



Maine Breast Cancer Coalition News & Views

Fall 2006

www.mainebreastcancer.org

1-800-928-2644

October: Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October, "Breast Cancer Awareness Month," is a time to reflect on the impact of breast cancer nationwide and in Maine. This year nearly 900 Maine women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 200 will die of the disease. Breast cancer patients and those close to them will be affected by the medical, emotional, and financial impact of a breast cancer diagnosis.

Awareness is the first step toward change, but it will take more than awareness to make a difference. Actions on the part of committed individuals and groups will have an impact on breast cancer. Consider ways that you can make a difference during this "Breast Cancer Awareness Month."

In this newsletter issue you will find information about the following actions you can take:

Let our lawmakers know that breast cancer is important. Keep informed of legislation related to breast cancer and urge your lawmakers to support these bills. Go to the National Breast Cancer Coalition site www.stopbreastcancer.org for updates on breast cancer legislative priorities.

Make a contribution or attend a fundraising event for the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition's Support Service Fund. This fund provides financial assistance for breast cancer and breast health needs for underserved Maine residents.

Breast & Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act An Important Law for Maine Women

What is the Treatment Act?

In the spring of 2001, the Maine legislature approved state funding to enact the Breast & Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act (MBCPTA). The Act, which became effective October 1, 2001, expands MaineCare (Medicaid) to women who are diagnosed with breast and cervical cancer through the *Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program*.

What is covered?

- Treatment for breast or cervical cancer or pre-cancerous lesions in women who have been diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer through the *Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program*

Who is eligible for the Treatment Act?

Women who are:

- Age 40 through age 64
- Uninsured or having insurance which has a pre-existing condition policy that does not cover cancer treatment *or* insurance which covers limited services and does not include treatment
- In need of treatment for breast or cervical cancer or pre-cancerous condition.
- U.S. citizens or resident non-citizens
- Screened through the *Maine Breast & Cervical Health Program* (see below for eligibility requirements).

Who is eligible for the Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program?

Women who are:

- Age 40 and over
- 250% of the federal poverty level guidelines
- Uninsured or have limited insurance coverage.

How does someone apply?

A woman can apply by calling the *Maine Breast & Cervical Health Program (MBCHP)* at 1-800-350-5180, press 1.

For more information about the Treatment Act contact:

Maine Breast & Cervical Health Program

1-800-350-5180, press 1 and ask to speak with a case manager.

“Maine Leadership Awards for Breast Health” Presented at Blaine House

The *Maine Leadership Awards for Breast Health* were presented at the annual Silver Tea hosted by First Lady Karen Baldacci at the Blaine House on Tuesday, October 3, as part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This year the Leadership Awards were presented to one woman who has made extraordinary contributions as a volunteer, and two women with exceptional records as health care professionals. This year’s recipients, **Cristin Sullivan Warstler, Ph.D.** of Bangor, **Terry Baker** of Brunswick, and **Linda Zeigler, R.N.** of Camden, were recognized for their leadership in advocating for the breast cancer needs of the women of Maine.

Cristin Sullivan Warstler was awarded the 2006 Breast Health Leadership Award for her role as an outstanding volunteer. Cristin, a clinical psychologist at Eastern Maine Medical Center since 2000, serves as a board member of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation – Maine Affiliate. She has organized and implemented breast cancer education presentations statewide and developed public service announcements about the importance of breast health.

Terry Baker and Linda Zeigler, R.N. were co-winners of the award for health care professionals. Terry Baker works as community executive for the American Cancer Society, and has been its lead staff person for seven years on breast health initiatives in Maine. Since 1995 Terry has worked as a volunteer, coordinator, and collaborator, serving in leadership roles for many organizations including the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition, the Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program, the Maine Breast Health Cooperative, and Southern Maine Medical Center’s Cancer Committee.

Linda Zeigler has worked as a nurse, advocate, and breast health educator in a number of different positions at Penobscot Bay Medical Center (PBMC) since 1993. She has developed and implemented numerous breast health education and assistance programs for Maine women. Linda has served on the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation – Maine Affiliate, the Maine Breast Health Cooperative, and the National Women’s Health Resource Center. (source: American Cancer Society press release)

Top Cancer Groups Fund Study of State Pain Policies

Chronic pain is a part of daily life for more than 50 percent of all cancer patients and survivors and for more than 75 percent of those with advanced stages of the disease – figures that have remained unchanged for decades, despite advances in therapeutic options to address pain. In an unprecedented effort to promote better pain control, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF) and the American Cancer Society are jointly funding a nationwide project to evaluate pain management policies in the states.

The organizations, which represent the nation’s leading information and advocacy groups for people with cancer, are funding a three-year grant to the Pain & Policy Studies Group (PPSG) at the University of Wisconsin Comprehensive Cancer Center to examine policies that govern pain management practices for cancer patients in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. PPSG will issue three report cards during the life of the grant that grade states on their pain policies.

PPSG is headed by David E. Joranson, MSSW, and Aaron M. Gilson, PhD, internationally known experts on pain control policy who implemented a first-of-its-kind study in 2003 comparing pain policies throughout the country. The results of that study, reported in *Achieving Balance in State Pain Policy: A Progress Report Card*, showed that more than half of all states had policies that encouraged pain management, addressed physicians’ fears of regulatory scrutiny and drew distinctions between physical dependence or tolerance and addiction.

(continued in next column)

But the 2003 report also showed that much more progress could be made. A total of 38 states received a grade of C or worse, demonstrating inadequacies in their pain management policies. (Maine received a grade of “B”) Many states reacted to the 2003 report by amending their policies to be more balanced. PPSG has collaborated with health care professionals, non-governmental organizations and government officials to help adopt policies that promote the appropriate use of pain medications. The new grant is intended to identify where progress is needed to encourage positive momentum for pain relief and palliative care. For more information visit www.medsch.wisc.edu/painpolicy

Legislative Priorities for Breast Cancer Issues

With elections coming up soon, now is the time to ask the candidates about their positions on issues important to breast cancer. Ask the candidates:

If elected, will you support:

- Funding for access to quality healthcare for all?
- The Department of Defense’s exceptional Breast Cancer Research Program?
- The Breast Cancer Environmental Research Act----and work to make it a law?
- Preservation of the Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Program?

For more information go to the NBCC website at www.stopbreastcancer.org or call 1-800-622-2838.

Maine Race for the Cure 2006 A Success!

On September 17, more than 3,200 people from around the state participated in the 2006 Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation’s annual *Maine Race for the Cure* in Bangor. This year’s race raised more than \$180,000, which will support breast cancer and breast health initiatives throughout Maine, in addition to providing funds for the national research program. To find out more about the Maine Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation go to www.komenmaine.com.

Spirit of Life Award Announced

Laurel Bezanson, an eighteen-year survivor of breast cancer and advocacy committee chair for the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition since its inception in 1992, has been selected for the Maine Cancer Foundation's 2006 *Meredith Burgess Spirit of Life Award*. This award honors an individual in Maine who demonstrates unfailing optimism and advocacy when dealing with breast cancer, a person who exhibits or embodies the spirit of "living with cancer" and who works to carry a positive message to other cancer patients regardless of personal health.

Laurel was honored at the annual Maine Cancer Foundation *Cure Breast Cancer For ME* event on October 4 in Portland. For more information about the Maine Cancer Foundation go to www.maineccancer.org.

MBCC Support Service Fund News

The MBCC **Support Service Fund** provides financial assistance for breast health or breast cancer related services and items to underserved people in Maine. The Fund assists low-income, uninsured, or underinsured people who don't qualify for, or whose particular needs aren't covered by other assistance programs. Since the Fund began in 2000, we have awarded grants to more than 700 Maine residents who had nowhere else to turn for assistance.

So far this year we have received applications for financial assistance from 105 Maine women. We have granted requests for mammograms and readings, breast ultrasound, physician co-payments, hospital bills, prescriptions, lymphedema compression garments, assistance with travel expenses to treatments, and many other items and services.

To find out more or to apply for a grant call Maine Breast Cancer Coalition toll free at 1-800-928-2644 or download an easy-to-complete application from our web site at www.mainebreastcancer.org

How You Can Help

The **Support Service Fund** is only partially supported by grants from major foundations. MBCC relies on contributions from local groups or individuals.

If your community group, business, or organization would like to dedicate all or part of the proceeds from a fundraising effort to the Support Service Fund, contact grants chairperson Chris Haiss at 207-938-4018 or czh@tdstelme.net.

Or please consider a tax-deductible donation of any amount. See the donation and membership form on the back page of this newsletter for details. Checks should be made payable to MBCC. Please write "*Support Service Fund*" on the memo line.

MBCC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Our Mission

Maine Breast Cancer Coalition is dedicated to making a difference in the health of Maine people through:

- **Financial Support** for underserved people with breast cancer or breast health needs
- **Advocacy** for breast cancer research and legislation
- **Education** to promote knowledge about breast cancer and quality care

Wine Tasting to Benefit Support Service Fund

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, University of Maine psychology student, Barbara Vittum, is hosting a wine tasting benefit on **Sunday, October 29**, from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM at the Bucksport Golf Club, RT. 46 in Bucksport.

Your \$25 per person donation entitles you to tasty samples of several fine wines, delicious hors d'oeuvres, scrumptious desserts, spectacular live entertainment and a social gathering that celebrates life. Free coffee, tea and bottled water will be available. Servings of wine, beer and soda will be on hand for purchase.

Proceeds will go to the **supplemental fund of Caring Connections** and the **Maine Breast Cancer Coalition's Support Service Fund**. All monies will assist the women served by these programs with their breast health and breast cancer related needs. If you are unable to attend, would you be willing to purchase a ticket so a breast cancer survivor can enjoy this event? For more information please contact Barbara Vittum at the Vineyard at 469-7844 or Caring Connections (Bangor Y) at 941-2808 x 337.

MBCC Support Service Fund Receives Major Grants

Maine Breast Cancer Coalition is pleased to announce we have received two major grants, one from the **Fraternal Order of Eagles Pink Sock Foundation** and the other from the **Borman Family Foundation**.

The Fraternal Order of Eagles Pink Sock Foundation has been a long-term contributor to our Support Service Fund. The organization holds fundraising events throughout the year and recently made a donation of \$12,501 to the Fund.

For the third consecutive year, the Borman Family Foundation has awarded a generous grant to the Support Service Fund. This year's grant for \$3,000 demonstrates the Borman Foundation's ongoing commitment to helping underserved Maine residents.

We would like to express our appreciation to the following people or organizations who held fundraising events for the Support Service Fund:

Rose Marquis held a fundraising event at the Waterville Elks Club and raised over \$1000 for the Support Service Fund.

Friends and family members of **Sue Legere** made generous donations to the Support Service Fund. Sue had asked family members to donate to the Fund in lieu of birthday presents this year.

The **Lewiston Eagles** held a fundraiser and donated the proceeds to the Fund.

We recently received generous donations for the Support Service Fund from:

Mary Jane MacLauchlan in memory of deceased family members

Sandy and Andre Plette in honor of **Laurel Bezanson** and **Katy Core**.

Linda Morneault

Sara Wallbridge in memory of Susan **Tidyman**.

Thank you for your generous contributions!

Join Us!

If you are receiving this newsletter and are not yet a member of the *Maine Breast Cancer Coalition*, please consider joining us. Membership is only \$15 for individuals or \$100 for business or corporate memberships. Please send us the membership form on this page (or a photocopy). Or consider becoming an active member. We meet the second Wednesday of most months from 5:45 to 7:30 P.M. at MaineGeneral Hospital in Waterville. Call 1-800-928-2644 first to confirm meeting dates.

Yes! I want to support the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition's work.

- I want to be active in the *Maine Breast Cancer Coalition*. Please contact me.
- I want to become a member of *MBCC*. Enclosed is a check for \$15 (individual) or \$100 (business membership) payable to *MBCC*.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (day) _____ (eve.) _____
Email _____

- I want to make a tax-deductible contribution. Enclosed is a check payable to *MBCC* for \$_____.
In honor/memory of _____
- I want to donate the following gifts or services:

Please mail your check for membership and/or contribution with this form to:

Maine Breast Cancer Coalition
11 Bangor Mall Blvd. Suite D
PMB 362
Bangor, ME 04401-3650

