

# BREAST CANCER SURVIVAL CENTER

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A Non-Profit Organization Providing  
Post-Treatment Support and  
Education for Breast Cancer  
Survivors and their Families

*Scenes from 2006 Survivors  
Celebrate Life! Fashion Show*



Please let us know of others who  
would like to receive this quarterly  
newsletter.

*Editor's Note: We cannot provide  
medical advice. Consultation with  
your doctor is your best source of  
medical information.*

## The Seven Principles of Coffee Wisdom

### 1. Reheating causes bitterness.

Your past is the reason, not the  
excuse. Let go of what is gone.

### 2. Start with fresh grounds.

Learn from your mistakes, don't  
repeat them.

### 3. Use the correct grind.

Put right what you can and  
accept what you cannot change.

### 4. Use high-quality beans and fresh, pure, cold water.

Celebrate your uniqueness. Mix  
with people who lift you up, and  
steer clear of those who drag you  
down.

### 5. Get the proportions right.

Challenge irrational thinking.  
Keep a sense of proportion and  
perspective.

### 6. Boiling destroys flavor.

Check your stress levels. Balance  
your mind, body and spirit.

### 7. Drink it while it's hot.

Live in the present with an attitude  
of positive expectancy. Let go of  
worrying thoughts and appreciate  
and act in the now.

Source: *Coffee Wisdom, 7 Finely-  
Ground Principles for Living a Full-  
Bodied Life*, by Theresa Cheung



# Breast Cancer Survival Center

Providing Post-Treatment Support and Education

December 2006 Volume 7, Number 3

[www.breastcancersurvival.org](http://www.breastcancersurvival.org)

## The Survivor's "Obligation"

### Coming Events

#### Support/Discussion Groups 2007

January 9, 23; February 13, 27;  
March 13, 27; April 10, 24; May 8,  
22; June 12

**Room 116, West Campus,  
Norwalk Community College.**  
5:30 p.m.

#### One-day Retreats for Survivors and Family Members

April, May, September, 2007

#### Weekend Retreat for Survivors

October 26, 27, 28, 2007  
Mercy Center, Madison, CT

#### Eighth Annual *Celebrate Life!* Fashion Show and Brunch

October 14, 2007  
Shore and Country Club  
East Norwalk, CT

#### Breast Cancer Awareness Month Candle-lighting Ceremonies

October 2007

For information, (203) 857-7304,  
e-mail [cancersurvival@aol.com](mailto:cancersurvival@aol.com),  
or see us on the web at:  
[www.breastcancersurvival.org](http://www.breastcancersurvival.org).

*Thanks to Novartis Oncology  
and the Wilton Woman's Club  
for generously underwriting this  
newsletter.*

Cancer survivors have an opportunity, even an obligation, to help the newly diagnosed and the fight against cancer. That was one of the messages of the first LIVESTRONG™ Summit hosted by the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF).

The LAF, founded by champion cyclist Lance Armstrong in 1997, inspires and empowers people affected by cancer. Its credo is that unity is strength, knowledge is power and attitude is everything. From diagnosis, the foundation provides practical information and tools that people with cancer need to live life on their own terms. The LAF serves its mission through advocacy, public health and research.

The Inaugural LIVESTRONG Summit attended by BCSC Executive Director Susan Santangelo was a three-day event held in Austin, TX. It was designed to organize, inspire and direct the efforts of cancer survivors from across the country to change the face of cancer survivorship.

Led by a variety of notable speakers, including LaSalle D. Leffall, Jr., M.D., chair of the President's Cancer Panel and cancer survivors Senator John Kerry (D-MA), Elizabeth Edwards, author and wife of Senator John Edwards (D-NC), and Lance Armstrong, LIVESTRONG Summit delegates collaborated in regional groups to identify challenges, brainstorm possible solutions and develop personal action plans to broaden awareness and impact the unmet physical, emotional and practical needs of people living with cancer. Delegates were expected to take their knowledge back home and apply their action plans locally.

Approximately 700 delegates were selected to attend. Delegates representing those battling cancer, caregivers and

those who had lost a loved one to the disease were chosen based on their leadership and involvement in cancer.

"We've made tremendous strides in the fight against cancer, but it's not enough," Armstrong said. "Every day, Americans continue to suffer and die from cancer, and that's unacceptable. It's up to us to show that we're out there fighting cancer every day - and the LIVESTRONG Summit is the first step in that direction. We are proud to have you all here, and we are counting on you to join us in inspiring and empowering people with cancer. That's what this weekend is all about. The LIVESTRONG Summit is just the beginning. What we start here can change the world, and I challenge you to be a part of it. Take home what you learn here and do something to help people living with cancer in your community."

The first challenge posed to delegates was to identify the most prevalent obstacles that cancer survivors face. Among issues highlighted were poor information, the difficulty of working with a healthcare team, the unexpected after-effects of cancer, insurance and financial problems, the lack of support for patients, family dynamics issues, emotional issues and practical challenges for survivors.

Delegates were challenged to identify how to change the cancer experience from the point of diagnosis and beyond, and also how to fill the unmet needs of survivors.

Armstrong challenged delegates to go home and change their community.

"As cancer survivors, we have what I call 'the obligation of the cured,'" he said. "Together, we can do anything."

# Give Yourself a Gift for the Holidays

## Letter from the Director

After a very hectic but productive October, with an amazing series of events, it was such fun to be able to enjoy a special healthy cooking demonstration just in time for the holidays. The event, "Cook Smart, Eat Smart," was held November 28, at Norwalk Community College.

This live cooking demonstration showed survivors how to make stress-free, delicious, healthy desserts for the upcoming holidays. Using the right tools and a little inspiration, we learned how to make great-tasting recipes that offer healthy substitutions and choices.

Many thanks go to Sharon Aks, Independent Consultant with the Pampered Chef, and Chef Lisa Corrado of Eating Well, LLC, for such a great and delicious program.

Did you know that "stressed" is

"desserts" spelled backwards? Heck, I'll take dessert over stress any time, any where. But that got me to thinking.

What is it about the holidays that causes so many of us so much stress? Do we have unrealistic expectations of creating 'the perfect holiday' for those we love? Do we try to do too much for everybody else and forget to put aside some time for ourselves? Or, even worse, do we feel guilty if we take some time for ourselves during this extremely busy time, since it will probably mean taking time away from some other task or - worse -- person?

Anyone who has ever attended the marvelous BCSC retreats that Nina Marino and Lee Fallet facilitate has heard this mantra reiterated over and over again: "If you don't take care of yourself first, you can't take care of anyone else."

It seems like such a simple concept, and as cancer survivors, we have to take good care of ourselves so we can be around for all those wonderful, happy occasions that lie ahead for us. We need to take care of our bodies by eating right, getting those medical checkups, getting enough sleep, exercising - we know this, right? But we also have to take care of our inner selves, to maintain optimal emotional health by taking advantage of the myriad of opportunities that are available, like yoga, meditation, reiki, or just reading a book for pleasure in the privacy of your room - take your choice.

We can do this for ourselves. We should do this for ourselves. We must do this for ourselves. Not just during the holidays, but all year long.

*Susan Santangelo*

## Save the Dates

October 14, 2007

**Eighth Annual Celebrate Life! Fashion Show and Brunch**  
The Shore and Country Club  
East Norwalk, CT

October 26, 27, 28, 2007

**Weekend Retreat for Survivors**  
Mercy Center  
Madison, CT



Providing Post-Treatment Support  
and Education for Breast Cancer  
Survivors and their Families

## Focus on: Marlene Stern

### Publishes Book on Breast Cancer Experience

Marlene Stern, a five-year breast cancer survivor, has written an inspirational book about her experience with the disease, with proceeds to benefit the Breast Cancer Survival Center. The book is called *Looking Into the Mirror: How I Survived Breast Cancer, Built My Business, and Realized My Dreams*.

Marlene has dedicated her book to all the women who have survived breast cancer, women who are still fighting the disease, and women who fought the disease and lost the battle, especially her own late grandmother, Teresa Abaya Herrera.

Marlene attended the first retreat BCSC presented for young survivors in April 2005, and she said it was a life-changing experience for her. But even more, she said, was her modeling in

the October 2005 *Celebrate Life!* fashion show, which was attended by over 30 of her family and friends. "The excitement of the show and being honored as a survivor made me truly feel good about myself," she says in her book. "I felt as if I was 'coming out of the closet' as a breast cancer survivor, and knew that I could now pick up with the rest of my life."

She says that writing the book was a cathartic experience for her, and a way to give something back to BCSC as well as spread the word about its programs and services for survivors.

An order form for the book on our web page, [www.breastcancersurvival.org](http://www.breastcancersurvival.org). It would make a great holiday present for someone special.

## Take a Survey, Win a Prize

Be one of the first 20 to reply and win a pair of Sock it to Breast Cancer™ socks

### Evaluation of the Breast Cancer Survival Center Newsletter

How long have you been receiving the Breast Cancer Survival Center newsletter?	
Have you attended any BCSC programs that have been discussed in the newsletter? If not, why?	
On a scale of 1-3 please rate the following: (1= very good/relevant, 2= somewhat, 3= needs improvement/no relevance)	
Relevance of articles	
Clarity and accuracy of material	
I feel better informed after reading the BCSC newsletter	
The newsletter makes me feel connected to other survivors	
Design of newsletter	
Please complete and mail to: BCSC, PO Box 701, Fairfield, CT 06824 Or e-mail to: cancersurvival@aol.com	Comments:

## BCSC Awareness Events Inspire

The Breast Cancer Survival Center presented ceremonies in Fairfield, New Haven, and Hartford counties during October as part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The Fairfield County ceremony was *Celebrate Life!*, a concert and candle-lighting ceremony, held Monday, October 23, in the Westport Town Hall auditorium, in partnership with the Westport Young Woman's League, and was presented as part of Westport's Make A Difference Week.



Featured performers in the concert included the Westport Town Band, the Serendipity Chorale, and the Center Stage Theatre Company. Following the performances, there was a candle procession by the Westport Girl Scouts, a lighting ceremony, and the reading of names of women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer. Former Fairfield First Selectwoman Jacky Durrell, herself a survivor,

read the names.

The event's finale, sung by Cantor Deborah Katchko Gray of Ridgefield, was "Light One Candle."

The Hartford County ceremony was held in the Connor Chapel at St. Joseph College in West Hartford. The chapel was filled with luminario bags, and at the conclusion of the regular liturgy, the lights dimmed and students read the names.

The New Haven County ceremony was held in the auditorium of Milford City Hall. Luminario bags were placed all around the stage by local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, and the audience was treated to the beautiful music of the contemporary choir from St. Gabriel Church. The names were read by Mayor James Richetelli. BSCS has conducted the ceremonies since 1999.

## Breast Cancer In the News

**"Many Cancer Survivors Stop Mammographies."** More than a third of breast cancer survivors gradually stop getting annual mammographies, according to a study reported in *Cancer*, a journal published by the American Cancer Society. The results may indicate women grow complacent about medical screening once they get past the medical scare, said the study's lead author, Dr. Chyke Doubeni of the University of Massachusetts. Associated Press, 4/24/06.

**Panel Seeks Cancer Drug Warning."** Post menopausal women who take Tamoxifen to treat breast cancer face a greater risk of recurrence if they have a specific genetic variation, federal health advisers said in recommending that a warning be added to the drug's label. *The Wall Street Journal*, 10/19/06.

**"Elderly Breast-Cancer Patients May Be Undertreated, Study Finds."** Elderly women with breast cancer who receive care in community hospitals might not be getting proper diagnosis and treatment, according to a study published by *The Journal of the American Medical Association's Archives of Surgery*. The study found that mammography is underused as a screening method and, once cancer is diagnosed, many of those patients aren't treated with common therapies, including radiation and chemotherapy. *The Wall Street Journal*, 10/17/06.

**"Weight and Breast Cancer."** Women who gain weight shortly before or after menopause may increase their risk for breast cancer, a new study suggests, but losing weight after menopause may decrease their risk. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 7/12/06.

**"Younger Black Women More Prone to Deadly Cancer."** The findings suggest biology may help explain why breast cancer is deadlier in black women younger than 55 than it is in white women in the same age group. Other studies have blamed inadequate screening rates. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 6/6/06.

**"A Cancer Drug Shows Promise, at a Price Many Can't Pay."** Doctors are excited about Avastin, a drug already widely used for colon cancer, as a crucial new treatment for breast and lung cancer, too. But doctors are cringing at the price the maker, Genentech, plans to charge for it: about \$100,000 a year. *The New York Times*, 2/15/06.

# Holiday Gift Order Form

# Thank You

## BREAST CANCER SURVIVAL CENTER

Providing Post-Treatment Support and Education

*Sock It to Breast Cancer!™ socks*

*Sock It to Breast Cancer!™ bear*

*Pink Empowerment Bracelet*



Many people helped make our seventh annual *Celebrate Life!* Fashion Show and Brunch a success: Guest hosts, Robert Laska, publisher of *The Connecticut Post*, and Sara Carpenter Brown from the BCSC board; the terrific staff from Talbots in Westport, West Farms Mall, and East Harwich, MA; Dianne and Arianna Daniels for the models' makeup; Arcadia Salon, Salon K, and Hair and Company for the hair-styling, and Andy Bess for his wonderful photos.

From The Gedney Agency, our handsome male escorts: Jonathan August, Keith Chittenden, Marc Coumeri, and Nick Merolla. Special thanks to Ted Pulton, who also served as an escort for our beautiful models. A special thank you to Craig Shoop from The Gedney Agency who really makes the event happen. We're so grateful to Jim Hutchinson and the entire staff of Shore and Country Club, who make the brunch even more delicious every year. And to Marti and Bob Baker, our event hosts, and Laura Sydney for hosting our get-acquainted dessert party. Thanks to our Culinary Angels for underwriting this event: Penny and Alan Griffith, Robert and Marianne Laska, Anthony and Marlene Volpe, Catherine Shriglio, and the Friends of Annette Serniak. Also our many Culinary Cherubs: Cree McDougal Scudder, Judy and Ed O'Brien, Rosemary Wall, Barbara Virgulak, Jan Fable, Pat Wernig, Suzanne Ambriscoe, Jessie Ferris, Holly Pivor, Kathleen O'Donnell, Beth McPadden, Lucille Chizmadia, Laura Sydney-Pulton, Honorable and Mrs. G. Kenneth Bernhard, Leslie and Lois Lewis, Virginia Codeanne, Chris Gulotta, Judy Ackroyd, Michele Hubler, Stacey Sloan, Dolores Betti, Marilyn Smith, Fran Sydney, Pat Ewing, Salona Williams, Linda Michaud, Tom and Suzy Santangelo, Patti Falvey, Dr. Tom Ayoub, and Caryn MacLean. We could never have done this event without the support of our Media Sponsors, Brooks Community Newspapers and *The Connecticut Post*, and our Corporate Sponsors, Greenwich Hospital and New Alliance Bank. Our glamorous models walked to wonderful piano music provided by Wayne Hiller. Thank you to our generous raffle donors: Betsy Santangelo, Mr. and Mrs. Max Marshall, Barbara Dean, Talbots, Amanda and Cindy Perham, Laura Sydney-Pulton, Marianne Laska, P.M. Designs, Sandy Pendergast, Barbara Nutile, Prudy Stewart, Sharon Aks, Katie Reed, Ed Tunick, Perfumerie Douglas, Mary Lou DeLuca, and Rachel Karchere. And an extra big thank you to our terrific volunteers: Marianne Laska, Joan Likely-Cosenza, Laura Sydney-Pulton, Danielle Pulton, Vinny Vitale, Kelly Moran, Dianne Daniels, Arianna Daniels, Linda Michaud McGee, Sara Carpenter Brown, Barbara Pearson-Rac, Barbara Miller, Cindy Perham, Trina Barnes, Claudette Apple, Lynn Murray, Craig Shoop, Joe Santangelo, Lynn Dennis, Marlene and Jeff Stern, Sarah Silverberg, Paula Belisle and Jan Munro

For our October awareness ceremonies, special thank you's to: In Westport, First Selectman Gordon Joseloff; Second Selectwoman Shelly Kassen; Former Fairfield First Selectwoman Jacky Durrell; The Center Stage Theatre Company and Jill Jaysen; The Westport Community Band and Charles Hertz; The Serendipity Chorale and Gigi Van Dyke; Cantor Deborah Katchko-Gray; the Westport Young Woman's League, especially Liz Kasabian, Pam Troy-Kopack, Sandy Morrison, Cath Lloyd, Lori Sochol, Kristy Goodman, Jeanette Linsey, Sandy Smith, Kelly Walsh, Michelle Saunders, Ann Boberski, Litsa Ryan, Elizabeth Juviler, Jen Epstein, Rebecca Goldblatt, Korinna Weiss, Lori Corenthal, Kate Miguel and Anne Marie Fox; the Make a Difference Day Organizing Committee and Barbara Pearson-Rac; Linda Michaud; Laura Sydney; Sara Carpenter Brown; Mike Frawley from the Town of Westport; Westport Parks and Recreation and Stuart McCarthy; the Staples High School Music Department; the Staples High School Key Club; the Westport Girl Scouts and Amy Ranich; and Maurice Villency. For Milford: Marianne and Bob Laska; the staff of the Mayor's Office and Mayor James Richetelli; the members of the beautiful contemporary choir from St. Gabriel, conductor George Bepko, Bill D'Andrea, Dan Marecki, Jan Fisher, Mary Simonetti, Lori Guerrero, Steve Hodson, Charlie Schultz, Joe Fernandez, Sara Baluha, and Dorothy Fitzgerald, who also sang a beautiful rendition of "Somewhere Over The Rainbow"; Milford Girl Scouts Shannon Williams, Chyna Lipnickas, Maggie Cole, Brenna Williams, Lily Burke, Caitlin Williams, Taylor Challey, Victoria Lipnickas, Kyra Umbreit, Traci Umbreit, Balise Vitale, Caitlin Molloy, Gwen D'Andrea, and troop leaders Donna Stupak and Michelle Challey; and Milford Boy Scouts Mike Healy, Kevin Dunlevy, Kent Dunlevy, Dan Murray, and Dan Kingsley.

For St. Joseph College in West Hartford, Nell and Erika Bourgojn; Sister Beth Fischer; Judy O'Brien; student volunteers Kelley McCarthy, Susan McKenna, Amanda Coutu, Caitlin Whitham. And especially Father David for the beautiful and moving liturgy.

Selection	Quantity	Price	Total
Socks			
Trouser socks, black		\$10.00	
Sport socks, white		\$10.00	
"Meg" Bear		\$20.00	
White		\$20.00	
Light Brown		\$20.00	
Dark Brown		\$20.00	
Pink Empowerment Bracelet (Circle first choice)			
"Survivor," "Hope," "Faith," "Strength"		\$1.00	
Shipping	Under \$20	\$ 2.50	
	\$20 and up	\$ 4.50	
<b>TOTAL</b>			_____

My Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I Would Like to Donate \$500, \$250, \$100, \$50, \$25, Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please accept my tax-deductible contribution to help provide support and education to breast cancer survivors and their families.

Please make checks payable to Breast Cancer Survival Center and mail to: **BCSC, 4 Drummers Trail, Old Saybrook, CT 06475.** Thank you.

Donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

# Reflections on the Fashion Show

By Laurie Forcade

Having just had reconstructive surgery a few days before, I was tired. I was wiped out from anesthesia, unhappy with my weight, my mood swings, and most of all my new implants. I was still too sore to wear a bra and my scars were raw. But having said I'd model for the Breast Cancer Survivor Fashion Show, I arrived there relatively effervescent.

"Who needed an ultra plus-size forty-something woman with a bilateral mastectomy as a model?" I wanted to know. I'm a freak. But then another part of me said, "Large women get breast cancer, too. And they need to know they are still beautiful."

"You're kidding," my mother gasped when I told her I was modeling. "You've got to be kidding." She and my sisters didn't come to the show.

Pink ribbons--once upon a time a reminder that we were delicate little girls, now an emblem of courage in the face of political, emotional and physical struggle-- were everywhere.

And my "sisters" were at the show. Sisters I didn't know I had, in between the carnation-hued tablecloths, the hair-spray, the bright red lipstick. The elegant silver-haired woman in her 70s who had trouble walking but no problem after taking the arm of an escort down the runway. The vivacious teacher in black velvet who came all the way from Cape Cod to celebrate her survivorship. And finally the young woman from Manhattan who lifted her sweater to show me how good reconstruction could be.

I was complaining in the dressing room about the lengthy, painful expansion process and my passable but disappointingly un-Heidi-Klum-like final silicone implants



when Lisa told me her story.

"Fat girls don't get good breasts, surgeons don't think we're worth it," I whined. We discussed the pros and cons of various flaps, nips and tucks. She gave me the name of a world-class plastic surgeon in New York and proudly pointed to her big, perfect, "faux" breasts. "I want *those!*" I exclaimed.

In the lingo of the well-known Mastercard ad: Talbot's pinstripe trousers, \$120.00. Gold-toned accessory necklace: \$43.00. Renoir-quality breasts on a cancer survivor and the smile on her and her "sister's" face: Priceless. Sure, life is more important than Heidi-Klum boobs, but if you can get them in the process -- don't pass it up.

Grace, wisdom, dignity and hope illuminated the faces of all the models at the Shore and Country Club, and I know they were more stunningly gorgeous, inside and out, than any size 6, pouting, 18-year-old I've ever seen in designer silks on the cover of *Vogue*.

As one woman said to me in tears as we hugged our goodbyes, "It was all worth it because I met *you*." My sentiments exactly.

## Scenes from 2006 Survivors Fashion Show



Photos: by Andy Bess

