VBCF Presents Kohlenberg and Dopp Awards

VBCF was honored to present the Sharon H. Kohlenberg Healthcare Service Award and Nancy G. Dopp Volunteer of the Year Award at two exciting events this year.

The Sharon H. Kohlenberg Healthcare Service Award was presented at Paint the Town Pink: An Evening of Education and Fun at Willow Oaks Country Club in Richmond on October 21. Guests enjoyed a wonderful night with a reception, dinner, dancing, and education as Dr. George A. Knaysi, MD, FACS and Susan M. Uhle, NP discussed breast cancer risk and new directions in breast cancer treatment.

The Nancy G. Dopp Volunteer of the Year Award was presented in front of a large crowd at the Naval Air Station Oceana Air Show in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The theme for the Oceana Air Show was A Celebration of Flight, A Celebration of Life in honor of breast cancer awareness month. Guests were thrilled by performances from two world class jet teams, the U.S. Navy Blue Angels and the Canadian Snowbirds Demonstration Team.

Pictured (l-r): Kohlenberg Award Recipient Dr. George Knaysi with Larry Goldman, husband of Sherry Kohlenberg. The Kohlenberg Award honors her memory.

Pictured (l-r): Eunice McMillan of VBCF’s Hampton Roads Chapter with Dopp Award Winner Beblon Parks at the Naval Air Station Oceana Air Show in Virginia Beach, VA.

To read more about our Kohlenberg & Dopp Award Winners please see page 8.
Wow, October is finally over and maybe I will have time to catch my breath. I know that October is National Breast Cancer Awareness month, but you could not tell that from the calendar of events that our staff, chapters, board, and supporters worked hard to make happen. Each month has been full of activities.

In this edition, you will see lots of articles about our great chapters and how they are making a difference in their community and throughout the state. They also had fund-raising events, which help us pay the bills each month.

I personally attended the Hampton Roads Chapter's 3rd Annual Victory Walk in Portsmouth during September. And, I got a chance to meet Duke, who is one of their members. He is a great guy and is also a breast cancer survivor. The Peninsula Chapter held their 15th Annual VBCF Golf Tournament in Hampton in October and I was able to attend the event for the first time. It was a cold and drizzly day (with some real downpours), but the golfers appeared to have a great time playing and then sharing their "adventures" on the course during lunch. Of course, many thanks go to the event co-chairs, Diane Scott and Boddin Wright, for all their effort and the numerous chapter members that assisted. Our Central Virginia Chapter held their 13th Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Dinner in Petersburg near the end of October. The food at the Brickhouse Run Restaurant is always delicious and the celebrity waiters really add to the fun. Of course, this is just a small percentage of all that they did.

Congratulations to our award winners, Bebion Parks and Dr. George Kaysi. Bebion was selected to receive our Nancy G. Dopp award, which recognizes a volunteer in the breast cancer community. Dr. Kaysi was presented our Sharon H. Kohlenberg award which recognizes a medical professional that goes above and beyond in making a difference in the lives of folks diagnosed with breast cancer. (And, yes, I am biased on this selection as Dr. Kaysi is my surgeon.)

VBCF was invited to participate at several new venues during October. This included the Oceana Air Show and the State Fair of Virginia. Brighton Collectibles, a fashion accessory store in Richmond, selected VBCF as their charity to receive funds from their "Power of Pink" campaign. I could go on and on about other events, but I don't have the space in this column.

This will be my last column as VBCF President. My term ends in January 2010 and, per our bylaws, I cannot be re-elected. I will continue to serve on the board for two more years as Immediate Past President. It has truly been an honor representing you and the organization. I appreciate all the support that I received from our Staff, VBCF Board, Chapters, and YOU.

When I share my story publicly, I often say that while I do not wish breast cancer on anyone, my life has truly been blessed and enhanced by my journey. It may sound corny, but its true and much of that is because of the wonderful women and men that I have met.

So, I will end with Happy Holidays and a wish that your 2010 be filled with love, laughter, joy, hope and Good Health.

Gay Rudis, President
Becky Morris, Vice President
Terry Newberry, Treasurer
Rita Handley, Secretary
Enta Boyd
Yvonne Eisenberg
Kathy Funk
Alison G. Gaucher
Don Geisler
Shirley M. George
CJ George
Sharon J. Goodrich
Lynn Holly
Frank Poynter
Samantha Reed
Mary J. Saunders
Linda Seeman
Angela A. Lawrence
Executive Director
Lisa Boudreaux
Administrative Manager
Vernal Branch
Advocacy & Constituency Coordinator
Jaime Strohacker
Program Coordinator

The Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation is a grassroots organization committed to the eradication of breast cancer through education and advocacy.

Educate. Advocate. Eradicate.
VBCF Mourns the Loss of Maureen “Mo” Cassidy

VBCF and the Central Virginia Chapter mourn the death of Chapter Past President Mo Cassidy.

Maureen Cassidy was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001 and became involved with VBCF in 2003. Mo served as the chapter’s first Secretary. She also served as Chapter Treasurer, Chapter President, and sat on the VBCF Board of Directors.

A Glen Allen resident, Maureen was the Office Manager of Freeman & Morgan Architects. In addition to her work with VBCF, Mo was a communicant of St. Michael Catholic Church, and a volunteer with the American Cancer Society and Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Mo participated in all areas of activities doing everything completely and encouraging others to get involved. She will be greatly missed.

Visit our website - www.vbcf.org!

VBCF’s Pink Ribbon License Plate is now available for purchase at your local DMV!

Visit your local DMV
or log on to www.dmv.state.va.us
to order your plate today!

Generations of Hope & Healing

A conference for physicians, nurses, survivors & family
Saturday, April 17, 2010 • Weyers Cave, VA
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
featuring Keynote Speaker Andrea Lohr,
wife of Delegate Matt Lohr

General Audiences:

• The Challenge of Triple Negative Breast Cancer: Ben Ho Park, MD, PhD - Johns Hopkins
• Survivorship: Care of the Patient After Cancer Treatment: Haidee Waters, PhD, ANP - VCU Massey Cancer Center Adult Survivorship Clinic

For Physicians:

• Neoadjuvant Chemotherapy in Breast Cancer Management: Harry Bear, MD - VCU
• Update on Post-Mastectomy Radiotherapy and APBI: Doug Arthur, MD - VCU Massey Cancer Center

Other topics will include: Hereditary Breast Cancer; The Emerging Role of the “Breast Navigator”; MRI and BSGI in Screening and Diagnosis; Current Screening Recommendations; Role of Radiology in Diagnosis and Follow-up; Surgical Options for Treatment; When is Chemotherapy and/or Hormonal Therapy Recommended; When is Radiation Therapy Recommended; Importance of Advocacy

Registration Fees: $25.00 (Breakfast and Lunch Included)
CME’s & CEU’s extra.
CME’s & CEU’s provided by UVA.

*Six Category 1 CME’s anticipated
**Six CEU’s anticipated

Presented by Augusta Health, Augusta Regional Free Clinic, Every Woman’s Life Program and VBCF.

For more information contact the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation at 1-800-345-8223 or visit www.vbcf.org.
Volunteer Spotlight: Kathy Funk

Kathy Funk was born & raised in the territory of Alaska by parents who were Alaskan Pioneers. She met her husband Wayne there while he was stationed at Fort Richardson, Alaska. When Wayne got out of the army they moved to his home state of Virginia. Kathy and her husband started a contracting business nearly 30 years ago which has grown well over the years.

Kathy has been active in her children's school and at church and especially very busy with their company. In late 1992 at age 40 she received the very unwelcome news that she had breast cancer, found by a mammogram. She had no known family history which she now knows is true in most cases. At that time she had 3 teenage children who still needed their mother and she wanted to live. Kathy underwent a mastectomy with many lymph nodes removed. The majority of those lymph nodes were already affected, even two of them visibly to the surgeon. She was given the opportunity to have a very aggressive experimental treatment, the Bone Marrow/Stem Cell Transplant program. This treatment is no longer offered in the U.S. for breast cancer patients. Insurance paid for this treatment in many states but not in Virginia, so much of her treatment was out of pocket. Kathy received very high dose chemo for three months. She then entered into the hospital for even higher dose chemo and stayed there for three weeks as her bone marrow was totally destroyed. She then recovered by receiving her stored bone marrow/stem cells that had been harvested earlier. That was followed by many weeks of radiation. About three years after treatment she had the tramp flap procedure for reconstruction.

After Kathy's recovery she felt a need to do something but didn't really know what. She participated in the behind the scenes work of the early version of Cancer Survivors Day, ball games of the Richmond Braves. During her treatment she was part of a transplant program support group, where she met some ladies who had recently begun VBCF. Kathy went to one of the earliest lobby days to the state capital where the group lobbied for insurance coverage of the transplant treatment by Virginia insurance companies. She joined the Central VA Chapter and was chapter treasurer for six years. She is currently in her third year as chapter president. Kathy has chaired the Central Virginia Chapter's Breast Cancer Awareness Dinner since 2004. She is also in her second term on the VBCF Board of Directors.

Three years ago Kathy was found to have thyroid cancer. She once again faced surgery and treatment for cancer. The doctors could not rule out if there was any connection with her breast cancer treatment. This served as a reminder of how much there is still to do to make cancer something of the past. Kathy stays involved in the battle to spread awareness and hopefully make a difference in this fight to end breast cancer for her three children, six granddaughters, all her family and friends. In Kathy's words "They deserve a future without this disease."

Blue Ridge Chapter

Fall is always a busy time for all VBCF chapters and the Blue Ridge Chapter is no exception. The chapter donated money to the Staunton, Waynesboro, Augusta and Rockbridge County Public Libraries for breast cancer materials that include books, audiovisual materials, and magazines. They kept a kiosk at the Staunton mall stocked with VBCF literature and gave out thousands of pink ribbons throughout the Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County area.

The chapter sent members to both the Smyth and Wythe County Ladies Night Out events to represent VBCF. They staffed many local employer and church sponsored health fairs during September, October, and November. Meg Shrader accompanied Vernal Branch to Virginia Tech to educate Dr. Carla Finklestein and her students as to the mission of VBCF and to encourage the students not only to continue their research but to become advocates as well.

Spring of 2010 is also going to be a busy time for the chapter. Once again the chapter will be holding the Pink Ribbon Hi Tea in March. Myrtle Kite and several members of the chapter are continuing to work on the Generations of Hope and Healing Conference to be held on April 17, 2010 at the Plecker Center at Blue Ridge Community College. We hope to see you at the Conference.

Central Virginia Chapter

The Central Virginia Chapter participated in many different functions this fall. Several chapter members met with first year students at VCU medical school for their small group sessions. This is a rewarding opportunity that allows participants to influence the next generation of doctors. Chapter members staffed many breast cancer awareness events across Central Virginia, passing out literature, talking with the public, and presenting VBCF's Stay Abreast Speakers Bureau program. The chapter has also entertained guest speakers at its fall meetings, including Katherine Bettin, Ph.D. on the topic of sexuality and a speaker discussing Oncotype DX.

The chapter held their 13th Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Dinner at the Brickhouse Run Restaurant in Old Towne, Petersburg. As always this was a wonderful event with great food, fellowship, and local celebrity waiters. This year’s event raised almost $16,000 through donations and sponsorships. Many thanks to the Celebrity Wait staff who volunteered their time in support of breast cancer awareness and VBCF.
Hampton Roads Chapter

The Hampton Roads Chapter has been busy this fall! On Friday, September 18, survivors and supporters participated in the Umoja Parade. Upon seeking the approval of the elders, the parade was the official beginning of the Umoja Festival. This was the 19th Annual African-American Culture and Heritage Festival that promoted unity and cultural diversity. The 3rd Annual Victory Walk was on September 19 as part of the Umoja Festival. The walk wound along the historic waterfront in Portsmouth. Walkers arrived early and were eager and ready to walk to raise awareness and donations on breast health. C.L.E.A.N. and students from Norfolk State and Old Dominion Universities were among the volunteers for the walk.

The Thunder and Lightning Motorcycle Club, in conjunction with Aggressor’s Cycle and Sentara BelleHarbour, held the 7th Annual Rolling for Life Motorcycle Ride to raise awareness for breast health and donations for VBCF. Portsmouth Sheriff Bill Watson wore a pink shirt for the occasion to raise awareness for breast health.

On October 9, the fans and Norfolk State volleyball team wore pink in their home game against North Carolina A&T. Many fans wore pink headbands, ribbons, caps, tee-shirts, shoe laces, and shoes. This game was to raise awareness of breast health. The Hampton Roads Chapter set up a table and distributed information and fans to the audience.

The Hampton Roads Chapter hosted its Annual Breast Cancer Luncheon on November 14 at the Holiday Inn Select in Norfolk. Survivors participated in the “Parade of Life” and the Overton Award was presented. Participants enjoyed a wonderful silent auction. The youngest known breast cancer survivor in Hampton Roads, Kierra Sewell, was the guest speaker. Diagnosed in June 2007, Kierra was only 14 years old at the time. Now 16, her inspiring message was the perfect addition to a wonderful event.

VBCF Northern Virginia Chapter Forming

A VBCF Chapter is in the works in the Prince William County area of Northern Virginia! If you’re in the Northern Virginia area and are interested in becoming more involved with VBCF – now’s the time to act! For more information, contact Brenda Bryant at princewilliam@vbcf.org or the VBCF office at 800-345-8223 or jaime@vbcf.org.

Efforts are also underway to start a VBCF Chapter in the Alexandria area of Northern Virginia. For more information, contact the VBCF office at 800-345-8223 or jaime@vbcf.org.
VBCF Library Outreach Program Expands

In September VBCF made a donation to the Smyth-Bland Regional Library. The check was presented at the Smyth County Ladies Night Out program.

The VBCF Library Outreach Program began at the local level in the Central Virginia Chapter of VBCF. The purpose of the program is to provide education on breast cancer topics to the public by donating money for breast cancer books and periodicals to be purchased by public libraries. VBCF took this program to the state level in 2007, donating money for breast cancer books and periodicals to public library systems in areas of the state that do not necessarily have an active VBCF Chapter, allowing us to provide educational resources to residents in those areas. VBCF made donations to six library systems across the state in October and November this year.

A true testimony to the program, VBCF recently received an update from Amy Bond, Director of the Lonesome Pine Regional Library in the Wise, Virginia area. "These new books circulated a total of 55 times. Since we added the books in November 2008, this represents usage from November 2008 through June 2009. Thanks again for making it possible for us to update our books in this subject area for our library users."

2009 donations were made to:

- $400 to the Alexandria Library which has four branches in the City of Alexandria. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us for more information.
- $200 to the Amherst County Public Library with two libraries in its system. Visit www.acpl.us for more information.
- $200 to the Lynchburg Public Library with two libraries in its system. Visit www.lynchburgva.gov/publiclibrary for more information.
- $1,000 to the Prince William Library System with ten libraries in Prince William County. Visit www.pwcgov.org/Library for more information.
- $400 to the Smyth-Bland Regional Library, with four branches located in Marion, Bland, Chilhowie, and Saltville. Visit www.sbrl.org for more information.

The Hampton Roads Chapter of the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation held their 3rd Annual Victory Walk on Saturday, September 19 in Portsmouth. The walk was held in partnership with the City of Portsmouth and the Umoja Festival.

The Peninsula Chapter of the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation held their 15th Annual Golf Tournament on Saturday, October 17 in Hampton. The Golf Tournament was held at The Hampton Golf Course.

VBCF Holiday Card Available Now!

Support VBCF while wishing your family and friends happy and hopeful holidays. You may order them now through our website, www.vbcaf.org or by calling the office at 800-345-8223. $12.00 for a package of 12.

Inside message: Wishing you and your family peace, love and joy this Holiday Season!
Project LEAD Institute 2009: One VBCF Volunteer’s Perspective - Andrea Sturken, VBCF volunteer

Along with forty-eight other breast cancer advocates (including Brenda Bryant, Rita Handley, and Angela Lawrence from the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation), I attended this year’s Project LEAD Institute, held July 28 through August 2, 2009 in La Jolla, California. The intensive six-day course covered material ranging from the basic science and biology of breast cancer to the basic principles of epidemiology. Attendees hailed from various breast cancer advocacy and awareness organizations across the country as well as one advocate attendee who came from the United Kingdom. The LEAD faculty consisted of nationally recognized breast cancer research scientists and epidemiologists. Other faculty members included breast cancer advocacy leaders, among them VBCF’s own Vernal Branch, who served as mentors and study group leaders.

Having had a taste of the Project LEAD experience at the first Project LEAD Workshop held in Philadelphia in April, I was ready for the opportunity to delve even deeper into the subject matter that the longer Institute would provide. My first glimpse of the more intense nature of the six-day course came with the arrival in June of the homework packet that consisted of a number of required readings due by the start of the program. Those readings and the enclosed agenda for the program fostered my high expectations for the course. As an advocate who has looked for opportunities to gain knowledge in the science of breast cancer and deepen my understanding of the breast cancer research and advocacy process, I am pleased to report that those expectations were fulfilled.

Upon arrival and check-in on Tuesday, July 28 until the course’s conclusion on Sunday, August 2, we were busy with lectures, study group meetings, and advanced topics sessions. In the tradition of the National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund, a “moment of silence” prefaced each day’s activities, reinforcing both the mission of NBCCF and our mission of attending Project LEAD: to become educated advocates in the fight to eradicate breast cancer. After introductions and a preview of the course on Tuesday, our work began that evening following dinner with reading assigned in our newly-issued three-inch course binder.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the course focused on the science of the disease. At the beginning of the first session, we were told that, remarkably, five science lectures would cover the equivalent of a first-year biology curriculum! Those lectures included “Introduction to Basic Science and the Biology of Cancer,” “Principles of Genetics,” “Structure and Function of DNA and RNA,” “Protein, Translation, and Mutations,” and “Development of Cancer at the Molecular Level.” Faculty members included Michelle Bennett, Ph.D., Diane Palmieri, Ph.D., and Pat Steeg, Ph.D., all of the National Cancer Institute.

After a break Thursday afternoon, on Friday and Saturday we were back to the course agenda, covering epidemiology and research advocacy. Epidemiology lectures included “Introduction to Epidemiology,” “Risk Factors,” “Cohort Studies,” “Case Control Studies,” “Review Observational Studies,” “Causal Inference,” “Clinical Trials,” and “Systematic Review and Meta Analysis.” Faculty members included Michele Forman, Ph.D., the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center; Bob Milliken, D.V.M., Ph.D., M.P.H., the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; and Kirsten Moysich, Ph.D., Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

Advocacy lectures included “Advocate Involvement in the Research Process,” “NBCCF’s Clinical Trials Initiative,” “NBCCF’s Legislative Priorities,” and “Influence Strategies.” These presentations were made by NBCCF team leaders, mentors, and staff.

On Sunday, as our “final exam” and prerequisite for our graduation, we attended a science research seminar—similar in format to presentations made at annual science conferences and meetings—with Michael Press, M.D., Ph.D., of the University of Southern California, a scientist whose work with Dr. Dennis Slamon and others on the amplification and overexpression of the HER2 gene led to the later development of Herceptin. Applying the concepts and knowledge learned in the previous days, we were able to critically reflect on his presentation and ask questions during the discussion period, much as we might ask questions of scientists, clinicians, and/or researchers at conferences or during research review panel meetings.

While the majority of the LEAD Institute was conducted in a traditional lecture format, we would not have had the success we all felt upon graduation on Sunday if opportunities for active, hands-on learning had not also been a fundamental part of the LEAD experience. The course, tailored to the adult learner, was designed to keep us somewhere between “the comfort and panic zones” of the learning paradigm, according to Molly Mead, Ed.D., M.B.A., longtime educational facilitator for Project LEAD. In other words, she told us, to achieve learning we needed to venture into the area of “risk.” This was accomplished primarily through hands-on assignments tackled in study groups.

Prior to our arrival at Project LEAD, we were assigned to mentors—breast cancer advocacy leaders and LEAD graduates—who facilitated our study groups. With approximately eight students in each group—who each took a turn as the group leader and/or scribe—we worked through exercises related to the daily lectures. Faculty members circulated among the study groups and were available to answer questions, explain the most challenging concepts, and provide feedback as we worked through our assignments.

The most gratifying work that came from my study group was the exercise we did following the epidemiology phase of the course when we had to design two studies (a case-control study and a cohort study) on Vitamin D and breast cancer. Having the faculty epidemiologist on hand to walk through Continued on page 11
What is NAPBC? - Tracey Tatum, RN, MS, FNP, AOCNP - Breast Cancer Coordinator, Thomas Johns Cancer Hospital at CJW Medical Center, VBCF Scientific Advisor

NAPBC, National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers, is a national organization developed through the American College of Surgeons (ACoS), whose goal is to improve the quality of care of patients with breast disease.

**What does it mean for breast cancer?**

Centers that are accredited have voluntarily committed to undergo a rigorous evaluation and survey. Included in this review are a center’s compliance with high quality standards related to preventing, diagnosing and treating breast diseases including cancer. This is all inclusive for breast services from annual screening and benign disease management to high risk breast care and diagnosis of breast cancer; through survivorship. Healthcare providers may differentiate their care from other facilities by achieving accreditation by the NAPBC. In turn consumers may use this accreditation to identify those centers who have achieved this high level of quality of care for patients with breast disease. Lastly, the insurance industry looks at quality indicators in cancer treatment to determine coverage.

**How is accreditation achieved?**

An initial application is submitted by the center. This is reviewed by the NAPBC to determine a facility’s eligibility to proceed to survey. Once a center is approved and scheduled for a survey, a more extensive survey application record (SAR) is completed. This SAR requires a facility to document how it fulfills the criteria necessary to meet each specific standard. A comprehensive survey is performed at the center by a physician expert in breast disease to evaluate the center’s compliance with each of the established 27 standards. As you see, accreditation is an extensive process to attain.

NAPBC standards look at the topics of Center Leadership, Clinical Management, Research, Community Outreach, Professional Education and Quality Improvement. For more information about NAPBC and to find an accredited center call 312-202-5185 or visit www.accreditedbreastcenters.org.

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**In Great Appreciation**

Many individuals, organizations and businesses have held events recently that have benefited Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation (VBCF). Many of the events were held in conjunction with Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. As this newsletter goes to print, we do not have all the results in from October and so will recognize October events in our next newsletter, so that we can be sure and include everyone.

In the meantime, a huge thank you goes out to all the dedicated volunteers who have worked health fairs, faith-based events, and community events as well as those who have distributed pink ribbons, information cards, and other educational materials in businesses and institutions. We rely on volunteer efforts to help us reach a wide audience in communities throughout Virginia. Volunteers play a crucial role in VBCF’s mission to eradicate breast cancer through education and advocacy. We appreciate all the efforts!

A big thank you goes out to the bowlers and volunteers of the RIBIT – Richmond Invitational Bowling Tournament – held over Labor Day weekend. RIBIT generously donated a portion of their proceeds to VBCF again this year. A special thanks to Craig “Boo-Boo” Phillips, co-director, for including VBCF in this wonderful event.

Thanks to Ukrops and to all who contributed Ukrops Golden Gifts Certificates to VBCF. This was our best year yet!

**Fredericksburg Eagle Riders,** a fun, family-oriented organization dedicated to the enjoyment of motorcycles, safe riding and the Fraternal Order of Eagles donated over $1000 to VBCF’s education and awareness programs.

Special thanks to Laurie Follmer and Lisa Harrison, for including VBCF in their **Camp for the Cure** program this year. They held a theatre camp this summer which resulted in a wonderful musical revue and performance. It was dedicated to Megan Blake, a young mother who just finished treatment for breast cancer. Through the program, they were able to donate an amazing $2500 to VBCF.

And, finally, thank you to Eryn and Alexandra in Clifton, VA who are friends that had a lemonade stand. Alexandra knew she had breast cancer in her family and Eryn found out that breast cancer also runs in her family. So, they donated proceeds of their lemonade stand to VBCF because they don’t want anyone else to have to go through breast cancer!
Dr. Susan Love Joins VBCF for Two Special Events in 2010!

Dr. Susan Love, author of Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book, termed the “bible for women with breast cancer” by the New York Times, as well Dr. Susan Love's Menopause and Hormone Book, will be joining VBCF for two special events in May 2010. Dr. Love is a researcher and surgeon, as well as being known as one of the “founding mothers” of the breast cancer movement.

On Thursday, May 6, VBCF will be hosting an evening reception and presentation by Dr. Love at the Hilton Richmond Hotel and Spa at Short Pump Town Center.

Aces for Awareness, a series of tennis events and luncheon to benefit VBCF will be held on Friday, May 7.

Participants will enjoy a morning of tennis at five Richmond area club sites (Burkwood Swim & Racquet Club, Dominion Club, Hermitage Country Club, Salisbury Country Club, and Willow Oaks Country Club) followed by a luncheon featuring Dr. Love at the Hilton Richmond Hotel and Spa at Short Pump Town Center.

Dr. Love will be discussing her new project, the Love/Avon Army of Women (armyofwomen.org) as well as new updates in breast cancer research.

Mark your calendars now and keep an eye out for more details on these special events with Dr. Love!

Newly Diagnosed?

Have you recently been diagnosed with breast cancer or know someone who has? Contact VBCF to receive a Newly Diagnosed Information Packet, which contains information on how to understand your pathology report, emotional healing, treatment options and more. To order a packet visit www.vbcf.org or call 804-285-1200 or 800-345-8223 or e-mail Lisa@vbcf.org.

Project LEAD Institute 2009 - Continued from p. 7

our proposed study design and offer assistance was an invaluable experience.

At our last meeting, we also shared and exchanged ideas about the required “Graduate Action Plan” that we would each submit to our mentor and study group facilitator before our departure from the Institute. These plans are our personal roadmaps for our advocacy work post-LEAD.

Other opportunities for active learning were achieved through participation in the “Advanced Topics Sessions.” Faculty members made presentations about their own research to smaller groups of students. Select students, either who volunteered or were “drafted,” summarized those presentations and reported back to the larger group. Examples of these presentations included “Personalized Medicine” by Dr. Bennett and “Polychlorinated Biphenyls and Breast Cancer Risk” by Dr. Moysich.

Now as a LEAD graduate, I look forward to utilizing the knowledge acquired by attending the Institute in my work for VBCF and breast cancer advocacy and highly recommend the course to others who are looking to deepen their awareness of the breast cancer research process. The following benefits make the personal investment in applying to, preparing for, and actively participating in the course worth the effort:

• meeting and networking with other committed advocates;

• learning about the science and the epidemiology of the disease from the actual scientists and researchers working in the field and later having the opportunity at meals, in study group, or during breaks to chat informally with them and ask questions;

• working through a curriculum designed specifically for advocates without a scientific background;

• having a specially-tailored, six-day residential program that allowed for complete immersion in the subject matter;

• gaining access to further educational opportunities, such as joining LEAD grads online, participating in special online seminars for graduates, and attending LEAD grads-only sessions at the annual NBCCF conference;

• sharpening the analytical skills necessary for attending national annual breast cancer and science conferences and meetings or participating as a consumer reviewer on a national or local research review panel.

As a former English major whose professional career and current daily life are anything but scientific, the journey towards an in-depth understanding of the science of breast cancer was a very welcomed challenge. My experience at Project LEAD met my expectations and has given me the information to move forward in my quest to become a better informed consumer and breast cancer advocate.
This holiday season, give a gift that:

- says you care
- provides help and hope for others
- provides education
- saves packaging and shipping
- you don’t have to shop for
- will keep on giving
- is tax deductible*

Make a donation to Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation (VBCF) in honor or memory of a loved one. VBCF will send a gift acknowledgment within one week directly to the name and address provided. For donations of $30 or more, we will send you a free package of 12 holiday cards, while supplies last.

* value of cards not tax deductible