

# Honoring those who heal, help cancer victims

## Around the County

Chris Rooney

Zero Breast Cancer's Honor Thy Healer Awards shine the spotlight on the work and deeds of healers in every sense — those who strive to solve the puzzle of breast cancer; physicians, friends and family members who help women survive breast cancer; and leaders who pioneer community action to address prevention, education and access to care for underserved populations. In its ninth year of recognizing Bay Area luminaries, the 2008 Honor Thy Healer Awards will also recognize the statewide California Breast Cancer Research Program and the nationwide Avon Foundation Breast Cancer Crusade for their contributions to finding the causes, contributing factors and solutions to the most common cancer faced by Bay Area and California women.

The awards celebration will be held on Thu., May 8, from 6 to 9 p.m., at the Mill Valley Community Center. The event is open to the public, and is typically attended by community supporters of the honorees, health professionals and breast cancer advocates, public officials and event sponsors.

Zero Breast Cancer produces a video that allows the honorees to share their unique stories. Each honoree will address the audience directly as she/he is presented with the following awards: Healing Professional, Shining Star, Community Breast Cancer Research, Francine Levien Activist and Healing Partner. Zero Breast Cancer produces a commemorative program for the evening's celebration.

Each year, the Honor Thy Healer Awards committee solicits nominations from the community for the Healing Professional and Healing Partner awards. Zero Breast Cancer also selects three honorees each year to highlight community research, leadership and activism that exemplify the organization's mission.

Zero Breast Cancer is a nonprofit organization dedicated to finding the causes of breast cancer through community participation in the research process. It focuses on identifying environmental factors and the role they play in breast cancer at all stages of life and across generations.

This year's honorary chair will be KGO-7 TV's Cheryl Jennings, an Emmy Award-winning newscaster and philanthropist. Jennings is a 2008 inductee into the Marin Women's Hall of Fame.

This year's honorees:

The 2008 Healing Professional honoree is Bobbie Head, M.D., Ph.D.

A medical oncologist at California Cancer Care (Greenbrae), Dr. Head, a Marin General Hospital physician, was nominated for the Healing Professional Award by her patients and colleagues. She has specialized in breast cancer care and is a leader in the development of clinical quality outcomes for cancer treatment. She has been an assistant clinical professor at the UCSF School of Medicine and is affiliated with numerous regional and national cancer clinical research trials. For more than a decade, Head was the medical director of Hospice by the Bay in Marin County. She knows firsthand the breadth of difficulties people and their family members face when given the diagnosis of cancer. Head has chaired the Breast Health Task Force of the Marin Cancer Institute (Greenbrae) and through that organization has taken the lead in coordinating cancer survivorship programs. One of her former breast cancer patients says it best: "Dr. Bobbie Head is a wonderful human being; we are SO lucky to have her in Marin."



The 2008 Shining Star honoree is Marc Hurlbert, Ph.D.

Dr. Marc Hurlbert is the director of the Avon Foundation Breast Cancer Crusade, headquartered in New York City. This campaign, fueled by proceeds from the foundation's fundraising programs, including the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer, funds breast cancer research and access to care programs nationwide. Since 2003, 75,000 Avon U.S. Walk participants have raised more than \$200 million in donations, and since 1992 all Avon Breast Cancer Crusade initiatives worldwide have raised over \$525 million. Hurlbert uses his scientific background in pharmacology and laboratory research in his current role at Avon, overseeing a \$40-plus million annual grant-making budget to support breast cancer education, screening, support services, access to treatment and research. At the Avon Foundation, Hurlbert monitors and evaluates the progress of the breast cancer grantees and grant programs.



The 2008 Community Breast Cancer Research honoree is Marion H.E. (Mhel) Kavanaugh-Lynch, M.D., MPH.

Dr. Marion H.E. (Mhel) Kavanaugh-Lynch is the director of the California Breast Cancer Research Program, a nationally recognized program that funds innovative breast cancer research in California. Kavanaugh-Lynch develops strategies and guides priorities for the \$15 million per year that California invests in breast cancer research to bring an end to the disease. Her accomplishments include championing the role of advocates and survivors in the scientific review and grant-making process. She has developed a successful model for funding community-based participatory research throughout the state, while also directing rigorous evaluations of the CBCRP program overall.

In her professional endeavors, she has received numerous honors from breast cancer advocacy groups, has been recognized for her contributions to gay and lesbian medical organizations, and is a founding member of the International Cancer Research Partners. A national and international leader in breast cancer research and women's health, Kavanaugh-Lynch was recently appointed by Speaker of the House Fabian Nuñez to the Scientific Guidance Panel for the California Environmental Contaminant Biomonitoring Program.



The 2008 Francine Levien Activist honoree is Isabel Duron.

An award-winning journalist in television news broadcasting, Isabel Duron has been the senior anchor of KRON-4 TV's "Weekend Morning News" in San Francisco for the past 16 years. She was one of the first Latinas to work in mainstream television in the San Francisco Bay Area.

A Salinas, Calif., native and civic leader in the San Jose-Silicon Valley community, Duron is the founder and executive director of Latinas Contra Cancer, a San Jose-based nonprofit that



provides education and support to low-income Spanish-speaking women and men. Duron, who has battled cancer personally, has used her media experience to focus on Latina health issues, developing a signature Breast Cancer Bingo program and LCC's annual Mother's Day Walk Against Cancer.

"Duron's activism embodies the spirit, vision and determination of Zero Breast Cancer's late founder and first executive director, Francine Levien," the agency's press materials said.

The 2008 Healing Partner honoree is Leanne Greentree.

Susan Banta nominated Leanne Greentree, a fellow Nicasio School parent who was a relative newcomer to the community when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Nicasio, located in the geographic heart of Marin County, is a small rural town complete with a general store, which is where the two women met to begin their healing partnership journey.

Banta, a breast cancer survivor and mother of three, credits Greentree with helping care for her children, driving her to doctor's appointments and radiation treatments, and also mobilizing others in the Nicasio community to support her healing and recovery. For six months, Greentree managed a brigade of voluntary cooks and chauffeurs in order to allow Banta to concentrate her energies on healing herself at home and during hospitalizations at Kaiser Permanent.

A modern Marin mother, Greentree created a website for the purpose of coordinating meals and help for the Banta family, but moreover to enable Banta to share updates of her progress and to communicate with friends and out-of-area family on how she was coping and feeling.

Tickets to the awards dinner are \$130 per person and may be obtained by calling 507-1949. Proceeds from the event support the Bay Area research, education and community outreach programs of Zero Breast Cancer, a nonprofit organization located in San Rafael. Visit [zerobreastcancer.org](http://zerobreastcancer.org) for more information.

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