grandchildren. To view Ms. Paradise’s virtual fine art gallery and for details of an upcoming memorial gathering, visit: www.gailparadise.com, or contact our office. Visit this same website to purchase her works of art. (A portion of the sales proceeds benefit MBCW.)

MBCW has established the *Gail Paradise Memorial Fund* in honor of this remarkable artist and breast cancer advocate. We will carry forward the memory of her creative spirit, sense of humor and generosity. Contributions for this special fund will be used for education programs, a passionate interest of Gail’s.



Mermaid

Farewell, my lovely friend,
released from your final year of pain,
with your dispensations in place,
that talked-about shed finally built out back,
and your legacy now lodged in our grieving hearts.
I've heard people live for as long as they're remembered,
so you'll be here at least as long as I am, my dear,
for as long as my vision allows me to see
these amazing creations from your talented hands –
considered treasures from day one,
and so they shall be even unto my heirs.
I'm grateful to have known you,
To have shared your world for awhile,
And I wish you peace and godspeed
on your imminent passage to Paradise.

08/13/05

For Gail, with love

M. Kate Hilsenbeck

Dipsea Hike/Run

FOURTH ANNUAL

A scorching heat wave did not stop hundreds of Marin Breast Cancer Watch supporters from making the long climb up Mount Tam on a clear day in July. The fourth annual **dipsea hike/run** took place on Saturday, July 23rd. A spectacular climb for fun and fitness, hikers and runners began their climb at Old Mill Park in Mill Valley and made their way up trails to a celebration at the Mountain Theater on Mount Tamalpais. Over the past four years, participants have raised more than \$100,000 to support the work of Marin Breast Cancer Watch. The dipsea hike/run honors its founder, Annie Fox, a Marin County employee and breast cancer awareness advocate who fought the disease until her untimely death at the age of 35, just before the first MBCW dipsea hike/run event.

Our sincere thanks to all the dipsea hike/run participants, volunteers, and contributors who made this day such a success. Special thanks to our Event Sponsors: Tamalpa Runners; Mechanics Bank; Clif Bar/Luna; Marin H2O/Culligan; Mortgage Loan Specialists; Pasta Pomodoro; Jackson's Hardware; Juice Beauty; Kaiser Permanente; Kinesys Performance Sunscreen; Mill Valley Massage; Wm. Shine Company; and Marin Brewing Co.



Steve Barlow and Jerry Leith are members of the Dipsea Hike/Run Planning Committee.

MBCW Board Member Flavia Belli poses with MBCW staff member Adrienne York at the fourth annual Dipsea Hike/Run.



MBCW volunteer Carole Rumsey and son Parker cheered in runners and hikers at the Dipsea Hike/Run.



MBCW Board Member Linda Duke serves food at the Dipsea Hike/Run.



MBCW supporters from Petaluma take a rest after the Dipsea Hike/Run.



Dipsea Hike/Run Planning Committee member Chris Stewart rests with long-time MBCW supporter Marjorie Bonner and Emeritus MBCW board member Roni Peskin Mentzer.



Lawrie Webb poses with her daughter and MBCW summer intern Emily Raab.

Diversity Outreach and Health Literacy

Yolanda Nuñez, Outreach Coordinator

Imagine for a moment going to a doctor or a health clinic and being told you have **TSAERB RECNAAC**. Just like that. Then imagine being told you have **BREAST CANCER**. Many women don't have to imagine, they have heard it and many survivors have said that when they heard this diagnosis the words *breast cancer* were blurred and incomprehensible and they had to ask the doctor to repeat what was just said.

Now imagine if you will, not speaking English, not understanding what is being said to you and never having heard the word cancer, because it isn't in your language or vocabulary. The word cancer does not exist in many indigenous populations. There is no definition, no explanation or translation of the word, let alone of the disease. Breast Cancer (or Tsaerb Recnac to non-English speakers) can sound confusing to those who lack basic understanding of health information.

The Center for Health Care Strategies finds that a disproportionate number of African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and Asians are estimated to have literacy problems. Of these populations, women are impacted more than men for the simple reason that women interact more with the health care system. Studies have found that women with low health literacy are more likely to have never had a mammogram and that if they have had one, they are less likely to follow-up on treatment. In fact in a study of 1,000 women with breast cancer, nearly half said the information they received was incomprehensible or incomplete. The less understandable the information for those women, the worse their quality of life remained for up to four years after their diagnosis. (National Women's Health Report, October 2004).

As our world and Bay Area population changes, basic health information needs to become more accessible and understandable to all. This has direct application to MBCW and the process of community based participatory research.

Many organizations attempt to implement diversity and cultural competency into their programs with a goal of reaching underserved populations and diverse sectors of the community. Most businesses and organizations now translate written materials, especially in California. Some employ Spanish speaking or bilingual program personnel. While this shows good will and fair intentions, there are ongoing challenges for organizations like MBCW in building new community connections. Diversity outreach and cultural competency is not merely about the language barriers, but unique cultural, class, age and gender barriers as well. We appreciate the contributions of the many community organizations and individuals who are working with MBCW to realize a broader level of participation in the Bay Area Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Centers program and related MBCW research, education and advocacy efforts.

Diversity outreach plays a very important role when it intentionally involves participants from the many ethnic, cultural and age groups concerned about breast cancer in the Marin and the Bay Area communities. There is no magic formula. At MBCW, we are learning to re-think and re-design our strategies as we develop and implement diverse outreach programs. This change must be done from within the organization as we engage new partners in the process of discovering the causes and prevention of breast cancer. If we as breast cancer advocates and activists can embrace our commonalities and respect our differences while working towards the goal of finding the clues to the puzzle of breast cancer - we will all benefit, we will all win. It doesn't matter who we are, where we came from, what languages we speak or what color we are. Breast cancer is an equal opportunity disease that affects far too many women, mothers and friends.

In essence, if you are a woman you have breasts. If you have breasts, you are at risk for getting breast cancer. Diseases such as breast cancer do not show any discrimination, prejudice, or preferences. It is as simple as that! Diversity outreach is not rocket science when we are all in this battle together. We welcome new voices from our community.

www.breastcancerwatch.org

Adolescent Education Project Intern

Emily Raab

As a junior at Sir Francis Drake High School in San Anselmo, I was offered an opportunity to work as a summer intern at Marin Breast Cancer Watch. During my internship I was lucky enough to meet some wonderful people. I interviewed Mary



MBCW interns and volunteers Jenny Heath, Molly Davissou and Emily Raab prepare packets for a focus group meeting.

Beth Faustine, the Breast Cancer Care Coordinator at Kaiser Permanente. Mary Beth shared with me what it is like to work with patients and families who have been affected by breast cancer. Kathy Renick, Marin General Hospital librarian, taught me great skills for searching the internet for health information. At an Advisory Committee meeting, I spoke about the Peer Education presentation that my class is developing with Susan Schwartz. Overall this has been a great experience that has taught me many things that I will take with me. I am especially interested in this topic because many women in my family have had breast cancer and I would like to learn how to help them and myself.

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Marin Breast Cancer Watch would like to thank all of our supporters, volunteers, donors and sponsors who have contributed funds, time and resources over the past year.

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In Memory Of **Susan Detjens, Alice Berryessa, Linda Watson, Francine Levien and too many others...**
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In Memory Of **Arlene Kirshner and In Honor Of Roni Peskin Mentzer's Breast Cancer Walk**
Pearl Schulson

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*We'd like to hear your suggestions for
our next newsletter! Email your ideas to:
info@breastcancerwatch.org*

Calling All Volunteers

Volunteers are needed for various functions at Marin Breast Cancer Watch. If you would like to volunteer your time to help MBCW in our office, or at the many upcoming events, please let us know your availability by visiting our website and submitting a volunteer form at www.breastcancerwatch.org

Upcoming Events: Research Conferences and Events

September 9 –11, 2005

**From Research to Action: Seeking Solutions
California Breast Cancer Research Symposium**
Sacramento, CA.

More information about the symposium is available at www.cbcrp.org/symposium/ or by calling the California Breast Cancer Research Program at 888 313-2277.

September 10, 2005

**Stepping Out to Celebrate Life Fashion Show
Marin Breast Cancer Council**
Marin Center Exhibit Hall
Visit www.marinbcc.org for more information

September 24, 2005

Marin Peddlers Ride for Charity
A mountain bike fundraising event for the Marin Breast Cancer Watch
China Camp State Park
Registration is available online through Active.com or you can call the Marin Peddlers at 415-385-5785 to register

September 25, 2005

**Komen Race for the Cure
Susan G. Komen Foundation**
San Francisco, CA
Visit www.sfkomen.org or call 415-561-3377 to register

September 25, 2005

**The Breast of Broadway
Wine, Women & Song**
A musical journey through the classics of Broadway. This year's event will benefit Marin Breast Cancer Watch (MBCW), Marin Breast Cancer Council, and Rally for the Cause.
Throckmorton Theater, Mill Valley 6:00 – 9:00 pm
Tickets available through the Throckmorton Theater box office: 415-383-9600 or through www.TicketWeb.com.

September 26, 2005

**Stress and Breast Cancer: An Educational Forum
By Dr. David Spiegel**
Board of Supervisors Chamber-Room 330
Marin Civic Center 7:00pm
RSVP to Marin Breast Cancer Watch
415-507-1949 or info@breastcancerwatch.org

November 9-11, 2005

**Annual Scientific Meeting
NIEHS Breast Cancer and Environment Research Centers**
Michigan State University
More information about the program can be found at www.bcerc.org

January 21, 2006

**Environmental Links to Breast Cancer: Connecting
Communities through the Research Process**
Kaiser Permanente, Regional Branch
Oakland, CA.
Check www.breastcancerwatch.org for specifics.



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