Update on Breast Cancer Screening by Lisa DeFerrari, VBCF Board of Directors

A highly publicized report on a major study of breast cancer screening was published in the April 2, 2014 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association. This study was a systematic review of what we know about the benefits and harms of mammography from the many trials and other studies that have been conducted over the last fifty years.

The study found that mammography screening is associated with an overall reduction of breast cancer mortality, but that the net benefit of screening depends greatly on a woman’s baseline risk of receiving a breast cancer diagnosis.

Here is how the available evidence on benefits stacks up, based on major findings from the study:

- The benefits of mammography are greater for women who are at higher risk.
- Available evidence shows that the number of women whose lives are saved because of mammography varies by age, with benefits much greater for women in their fifties and sixties.
- The benefits are also greater for women who have increased risk for breast cancer based on a combination of risk factors. Some of the factors besides being older that increase risk Continued on page 3

Help Us Educate Virginians About Breast Cancer!

VBCF offers educational materials for distribution at faith-based organizations, community events, health fairs, local businesses, etc. We have Pink Ribbon Cards and Breast Health Basics Brochures available free of charge. Each pink ribbon is attached to a bilingual card with information about breast health - in English and Spanish. The brochures include information about breast cancer in the United States and Virginia and facts for both women and men about risk factors, symptoms, screening, and lifestyle choices in one concise handout. Both handouts give information about the VA Department of Health’s Every Woman’s Life program. Request yours today! Visit our website at www.vbcf.org/educate/request-ribbons-literature or call 800-345-8223 ext. 202!
Dear VBCF Supporters,

Welcome to the fall edition of our newsletter! Enclosed, you’ll read about exciting news and highlights about some of our key projects and programs. Our Board of Directors is committed to transparency and engagement. We continue to push ourselves to communicate not only what we want you to know but what we feel you deserve to know about VBCF.

One of the major efforts this Board has made in recent months has been to cultivate new and existing Board members so that we, and the public, can continue to learn more about the impact of breast cancer on Virginians. This newsletter (like others have) will focus on education and awareness raising. There is information on mammogram studies, clinical trial myths, survivorship conferences, as well as, local advocates adding value to Virginians’ health.

You can learn more about VBCF’s plan and our efforts to increase your knowledge and benefits inside this newsletter. I also encourage you to visit VBCF’s website, www.vbcf.org. We have recently added a breast cancer glossary and an improved online resource for those newly diagnosed. You will also find an October calendar featuring VBCF fundraising events as well as educational events from organizations across the state.

The Board will continue to look at all issues that have an impact on Virginians affected by breast cancer because we are committed to delivering education and programs of excellence. I also encourage you to sign up for VBCF’s monthly e-newsletter (www.vbcf.org/stay-informed) and to like VBCF on Facebook (www.facebook.com/virginiabreastcancerfoundation) for the most current happenings.

Pete Shrock, President
Board of Directors
Hearty Turkey Minestrone Soup

1 pound ground turkey breast or lean ground beef
1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, chopped
2 celery stalks, chopped
8 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth or beef broth
1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 cup small pasta, such as orzo or pastini
1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach
1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas or white beans, rinsed and drained
Pepper and salt to taste
Grated Parmesan cheese, optional

In a stockpot over medium-high heat, sauté the turkey and onion until the turkey is cooked through. Add the carrots and celery and sauté for 10 minutes, or until softened. Add the broth, tomatoes, basil, and oregano and stir to combine. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the pasta, frozen spinach, and chickpeas or beans and cook for 10 minutes, or until pasta is tender, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper. Serve with Parmesan cheese. Makes 14 servings.

Approximate nutrients per serving: 120 calories, 1 gram of fat, 13 grams of protein

This recipe is from The American Cancer Society’s Healthy Eating Cookbook. Visit our website, www.vbcf.org/recommended-reading for a list of helpful books.

Update on Breast Cancer Screening - Continued from Cover

include the number of first-degree relatives who’ve had breast cancer, having dense breasts, early age at first menstrual period and relatively late age at the birth of first child.

The study reported these risks associated with mammography screening:

- More than half of women 40 to 50 years old who have annual mammograms for 10 years will have a false-positive finding, that is, something that turns out not to be cancer.
- Some women will be treated unnecessarily for a condition that would never have been life-threatening. The study gives a rough estimate that about 60 out of 10,000 women screened fall into this group. There is no way currently to determine whether any woman’s early stage cancer or DCIS, also known as stage zero breast cancer, is life-threatening.

So what are the take-home messages from this study? The report made these concluding points:

- Current guidelines from organizations such as the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force, the American Cancer Society and others, besides being inconsistent with each other, are limited in their usefulness for making decisions about screening because they don’t take into account risk factors other than age.

- Women and their doctors need to make decisions about screening based on the individual woman’s estimated risk for breast cancer. Better risk models are needed to more accurately translate for individuals the benefits and harms of screening. In the meantime, the online Breast Cancer Risk Assessment Tool from the National Cancer Institute (http://www.cancer.gov/bcrisktool/) may be helpful.

- The significance of the harms of mammography for an individual woman depends on her own values and preferences. It’s important that women have accurate and balanced information to aid them in determining their preferences.

Lisa DeFerrari is a member of the VBCF Board of Directors. This article is adapted from a recent post on her blog, After Twenty Years (http://after20yrs.com).
This past June, I was fortunate to be able to attend the Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE) Annual Conference. FORCE is a national organization that is dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by hereditary breast and ovarian cancer. Over 750 of us came together in Philadelphia for the 8th annual conference. This year’s conference was held in partnership with Penn Medicine’s Basser Research Center (basser.org) for BRCA. BRCA is one of two genes (BRCA1 and BRCA2) that help repair damage to DNA. When you inherit a mutated gene, your risk of breast and ovarian cancer is increased.

There was a wide range of workshops available to choose from on a variety of topics and research. I attended a very informative session on hereditary cancer and legal rights. The use of genetic information is a big concern for those who are positive for a BRCA mutation. The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) is a federal law that protects individuals from genetic discrimination in health insurance and employment. Genetic information cannot be considered a pre-existing condition, or cause higher premiums or denials for health insurance. Similarly, it cannot be considered a basis for a failure to be hired or a reason to be fired. But there are gaps in GINA. It only applies to certain health insurers and certain employers. For example, it does not apply to small businesses with less than 15 employees, Indian tribes, or bona fide private clubs. It also does not apply to federal and military health programs or other insurances such as life, long-term care, or disability insurance.

Another great workshop provided information about cancer clinical trials. Cancer clinical trials are research studies to find better ways to screen, prevent, detect, or treat cancer. They help find ways to improve cancer care. There are many myths about cancer clinical trials. One of the biggest myths is that you will get a sugar pill instead of treatment. It is important to know that patients are always treated for their cancer. No one will ever get a placebo (sugar pill) instead of appropriate treatment. You will at least get the standard care treatment, which is the treatment that experts agree is appropriate and widely used. But you also might get a new treatment being tested, which doctors hope will be better. Participants are closely followed by doctors and nurses, and if the new treatment is proven to work, may be among the first to benefit from the treatment.

The conference was a great source of information and certainly worthwhile. FORCE is a national organization, but there are local outreach groups in northern Virginia, Richmond and Virginia Beach. To learn more visit, www.facingourrisk.org.

### Clinical Trials: Myths vs. Facts

**Myth:** Clinical trials are a last resort

**Fact:** Clinical trials should always be considered as an option for treatment. There are trials for nearly every type and stage of cancer.

**Myth:** If I participate in a clinical trial I may receive a placebo.

**Fact:** Placebos are not used in clinical trials that test cancer treatments. Patients either receive the new treatment or the best standard of care. Placebos may be used in trials to test drugs that may prevent cancer, but the people participating in the trial would not have cancer.

**Myth:** Clinical trials are not safe.

**Fact:** Clinical trials are conducted on humans only after there is scientific evidence that treatments are likely to be safe and effective. In fact, in Phase III clinical trials, the treatment or drug has already been tested on small numbers of patients for safety and effectiveness.

**Myth:** I won’t receive good care if I join a clinical trial.

**Fact:** Most cancer survivors who have taken part in a clinical trial were very satisfied with their experience according to a study conducted by the Coalition of Cancer Cooperative Groups. 92% reported a positive experience, and 91% said they would recommend participating in a clinical trial to a friend.

**Myth:** I will feel like a “guinea pig” if I participate in a clinical trial.

**Fact:** According to a study conducted by the Coalition of Cancer Cooperative Groups, more than 90% of those surveyed reported that they were not subjected to more tests and procedures than necessary and rejected the notion that they felt like a “guinea pig.”

Learn more about Clinical Trials in Virginia and beyond at www.vbcb.org/clinical-trials.
Myth: If I join a clinical trial, I can't get out of it if I change my mind.
Fact: You may quit a clinical trial at any time.

Myth: My insurance won’t pay for a clinical trial.
Fact: Many states, including Virginia, require that insurance companies cover routine costs of care in a clinical trial. Medicare began covering routine costs for clinical trials in 2000. If you are receiving an experimental, new breast cancer treatment in addition to routine breast cancer care, the trial sponsor is responsible for the new cancer treatment while many insurers will cover the remaining costs.

Myth: I can only participate in a clinical trial if I live near a large cancer center.
Fact: Clinical trials take place throughout the country at local hospitals, local cancer clinics and doctor’s offices. We are fortunate in Virginia to have two National Cancer Institute designated cancer centers – VCU Massey Cancer Center in Richmond and the UVA Cancer Center in Charlottesville.

Join the Drive Against Breast Cancer!

Available now at DMV!

When we began the two year process to get our pink ribbon license plate back in February of 2000, we had no idea how much it would benefit VBCF. Our goal was to simply raise awareness of breast cancer and VBCF. Each license plate purchased or annually renewed provides $15 to VBCF. There are more than 10,000 pink ribbon license plates on the road today, and VBCF received more than $150,000 in 2014. We are thankful to each and every person that has purchased our plate over the years. Your dollars are helping us continue to fight for the eradication of breast cancer.

VBCF Awards 2014 Educational Mini-Grants!

The Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation mini-grant program offered mini-grants of up to $1,000 to non-profit organizations for the 2014 grant cycle. The purpose of this grant program is to provide funds for breast cancer health education for Virginians. The grant funding period is May 1 through October 31, 2014.

Non-profit organizations from across the state applied for funds to provide breast health education to Virginians. VBCF awarded seven mini-grants for a total of more than $6,700 in this funding period. 2014 grantees are:

- Chickahominy Health District to assist with breast cancer education through their Every Woman’s Life program.
- CrossOver Healthcare Ministry to support their Breast Health Initiative program.
- Ellen Shaw de Paredes Breast Cancer Foundation for its Paredes Foundation Reach Out project.
- Greater Prince William Community Health Center for its Breast Cancer Education Project to increase knowledge of the importance of breast self-exam and breast cancer screening.
- Nueva Vida, Inc. to support Breast Cancer Education and Access to Care for Latinas at risk or with breast cancer in Richmond and Northern Virginia.
- Pathways Specialty Clinic to assist with its Pathways to Breast Health program to decrease incidence of late stage discovery of breast cancer.
- Richmond Guardian Angels for their Time to Live Breast Cancer Awareness Walk.

Congratulations to these organizations! Grantees expect to serve 5,810 Virginians in 6 months. VBCF looks forward to helping these and many other non-profits provide breast cancer health education to Virginians through our mini-grant program!

Join us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/virginabreastcancerfoundation
Becky’s Place at Remote Area Medical 2014
By: Maggie Powers

Each year, VBCF volunteers participate in the Remote Area Medical (RAM) program by providing educational classes to the uninsured and underserved in Wise, Virginia. Participants come from around the coal mine counties in Southwest Virginia to get medical, dental, and vision care. For most, this is their yearly opportunity, and they have waited for it. VBCF’s Becky’s Place tent is focused on offering health education services. It became a VBCF program when Becky Morris, a former VBCF Board President who lost her battle to breast cancer in 2010, requested we take on the project when the former lead organization dissolved.

This year, several thousand people lined up in the three days of rain, waiting patiently in pink plastic chairs or sitting on bleachers or tents. Medical triage and optical are done in the barn on the fairgrounds. Dental services are provided in “mash-like” tents with around 80 dental chairs used for cleaning, fillings, x-rays, and extractions. The dentists and hygienists are heroes beginning their 12+ hour shifts at 6 a.m. University of Virginia provided a mobile mammography van. Office space is an area divided by sheets. Doctors of Osteopathy have tables under tents and work individually on the patients and staff. Pharmacy is in a wooden building. Volunteers escort patients from one station to the next. Everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

At Becky’s Place, the women and men begin arriving before we are set up for classes. People there think of us as a “meeting place” and a source of information. Few patients came saying “I need breast cancer information” but stop to schedule their visits to Becky’s Place according to their appointment times. This year, our 14 volunteers along with VCU Pharmacy students provided 22 classes to hundreds of people in 3 days, giving our group and cancer education marvelous exposure. These classes include breast, ovarian, cervical, and male cancers in addition to smoking cessation and diabetes education.

This year, our large white tent with a yellow-striped roof and cathedral windows, even with all the rain running through it, had even higher attendance with more men and children. Some of our families attended more than six classes, hoping to win the fifty-dollar gift certificate that is raffled off after each class along with the VBCF black giveaway bag. Attendees have become our “friends” and look for us each year. The staff at RAM also attend our classes and send patients to Becky’s Place knowing that we spend time with each person.

As the years have gone by, this educational program has changed. We no longer carry books or have a children’s tent, but instead provide school supplies for Wise County elementary students. Volunteers have expanded beyond women’s cancer education and now offer men’s cancer information, smoking cessation assistance, and chronic disease education as well. Becky’s Place has already begun planning for next year as this area of our state is underserved and continues to need these medical services. In

Nancy G. Dopp Volunteer of the Year Award & Karin Decker Noss Scholarship

Congratulations to Maggie Powers - winner of the Nancy G. Dopp Volunteer of the Year award! Maggie is a founding member of the Blue Ridge Chapter of VBCF. She has been involved in all aspects of chapter work including serving as treasurer, attending events, attending lobby days and attending the NBCC advocacy conference. She has co-chaired the Becky’s Place educational effort at the Remote Area Medical (RAM) Expedition for several years with Yvonne Eisenberg. Many thanks to Maggie for her tireless volunteering for the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation!

And congratulations to Maggie’s RAM co-chair, Yvonne Eisenberg. Yvonne has been selected as the 2014 recipient of the Karin Decker Noss Scholarship. She has been an active member of the Blue Ridge Chapter as well as a VBCF board member. Yvonne will continue her advocacy efforts and education through the scholarship. She is off to a running start and has already attended the 2014 ASCO Breast Conference in Texas. Congratulations and Thanks to Yvonne!
2015, RAM volunteers are requesting that those interested in supporting Becky’s Place make monetary donations to this program to help support our health education efforts rather than contributing items (toys, books, toiletries, door prize gifts, etc). Volunteers have been inundated with items and the logistics of transporting them and instead prefer to focus on the health education mission.

In addition, RAM is expanding its services to Lee County in Virginia and to Kentucky and Tennessee. People are so thankful to have their teeth extracted, filled, and receive medical care. Becky’s Place has given them tools to use for their personal needs and the needs of their families. They are aware of resources available in their areas and have contact information for VBCF Becky’s Place. Each day, I see photos of Becky on my kitchen counter, and I am so grateful she and VBCF have been in my life.

You may qualify for a free mammogram and pap test through the Every Woman’s Life Program.

Call to see if you qualify!

VBCF Library Program

Since 2000, VBCF has provided more than $55,000 to local libraries and library systems across the Commonwealth through our library program. The VBCF Library Program is an extension of our mission to educate Virginians about breast cancer. Through the program, libraries have purchased books, periodicals, DVDs and other materials to support women and their families in local communities.

VBCF recently awarded funds to Massanutten Regional Library and Suffolk Public Library. VBCF’s Peninsula Chapter also donated funds to the Poquoson Public Library. The Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation looks forward to continuing our partnership with libraries across the Commonwealth to provide breast cancer materials to support women and their families in the community.

Want to receive the VBCF Connection, our monthly e-newletter? Visit www.vbcf.org to sign up!
In Memory Of: ____________________________________________

or In Honor Of: __________________________________________

(If you would like an acknowledgement card sent, please include name and address of recipient.)

Name: ____________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________

City: ______________________ State: ______ Zip Code: ________

A contribution of $ ____________ is enclosed.

Support VBCF!
Give online at www.vbpcf.org/donate.

It's fast, easy & secure!

Or, fill out form(s) and return with your check to VBCF.

☐ Please contact me about becoming a VBCF Volunteer.

☐ Please send me information on planned giving.

☐ Supporter $50
☐ Friend $100
☐ Patron $250
☐ Benefactor $500
☐ Champion $1,000

☐ Other $ ____________

Name: ____________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________

City: ______________________ State: ______ Zip Code: ________

Phone: __________________________ Fax: ____________________ e-mail: ____________________

This newsletter, published by the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation, focuses on breast cancer issues and the activities of VBCF supporters. If you have any comments, please call 800-345-VBCF or write to: Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation, 5004 Monument Avenue, Suite 102, Henrico, VA 23230.