VBCF - Commemorating 25 Years

by Susan Siegel, Board President and Katy Sawyer, Executive Director

Five women - Phoebe Antrim, Judy Ellis, Patti Goodall, Mary Jo Kahn, and Sherry Kohlenberg - met in a MCV breast cancer support group 25 years ago. They decided more needed to be done to give Virginians a stronger voice in the fight against breast cancer. Thus, VBCF was founded to eradicate breast cancer through education and advocacy for Virginians. With your help, we have come a long way since our Founders held meetings around a kitchen table and have accomplished a lot.

We assisted in the passage of the Breast Density Notification Law – Virginia was the third state in the U.S. to pass such a law in 2012. We have worked to increase money for breast cancer research at our state cancer centers and nationally via the DoD Breast Cancer Research program. VBCF trained advocates have served on research review panels. We worked to get the Genetic Information Privacy Act passed, prohibiting health insurance companies from discriminating based upon family history.

We have successfully supported the bill mandating insurance coverage for breast reconstruction and a 48-hour hospital stay following a mastectomy. We helped to pass the national Breast and Cervical Treatment Act guaranteeing treatment to low-income and uninsured women. And we have educated Virginians, providing accurate, up-to-date information on early detection, diagnosis, treatment, research, and survivorship.

And after 25 years, we are still going strong because of you - our network of volunteers who care as passionately as we do about making a positive difference in the lives of Virginians. But there is so much more to do. So we ask you to continue your commitment or to get involved with VBCF if you haven’t yet. Your support - whether it is time, talent, or treasure - makes a huge difference in the lives of Virginians.

This newsletter is focused on Action Items - a summary of things that have happened along with upcoming ways you can make an impact. While we are disappointed that VBCF is still needed 25 years later and that a prevention or cure for breast cancer has not yet been found, we believe that together, we will end this disease that affects so many.
Join Tito's Handmade Vodka to help the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation this fall! Donate online by October 31 and Tito's will match every dollar donated up to $10,000!

Making your gift online is quick, easy and secure! Just visit www.vbcf.org/titos or text* TitosVBCF to 55678 to donate.

Cheers!

*Text rates may apply.
Summer Pink Ribbon Brochure Assembly

Thank you to Janise Bey, Katie Brophy, Emily Dai, Kendall Davids, Paula Dickerson, Cannon Diradour, Joyce Easter, Lily Ernsberger, Haley Felton, DeVellere Ford, Amanda Garnet, Barbara Geisler, Taylor Gray, Doris Hall, Christopher Hamilton, Sandra Hamilton, Beth Hardy, Jessica Ramirez, Gay Rudis, Kayla Sawyer, LisaRae Walker, Rory Weinfurther, the Grafton School, and the Henrico County Mental Health Skill Building Team for volunteering with us this summer. We appreciate your help in assembling our pink ribbon brochures - we couldn’t have done it without you!

Nancy Dopp Volunteers of the Year

Congratulations to CJ George & Anita Smith! They were selected as VBCF’s Volunteers of the Year for their service as volunteer co-chairs of the Women’s Memorial Golf Tournament over the past 5 years. During this time, the event has raised over $110,000 and has been moved from July to September - a change the golfers appreciate! They took over after the prior volunteer chair, Sharon Talarico retired her position after 25 years. CJ also served on VBCF’s Board of Directors and as our Treasurer prior to her time as co-chair. Thanks to CJ & Anita for continuing this tradition!

2016 Karin Decker Noss Advocacy Scholarship Awarded

Eunice Fenwick is the 2016-18 recipient of the Karin Noss Advocacy Scholarship. Ms. Fenwick is a 19 year breast cancer survivor, current VBCF Board member, and past president of the Peninsula volunteer chapter. She is a trained hospice volunteer and also volunteers weekly for the Lackey Free Medical Clinic as a medical assistant. Ms. Fenwick has participated as a team leader for VBCF state and national advocacy days and is looking forward to gaining a more in-depth knowledge of breast cancer research, funding and treatment availability. Congratulations Eunice!
VBCF in the Community: This spring and summer have been full of travel and events for Erin Steigleder, Education Manager. Events have ranged from a resource fair at Old Dominion University, tabling at the Susan G. Komen Central Virginia Race for the Cure, a visit to a support group in Richmond, and speaking events in South Boston and Saluda to name a few. This fall is also shaping up to be busy with VBCF being represented in various communities across the state. If you belong to a group that is interested in having a speaker or hosting a health fair and want VBCF to be there, contact Erin Steigleder, Education Manager, at erin@vbcf.org or 800-345-VBCF x. 202.

VBCF in Medically Underserved Areas: This year, VBCF staff and volunteers plan to attend every Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic in Virginia to offer breast health education to the medically underserved. Staff and/or VBCF volunteers have attended the RAM clinics in Buena Vista (March), Smyth County (April), and Wise County (July). The Wise County RAM is by far the largest in the state with thousands of patients being served over three days, and at that RAM, VBCF volunteers have been teaching health education classes under the name “Becky’s Place” for years. This fall, VBCF plans to attend RAM clinics during September in Lee County (which lost its only hospital two years ago) and during October in Grundy.

Website Additions Alert: New information is available on VBCF’s website - www.vbcf.org - including new pages on hereditary cancer, inflammatory breast cancer, metastatic breast cancer, and breast cancer survivorship. Find this info and more under the “About Breast Cancer” tab.

VBCF Calendar: While October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, VBCF keeps a calendar of breast health related educational events from around the state updated all year long. Visit it at www.vbcf.org/calendar-of-events.

VBCF is proud to be part of a coalition hosting an upcoming educational conference for providers, Act Today for More Tomorrows: Reduce the Risk of Breast & HPV Related Cancers, on September 24th. This conference will be hosted at multiple sites across Southside Virginia. Learn more and register at www.vbcf.org/educate/conferences.

2016 NonProfit and Library Grants Awarded: VBCF has awarded a total of $5,685 to community organizations and libraries through our grant programs this year. VBCF approved five organizations for a total of $3,885 to support local breast health education projects that will serve approximately 8,100 Virginians. VBCF is proud to continue to fund Richmond Guardian Angels and Reach Out for Life, and excited for new relationships with Hadassah Richmond, Central Virginia Health Services, and a coalition across Southern Virginia that is planning an educational conference. Stay tuned to hear what our grantees accomplish this year!

Four library systems across the state - Eastern Shore Public Library, Massanutten Regional Library, Portsmouth Public Library, and Suffolk Public Library - will receive $100 per branch from our Library Grant program, totaling $1,800 to update breast health education materials for their patrons in 2016. Congratulations!
Save the Date! VBCF will host its 2017 State Breast Cancer Advocacy Day on February 1st. Make your voice heard at the Virginia General Assembly. No prior experience necessary. To sign up for information about this day, please contact Kirsta Millar, Advocacy Manager, at kirsta@vbcf.org or 800-345-VBCF x. 203.

Summer Legislator Visits: VBCF staff and advocates met with several Virginia state senators and delegates this summer including Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41), Senator Bill Carrico (R-40), Senator Rosalyn Dance (D-16) and Senator Siobhan Dunnavant (R-12). The purpose of these visits is to build personal connections, share the resources VBCF offers, and discuss potential legislation for the next General Assembly session related to breast cancer.

Help Us Help You: Have you taken Herceptin, Arimidex, Pertuzumab, Femara, Adriamycin, or Cytoxan? If so, were you required to try another drug first? VBCF is looking for Virginians who have experienced step therapy (sometimes called “fail first”), under which a patient must first attempt treatment using a lower-cost insurance-covered drug (referred to as a step-1 drug) and have it proven ineffective before payers allow coverage for another higher-cost prescribed drug (referred to as a step-2 drug). This step therapy approach can often be detrimental, causing patients to wait for medications that would more effectively treat their cancer. Please contact Becky Bowers-Lanier, VBCF’s state advocacy expert, at becky@B2Lconsulting.com to share your story.

Act now: Support the 2020 Deadline to End Breast Cancer: VBCF works in partnership with the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) to support national legislation as part of the 2020 Deadline to End Breast Cancer(www.breastcancerdeadline2020.org)

The Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act (S746/HR1197) has more support in Congress than it has ever had: 270 bipartisan co-sponsors in the House of Representatives and 50 co-sponsors in the Senate. VBCF thanks the following members of Virginia’s U.S. legislative delegation for signing on as co-sponsors: U.S. Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner; and Representatives Robert Wittman (R-1), Scott Rigell (R-2), Bobby Scott (D-3), Randy Forbes (R-4), Don Beyer (D-8), Morgan Griffith (R-9), Barbara Comstock (R-10), and Gerald Connolly (D-11).

This Act focuses on identifying strategies for the primary prevention of breast cancer and identifying methods to prevent breast cancer metastasis—which is responsible for over 90% of breast cancer deaths. Unfortunately, HR1197 is stalled in the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Its Chair, Congressman Fred Upton, can move the bill to the floor for a vote. You can help by calling Representative Upton’s district office (202-225-3761) with this message:

Chairman Upton, you have the authority and ability to move HR 1197, the Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act, through the Energy and Commerce Committee. The bill has over 270 cosponsors that include 63% of the E&C Committee. I urge you to markup HR 1197 and move it to the floor so it can get the vote it deserves.
Thank You!

Quality Grounds: Pushing for A Cure Campaign

Thank you to Mike Parker from Quality Grounds, LLC who donated $5,000 in snow plow revenue from the 2016 winter season through their ‘Pushing for A Cure’ campaign. VBCF staff was treated to a special visit from Mike and his best canine friend Dolly! Adorable Dolly rides on work trucks and plows with Mike and made a lot of new friends at the VBCF office!

VBCF Peninsula Chapter Luncheon

VBCF’s volunteer Peninsula Chapter hosted the 23rd annual “In the Pink” Luncheon and Fashion Show on April 9th to benefit VBCF. In addition to the fashion show, attendees enjoyed a silent auction and quilt raffle. Thank you to all the Peninsula Chapter volunteers who made this event so successful, netting more than $12,500!

7th Annual Aces for Awareness

Held on May 6th at the Country Club of Virginia, this year’s sold out event netted an Aces record of more than $50,000 in support of VBCF’s programs! A heartfelt thank you to our generous sponsors, wonderful co-chairs Candace Haske and Wendy Blankenship and their volunteer team for their hard work to make this day a success.

Cowgirls for a Cure 2016

Cowgirls for a Cure was held on June 25 in Quinton, VA. This all-girl rodeo drew over 150 participants and featured goat tying, barrel racing, and team roping, with all proceeds benefitting VBCF. Thank you to Brandy Slaughter and her team for putting on such a great event and their generous donation of $10,000 to support VBCF’s work. Next year’s rodeo is already set to be held on May 20, 2017 at the Virginia State Fairgrounds.
October Fundraising Events

VBCF benefits from the generous support of both large and small October events across the state. A few highlights for Fall 2016 include:

Virginia Tech bookstore will again donate a portion of their proceeds to VBCF from sales of their special breast cancer awareness t-shirt and wristbands in October.

The 6th annual Fall BRAzaar will be held October 1 at the Steel Horse Harley-Davidson in Midlothian, VA.

The 5th annual Pamper in Pink event held at Aura Spa at the Hilton in Short Pump on October 26th.

Volunteer Spotlight: Flip for the Fight!

Over the last 25 years, VBCF has been fortunate to have the support of amazing donors and organizations who have made an on-going investment in our mission. One of those fantastic supporters is GMS Gymnastics and its annual Flip for the Fight.

GMS Gymnastics Flip for the Fight invitational has generously supported VBCF since 2012. In the last five years, they have donated almost $70,000 to help support our mission of breast cancer education and advocacy. This event, held in Manassas, VA every spring, began with a few hundred participants and has grown to be the 2nd largest gymnastics invitational meet in Virginia. In 2016, over 1,300 gymnasts participated and 4,000 spectators watched the action.

Flip for the Fight was started as a tribute to Azin Youssefi-Manafi, GMS Gymnastics owner and coach, who is a breast cancer survivor diagnosed in 2009. Each year, Flip for the Fight features a Wall of Honor to recognize loved ones battling cancer and to honor those who have lost their fight. The event has seen incredible growth, moving locations several times to accommodate increasing numbers of participants. This year, Flip for the Fight was so popular, that 300 gymnasts were on a waiting list. Participants love this fun and meaningful gymnastics competition and look forward to the specially designed pink leotards that are made for the gymnasts each year.

VBCF is extremely grateful to GMS Gymnastics Flip for the Fight for its continued and generous investment in our work. This support enables VBCF to reach Virginians all over the state with educational resources about breast cancer and also advocate for the needs of all Virginians affected by this disease.
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: ____________

A contribution of $ _____________ is enclosed.

Please contact me about becoming a VBCF Volunteer.
Please send me information on planned giving.

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.

Fall 2016

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.