Breast Cancer is More than a Pink Ribbon Campaign

One of the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation (VBCF)s priority program areas is EDUCATION. VBCF offers a number of educational initiatives including a jointly sponsored November survivorship conference, bi-annual library grants in the summer and winter, annual mini-grants for non-profits to provide breast health education in the spring, and the three-day Becky’s Place at the Remote Area Medical Program in Wise County each July. While our educational efforts are year round, fall is the perfect time to highlight VBCF’s FREE educational resources, especially in October with National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

VBCF’s Pink Ribbon Education Cards feature pink ribbon pins attached to a card with information about breast health in English and Spanish. The cards also give information about the VA Department of Health’s Every Woman’s Life program which provides free women’s health screenings and treatment to low-income, uninsured women.

VBCF also has a new brochure this year Breast Health Basics for Women & Men with important information for both women and men. These two educational resources are available to individuals or organizations free of charge to distribute in local communities to help raise awareness that early detection can save lives.

If you have an event, business, place of worship, gym, hair salon or other location you would like to display VBCF literature, visit www.vbcf.org/educate/request-ribbons-literature to place your order today. You can also call the office at 800-345-8223 to make your request. Please allow 5-7 business days for shipping.

Let us know how we are doing!

We want to hear from you! Give us your feedback on our newsletter. We are here for you, let us know what you would like to read about! Visit www.vbcf.org/survey to fill out our brief questionnaire. Not online? No problem! Call Lisa Boudreaux, Communications Manager at 800-345-8223 ext. 200 to request a paper copy.

Want to Go Green?

Save paper and trees by receiving our newsletter via e-mail. Visit www.vbcf.org/go-green to complete a short request form and you will be all set!
Fall brings the start of school, falling leaves and pink ribbons on just about everything in the month of October. What does the pink ribbon really mean? It means many things to many people: a symbol of awareness, support, hope, strength, survivorship, marketing, fundraising, and unfortunately loss. I must admit that early in my survivorship I bought many products to support the cause without knowing what organization was benefitting, how much they would receive, and what the money would be used for. I quickly decided that the best way for me to support the cause was to get involved with VBCF. One of the things that attracted me to VBCF was that it is Virginians advocating for Virginians, and that all money raised stays in Virginia.

VBCF chooses to use our pink ribbon campaign to educate Virginians not only about breast cancer but also about VBCF. It is one part of our overall plan to educate and support Virginians. It is a very powerful experience to hand someone a ribbon and speak to them about the importance of getting a mammogram, October is a busy time at VBCF as we receive multiple requests for ribbons, speakers, and information. We are always looking for new volunteers that can be used in a variety of ways, from mailing information to staffing tables, volunteering for events, or being a part of our speakers bureau.

At our most recent board meeting we did an exercise that started with “I love serving/am interested in serving on the Board of Directors because” and we had to speak about it for one minute to multiple partners. It was a wonderful exercise, and most of us modified our answers from one partner to another, incorporating elements from our previous partners. Our responses may have been different but our passion for VBCF’s mission was a common thread. Our recap of the exercise also reminded us that each region of the state has unique challenges ranging from access to care, cultural diversity, and/or socioeconomic challenges, just to name a few. The best thing about the exercise for me was that it gave me a chance to really reflect on what VBCF means to me and succinctly be able to communicate it to others.

Our mission has remained the same since our inception, but the way we accomplish it has changed over these 20+ years. Could we have envisioned a webpage, Facebook account, an e-newsletter? Who would have thought that we would fund e-books for our local library grants across the state? We continue to adapt based on the current environment, but one thing stays consistent: we could not serve our mission without people who are passionate about our cause. Our supporters’ reasons for volunteering and their talents are as varied as the reasons that we wear the ribbon. It may seem intimidating at first, but we have wonderful mentors to help you. If you have been considering volunteering for us, won’t you join us? Please call the office, e-mail me at president@vbct.org, or visit www.vbcf.org/volunteer if you would like more information about volunteer opportunities at VBCF.
Spiced Sweet Potato Soup

This soup is a great meal for people with a lingering metallic taste in their mouth due to chemotherapy.

3 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and diced into 1-inch cubes
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom
1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
6 to 8 cups vegetable broth

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Toss the sweet potatoes with the coconut oil until they’re evenly coated. In a small bowl, combine 1/4 teaspoon of the salt with the cinnamon, allspice, cardamom, and nutmeg and stir until well combined. Sprinkle the spice mixture over the potatoes and toss again until evenly coated.
3. Place the sweet potatoes in a single layer on the prepared pan and roast for 40 minutes or until tender.
4. Pour 1/3 cup of the broth into a blender, add one-third of the roasted potatoes, and blend until smooth, adding more liquid as needed. Transfer soup to a soup pot over low heat and repeat the process two more times.
5. Stir in any remaining broth, along with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt, before serving.

Prep Time: 10 minutes  |  Cook Time: 55 Minutes

This recipe is adapted from The Cancer-Fighting Kitchen, Nourishing, Big-Flavor Recipes for Cancer Treatment and Recovery by Rebecca Katz with Mat Edelson. Visit our website, www.vbcf.org/recommended-reading for a list of helpful books.
Becky's Place at RAM 2013  by Yvonne Eisenberg & Maggie Powers

Wow! It is hard to believe the time has come again. The 14th Remote Area Medical Health Expedition in Wise County, VA was held July 19-21 at the Wise County Fairgrounds. Almost 1,400 volunteers joined together in Southwest Virginia to help deliver free medical, dental, and vision services to estimated over 3,000 patients that are uninsured, underinsured, unemployed and those that cannot afford the services otherwise. Amongst the volunteers were 15 VBCF volunteers delivering educational classes to the patients while they waited to receive care during the 3-day event. VBCF volunteers offered 20 classes that included breast, cervical, ovarian, prostate, and testicular cancers as well as classes on smoking cessation and diabetes. These classes touched 600 patients & family members.

RAM this year was like a family reunion for the VBCF volunteers, which includes Tabitha Dales who lives in the Wise County area. The volunteers took the time to sit beside the attendees’ familial faces that returned to classes, talking to them, and getting to know them as real people. Volunteer Maggie Powers asked one man what he had learned while attending classes and he replied that he “would get his colonoscopy this year.” He also stated he had made five appointments in the past but he was a “good appointment breaker.” This man was a Vietnam vet who did not want to go to the V.A. hospital, he was an Agent Orange man, had multiple heart conditions, and a diabetic. His wheelchair bound buddy with him said the he had “heard things that he did not know” and stated that his “17 grandkids needed to know what you are teaching.” Both men attended the smoking cessation classes and both were previous smokers. The Dipper Dan chewing tobacco model, loaned to VBCF from Augusta Health in Fishersville, VA, was a huge hit for many folks who also had their pictures taken with Dipper Dan.

There was a young teenage volunteer, Alexandra that came by Becky’s Place again this year bringing handmade cloth cuddle dolls made by her grandmother’s Senior Center in Boston, Massachusetts. This year she brought 150 dolls, each doll is named by the maker, and a message written on the body under the skirt. The dolls disappeared from the Becky’s Place children’s tent as soon as the children spotted them. This was a gift of love from a grandma.

The VBCF volunteers witnessed many patients in class with a mouth full of bloodied gauze sitting in class to have a

Research Roundup: Can Nicotine Patches Cause Breast Cancer?

There is even more evidence that smoking causes cancer - specifically breast cancer, according to newly published research from Virginia Tech.

This research shows that nicotine appears to be as dangerous as the other chemicals in cigarettes. This is leading to questions about the potential danger from using nicotine patches to control smoking.

Researchers at Virginia Tech used next generation genome sequencing methods to get a better look at what effect nicotine has on the health of a pure cell.

“We have concluded from this study that a number of changes that take place in these cells after exposure to nicotine resemble that of a standard cancerous cell. So it’s driving those cells to a cancerous state,” says Dr. Skip Garner who oversees the research.

The study, authored by Dr. Jasmin Bavarva, uses healthy cells that are dosed with nicotine. They extract the RNA and document all the genes to see which are affected and which are not.

Several known cancer genes are affected as are several unknown genes.

There are several genes we don’t know exist. Even nicotine changes their expression. We don’t know what those genes do even. So that’s a big deal, said Bavarva.

What is clear is that the number of breast cancer indicators created were significant, leading researchers to point out breast cancer in particular.

This new information has led researchers to wonder if using nicotine patches to control smoking needs to be reconsidered.

Especially when it is used as a therapeutic and if that therapeutic has danger in it we should probably look into it, said Garner.

Follow up research on this study is currently underway at the Virginia Bioinformatics Institute.

Read more about the study here: www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0067252

active VOICE
cooler place to sit and wait for medical care and in hopes to win the grand door prize as well as receive a tote bag with prizes at the end of each class. Door prizes are donated and collected throughout the year just for RAM patients visiting Becky’s Place. The waiting period between classes gave volunteers an opportunity to plant seeds of information and education.

If only one person is touched, the volunteers feel they succeeded in their mission to educate and advocate. However, many of the attendees appeared to feel comfortable talking about their health and needs. Many patients returned from previous years bringing friends with them. VBCF Becky’s Place was highly visible in its efforts to educate, advocate, and eradicate breast cancer.

Margaret Borwhat and Becky Morris were the founders of an education program to work with RAM and Health Wagon to improve lives and educate families. Their mission started out as teaching about women’s cancer, but after several years there was a demand from patients to include something for men. This year Becky’s Place was certainly a success to be proud of as 600 people passed through the classes and many talked with volunteers outside the classroom setting and at the literature table. In addition to Becky’s Place success, there was a large amount of new school supplies donated to the Wise County school board from monies received for that particular purpose so the children needing extra help will have what they need to start school and learn.

Many thanks to the co-chairs of Becky’s Place (Yvonne Eisenberg & Maggie Powers), all the educators/volunteers helping at the event or behind the scenes, VBCF staff, and especially a big thank you to all those that made contributions for Becky’s Place. We are already getting preparations going for next year at RAM.

Join the Drive Against Breast Cancer!

Available now at DMV!

When we began the 2 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 9,000 pink ribbon license plates on the road today.

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.
Fall Calendar

With October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the fall is a very busy time here at VBCF. Come out and support us at one of these great events. We look forward to seeing you! Visit www.vbcf.org/events as events will be added to this list.

Saturday, September 14

Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation Hampton Roads Chapter 7th Annual Victory Walk. Portsmouth. The Victory Walk is a gentle 2 mile walk along one of the oldest working harbors in the country! Walk begins at Ntelos Pavilion and winds along the waterfront. Proceeds benefit the Hampton Roads Chapter of the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation. This year’s walk is being held in memory of chapter member Duke Gardner. Registration is $25.00 for adults and includes a free t-shirt if you register by September 6. Registration is $15.00 for children ages 5 – 11. On-site registration begins at 7:30am; walk begins at 9:00am. Register at www.vbcf.org/victory-walk. Contact T.E. Okafor at 757-636-2334 for more information.

Saturday, September 28


Saturday, September 28 - Cont.

Central Virginia Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation Women in the Outdoors Heritage Day, Palmyra. Join the Central Virginia Chapter of the NWTF for a day of outdoor activities including: fishing, fly fishing, skeet shooting, canoeing, forest exploration, and many more! Registration fee is $20 and includes lunch, activities and one raffle chance. Youth under 16 are free. Donations will be accepted to benefit the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation. Event takes place at Camp Friendship, 573 Camp Friendship Way, Palmyra. Registration begins at 8:30am; activities begin at 9:00am. Raffle drawing will be at 4:30pm. Visit www.facebook.com/pages/Central-Virginia-Chap-ter/291735315833 for more information or contact Sherwood Londeree at Bo.Londeree@yahoo.com.

October Promotions

October - Breast Cancer Awareness Month Month-long Promotions to benefit VBCF

Samuel Beckett’s, Arlington. Special promotions all month long to benefit VBCF. Visit www.samuelbecketts.com for more information.

Thursday, October 3

Aura Spa & Salon, Shula’s America’s Steak House, Hilton Richmond/Short Pump Open House to benefit VBCF, Richmond. Join Aura Spa, Shula’s and the Hilton Richmond/Short Pump for an open house event to benefit the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation. Event takes place 5:30-7:00pm at Aura Spa inside the Hilton Short Pump. For $10 admission you will enjoy an adult beverage, food, a gift bag, and a raffle ticket for some wonderful raffle items. Mini-spa treatments will be available by donation. Visit www.aurarichmond.com for more information. For reservations call the Hilton Spa Concierge at 804-622-6000.

Saturday, October 5

Pink Butterfly Foundation 3rd Annual Fall BRAzaar, Chesterfield. The Fall BRAzaar is in memory of Denys Lynn Musselman. This free family friendly event features live music by Richmond area bands, a vendor market with crafters, artisans and businesses as well as children’s activities. Health and cancer care providers will be offering health screenings, breast cancer education, information and support. Proceeds benefit the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation. Event runs 10:00am-8:00pm at Southside Speedway, 12800 Genito Road. For more information contact Dana Sikon at mcmdana@aol.com or by calling 804-337-3831. Learn more at www.fallbrazaar.com.

Brazaar is in memory of Denys Lynn Musselman. This free family friendly event features live music by Richmond area bands, a vendor market with crafters, artisans and businesses as well as children’s activities. Health and cancer care providers will be offering health screenings, breast cancer education, information and support. Proceeds benefit the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation. Event runs 10:00am-8:00pm at Southside Speedway, 12800 Genito Road. For more information contact Dana Sikon at mcmdana@aol.com or by calling 804-337-3831. Learn more at www.fallbrazaar.com.
Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation Hampton Roads Chapter 11th Annual Rolling for Life Motorcycle Ride, Portsmouth. Co-sponsored by the Thunder & Lightning Motorcycle Club and Aggressor Custom Cycles. Ride from Portsmouth to Smithfield, VA. The motorcycle ride kicks off Breast Cancer Awareness month and raises awareness of breast cancer. Registration and staging will be at Aggressor Custom Cycles, 3306 Airline Boulevard, beginning at 9:00am. Cost is $10 per rider and $5 per passenger. Contact Tuwanna Okafor at 757-636-2334 for more information.

Thursday, October 17

Trump Winery Third Thursday Music Series, Charlottesville. Enjoy free live music in the Tasting Room at Trump Winery from 6:00-8:00pm on the third Thursday of every month. Tastings, glass pours, and bottles of wine will be available for purchase. Enjoy a relaxing night of good music and great wine! Proceeds from October 17 benefit the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation. Visit www.trumpwinery.com for more information.

Thursday, October 24


Saturday, November 9

Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation Hampton Roads Chapter Annual Breast Cancer Luncheon, Virginia Beach. Luncheon includes survivors participating in the Parade of Life and the presentation of the Overton Award. Contact Tuwanna Okafor at 757-636-2334 for more information.

Want to receive the VBCF Connection, our monthly e-newsletter? Visit www.vbcf.org to sign up!
Support VBCF!

Give online at www.vbcf.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 $ __________

A contribution of $ __________ is enclosed.

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: __________

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.