



Maine Breast Cancer Coalition News & Views

winter 2011

www.mainebreastcancer.org

1-800-928-2644

Be part of the movement that ends breast cancer by 2020!

Join the conversation at NBCC's 2011 *Annual Advocacy Training Conference*.

Join hundreds of breast cancer activists at the National Breast Cancer Coalition's [2011 Annual Advocacy Training Conference](#) to find out how you can be an integral part of NBCC's *Breast Cancer Deadline 2020* - a strategic plan to end breast cancer by January 1, 2020. The conference will be held Saturday, April 30, through Tuesday, May 3, 2011, in Arlington, Virginia, just outside of Washington, D.C.

For decades, the breast cancer movement has existed within the context of hoping to find a cure and hoping for an end. NBCC says, "No more! *By setting a deadline we demand that from this moment forward, all research and policy decisions surrounding breast cancer are made and guided by the goal of ending this disease by 2020.*"

The 2011 NBCC Advocacy Training Conference will teach breast cancer advocates how they can play a vital role in shifting the conversation to a focus on ending breast cancer by 2020. Sessions will give advocates the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to support *Breast Cancer Deadline 2020* both locally and nationally.

For more information or to register for the conference visit www.stopbreastcancer.org. If you do not have access to the Internet, call the Event Professionals at 770-760-9998 to register.

Support Service Fund Annual Summary

The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition *Support Service Fund* provides financial assistance for breast health or breast cancer related needs to Maine residents who have nowhere else to turn for help. 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 totaling more than \$850,000 to more than 1,600 people throughout Maine.

The following are statistics from our 2010 grant program:

- Number of approved applications: 343
- Counties represented: all 16 Maine counties
- Total amount awarded: \$155,722
- Grant range: \$21 to \$1,000
- Age range of applicants: 25 to 91

Representative items and services funded in 2010:

- breast imaging (mammography and ultrasound)
- chemotherapy
- radiation treatments
- lab/pathology
- radiologist readings
- surgeon/physician fees or copays
- lymphedema compression garments
- prescriptions
- travel expenses to treatments
- wigs/ turbans
- prostheses
- genetic testing
- temporary living expenses for people in breast cancer treatment
- many other support services

To find out more about the Support Service Fund or to apply for a grant call Maine Breast Cancer Coalition toll free at 1-800-928-2644, email us at ssf.mbcc@myfairpoint.net, or download an easy-to-complete application from our web site at www.mainebreastcancer.org. Call us if you need help completing the application.

The Support Service Fund is currently made possible by our dedicated volunteers and also generous contributors including [Susan G. Komen For the Cure: Maine Affiliate](#), the Borman Family Foundation, the Maine Breast Cancer Specialty License Plate Program; dedicated fundraisers by organizations and businesses including the York Hospital Breast Cancer Support Group, the Greater Bangor Women's Ski/Snowboard Club, the Fraternal Order of Eagles Pink Sock Foundation, Maine Fraternal Order of Eagles Groups, PATCO Construction, Stonewall Kitchen, Inverness Medical, Acapello Salons, and individual contributions by members and supporters of MBCC.

Support Service Fund Recipient, Kelli ... Her Story in Her Own Words

On March 10, 2010 I had my first ever mammogram. I simply thought "Well, this means I'm 40." When I left the appointment that day I didn't expect that there would be any concerns, because I was young. There wasn't a family history of breast cancer so that didn't even come to mind. It was just another busy day and I had things to do. On with life.

About a week later my life came to what seemed like a screeching halt. I was diagnosed with breast cancer. BREAST CANCER! I thought that it was an instant death sentence. I had not been educated about this disease and was completely overwhelmed by the diagnosis.

My thoughts were entirely fixed on my three young and two grown children. The twins were only four and my youngest child was 17 months old. They needed me. I couldn't leave them. I was devastated by the thought of not living to raise my children, as well as not being there for my oldest daughter's upcoming college graduation and "someday" wedding, the arrival of my first grandchild due to be born in June, my elderly parents, and for my husband who came to this country from abroad to be with me. How could I bring him here and then just leave him to raise three children on his own?

The very people who were heavily on my heart when I was diagnosed are the same folks who inspired my will to fight my disease. I walked into my surgeon's office with a photo of my five children. I wanted him to know that we had to join forces to fight my cancer, because they needed me. And, I needed them.

I was diagnosed with Stage 2b Invasive Ductal Carcinoma and Ductal Carcinoma In-Situ. Before learning that I had cancer, the pink ribbons I saw here and there didn't have personal meaning to me. I just knew that they represented breast cancer awareness. Now, those ribbons mean the world to me. And, I want every woman to know how important it is to be screened regularly. Early detection does save lives. It's not just a cliché.

From the date of diagnosis until the end of treatment nine months later, I had three surgeries, five rounds of chemotherapy, six and a half weeks of radiation treatments, and began taking hormone therapy. It was necessary at one point for my husband to take a one month leave of absence from one of his jobs so that he could assist with our three youngest children while my daughter worked out giving notice at her job. (She would spend from mid-June until the end of December as my helper at home.)

At that time, finances were very tight. The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition was a lifesaver for our family. The financial assistance helped carry us through a difficult month. I can't adequately express what a relief it was to be able to pay some bills that we'd have otherwise fallen behind on. We were already stressed about my cancer and beginning chemotherapy, so we are grateful that we didn't have the additional stress of worrying about those expenses.

(continued in next column)

The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition also gave me a sense of dignity when I experienced the emotionally painful loss of my hair due to chemotherapy. They assisted me with the cost of purchasing a beautiful wig, scarves and hats which made me feel that I could still be stylish during treatment. Those items also helped my children with their adjustment to the change in mom's appearance. We had a "fancy hat party" during which they saw my bald head and got to try on all of my head wear. They had so much fun that they asked to do it again weeks later.

Lastly, the Coalition helped us at the very end of treatment by providing some mileage reimbursement for the daily trips to Cancer Care of Maine for radiation treatments, as well as some additional living expenses relief. I had treatment through the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, which is an expensive time of the year for families.

On behalf of my family, I want to say "thank you" to the supporters of the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition. You are helping the women behind the pink ribbons in very real and meaningful ways. May God bless you for your generosity and kindness.

The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition Support Service Fund Committee wishes to thank Kelli for her courage and generosity in sharing her story.

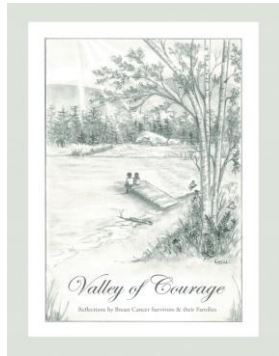
Young Support Group for Younger Women Diagnosed With Breast Cancer

"When women are diagnosed with breast cancer at a young age, they often feel alone and as if they are the only one this has ever happened to at this age," says Shannon Connor of [Caring Connections](#), who formed a support group for young women. Shannon, herself a young survivor of breast cancer, explains, "Being diagnosed with breast cancer is shocking at any age, but for young women this group gives them the opportunity to be empowered by others who are experiencing very similar circumstances."

The [Young Support Group](#), for women in their 20s, 30s and 40s, meets the first Thursday of each month from 12:30-1:45 PM at the Isaac Farrar Mansion located at the Bangor Y, 17 Second St. Days and times sometimes vary, so please call or email Shannon at 207-941-2808, ext. 338, or sconnor@bangory.org.

Valley of Courage: Reflections by Breast Cancer Survivors and their Families

(from a March, 2010, press release by Sue Bouchard of Fish River Rural Health)



In May, 2007, Fish River Rural Health (FRRH) in Eagle Lake, Maine started a breast cancer support group called "The Journey." The idea for a book began at that first meeting after the participants heard many inspiring, heartfelt stories about courage by survivors and their families. Nearly three years later, the idea became a reality with the publication of *Valley of Courage: Reflections by Breast Cancer Survivors and their Families*.

Those who contributed to the book hope the stories will inspire and provide guidance for others journeying through breast cancer and their families. The powerful stories send messages of faith, hope, strength, courage and the importance of community, family and friends. The book allows readers an opportunity to connect through the stories with courageous individuals who live in the St. John Valley or have connections to the Valley.

Some voices from the book...

Betty Dumond reflects on her journey, stating, "I know that life isn't easy and sometimes you have to give up what you love the most, but I wouldn't trade my journey." Carolyn Gardner remembers thinking of her family and shared, "Going through my cancer treatments, I would often think it is just as hard for the family of the patient with cancer as it is for the patients themselves." The book's most senior survivor, Mabel Guimond, 102 years old, as written by her daughter Mary Daigle, states, "On peut pas passer la vie sans rien." ("We cannot pass life without hardships or challenges.")

Dorothy Hopkins, chief editor of the book says, "Each voice is unique, but common threads tie the stories together, reflecting the special qualities of the St. John Valley and its people."

Proceeds from book sales go directly to FRRH's Breast Cancer Support Group "The Journey."

Ordering information:

To order a copy, please contact Sue Bouchard of Fish River Rural Health at sbouchard@frrh.org or 207-444-5973. Books ordered through the FRRH are at a discounted price of only \$10 per copy plus shipping. (For Eagle Lake area residents, there are no shipping costs if arrangements can be made for pickup.) The book may also be ordered through Amazon at \$14.95 plus shipping.



Do you have your
*Maine Breast Cancer
Specialty License Plate* yet?

Proceeds benefit the [Maine Breast Cancer Coalition](#) for our [Support Service Fund](#); the [Maine Cancer Foundation](#), and the [Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program](#).

The plates are available from BMV branch offices and most town offices. Call the Bureau of Motor Vehicles at 207-624-9000 for more information.

Second Annual Breast Fest

Three Days :: Twelve Bands
Friday, May 20 – Sunday, May 22

Motorcycle enthusiasts, mark your calendars! The 2011 Annual Breast Fest is a great way to have fun and support the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition's [Support Service Fund](#). This three-day fundraising event begins at 8:00 PM Friday, May 20, at Lost Valley Ski Resort in Auburn with the bands *Beyond the Fall* and *Uncle Jack*.

Saturday's bike run begins at 11:00 AM and goes through the scenic western Maine mountains, followed by live classic rock by eight bands at Lost Valley. Sunday starts with a jazz brunch, classic car show and then some blues. Twelve bands will play during the weekend including *Skosh*, *Hazzyrd*, *Kaining Amy*, *Drive*, *Black Cat Road*, *Zack Pomerleau*, and the *Eddy Jones Blues Band*.

Take part in all three days for a one-time \$10 donation to the Maine Breast Cancer Coalition Support Service Fund. All of your \$10 will go to someone in Maine facing breast cancer and needing financial assistance.

For more information contact Dave Provencher at 207-376-6146 or visit his page on the [Maine Biker Network](#) website for the latest news on Breast Fest.

We would like to express our appreciation to the following groups, organizations or businesses that held fundraising events or made donations to the [Support Service Fund](#):

Acapello Salons for their "You Just Got Pink'd!"
Fundraiser, with special thanks to **June Juliano**
Alere Scarborough, Inc.
Associated Grocers of Maine/Tobey's Grocery
Brighton Collectibles/Brighton Retail
for their "Power of Pink" bracelets fundraiser
Gorham Country Club Women's Golf Association
Inverness Medical Professional Diagnostics

Meadows Ladies Golf Association
MMP Women's Health
Moose River Country Store
Portland High School Boys' Soccer
Quirion Construction Company
Standish Fire Department/EMS
Winthrop Family Medicine
York Hospital Breast Cancer Support Group

We are grateful for individual donations to the [Support Service Fund](#) from:

Christopher Balli in memory of **Nancy Johnson**
Faye Lebreague in memory of **Nancy Johnson**
Ann Rock in memory of **Nancy Johnson**
Paula Sirois in memory of **Nancy Johnson**
Bernice Davis in memory of **Eleanor Caddigan**
Paul Twomey in memory of **Eleanor Caddigan**
Jean Bissonnette in memory of **Flora Ricker**
Barbara Irish in memory of **Flora Ricker**

Robert & Carole Anderson in honor of
Susan DeLeo
Debora Baldacci in honor of **Jim & Berna**
Davenport's 50th anniversary
Cheryl Craig in honor of **John Craig, Jr.**
Dan Gildart in honor of **Mary Polito**
Christine Bennett, MD
Elizabeth Byard
Margaret Collmus

Diane Cross
Sandra Guerette
Robert Hall
Kathie Johnson
Lock Kiermaier
Lydia Mussulman
Sandra Plette
Lonnie Powers/Ryan Soucie
Moragh Robertson
Ryan Scipione

If you would like to receive the MBCC newsletter via email (3 times per year) please send your name and email address to czh1@roadrunner.com.

MBCC respects your privacy. We will not share your name or email address with any other organization. Current and back issues of our newsletter are always available on the MBCC website at www.mainebreastcancer.org on the "News and Events" page.

How You Can Help

The [Support Service Fund](#) is only partially supported by grants from major foundations and revenue from the Maine Specialty License Plate Program. MBCC also relies on contributions from local groups, businesses, 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 Christine Hais at 207-938-4018 or czh1@roadrunner.com. One hundred percent of these donations will go to [Support Service Fund](#) recipients, as our low administrative costs are covered by our [Maine Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure](#) grant.

Or please consider a tax-deductible donation of any amount. See the donation and membership form below for details. Checks should be made payable to MBCC. Please write "Support Service Fund" on the memo line if you would like your donation to be designated for the Fund.

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 or organization membership) payable to MBCC.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ (eve.) _____

*Email _____

*if you would like to be on our newsletter email list

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 (or a photocopy) to:

Maine Breast Cancer Coalition
499 Broadway
PMB 362
Bangor, ME 04401-3460

The Maine Breast Cancer Coalition is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.