LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

2014 was indeed a very good year for the BCA. Thanks once again to the efforts of our outstanding staff and volunteers, the Breast Cancer Alliance was able to attain new fundraising heights and has awarded almost $1.6 million in grants for 2015. The quality and volume of grant requests continues to impress and encourage us regarding efforts to combat breast cancer. We have awarded 7 Research Grants to scientists at Penn, Penn State, Yale, Mass General, Tufts and Mount Sinai. Young Investigator grants have been given to researchers at Columbia, SUNY-Albany, and UMass Medical School. The comments of our medical reviewers confirmed that we had a very strong year for applicants: “Preliminary data very compelling,” “a very innovative idea – could transform cancer treatment,” “exceptional project by an absolutely world class team” and “novel marker, novel target, novel treatment strategy.” Through these comments, you can experience some of the excitement that we feel when we fund a proposal. In addition to the above, support for Outreach and Education projects ranged from supporting mobile mammography vans to patient advocates and psycho-social support. Finally, we are very proud of our innovative Breast Fellowship program which funds 1 year fellowships for surgeons who become specialists in breast surgery.

This year we have fellows at Memorial Sloan-Kettering, Mt. Sinai Beth Israel and Rutgers Cancer Institute. Our donors can be proud of what their dollars support.

Revenues to fund this excellent work came from many events, the largest of which is our annual luncheon and fashion show. The 2014 luncheon co-chairs, Jieun Wax and Lisa Fischer, dazzled us with the theme Branching Out, Coming Together, Aspiring to a Cure. The Hyatt looked beautiful as did the models in Brunello Cucinelli and the survivor models in fashions from Richards. We are grateful to Mitchells|Richards for their unwavering commitment to our partnership.

We kicked off Breast Cancer Awareness Month at our flag raising at Greenwich Town Hall on October 2nd. The day of festivities continued with shopping on Greenwich Avenue in a new event, “Go For Pink,” chaired by Loren Taufield.

The year wrapped up with the Holiday Boutique, chaired by Nancy Smith and Jaime Warner. It was beautiful and more successful than ever. New vendors and the addition of a special lunch buffet gave a lift to the boutique and made it fresh and new.

None of this happens without the help and support of – literally – hundreds of volunteers and supporters. That is what makes our organization special.

Thank you all for your help.

Sharon
BREAST CANCER PREVENTION: REFLECTIONS ON A EUROPEAN CONFERENCE

Yonni Wattemaker
Executive Director

Last November, BCA President Sharon Phillips and I traveled to Hasselt, Belgium. At the invitation of the European Cancer Prevention Organization, we want to learn about new research topics in the area of breast cancer prevention. At the opening of the conference, ECP President Jaak Janssens, MD, PhD, made an important statement: We should no longer be talking about breast cancer, but breast cancers.

The conference was broken into a variety of topics including adult life-style factors and early detection and screening. Presenters were highly regarded scientists from the US, Belgium, Italy, UK, Israel, France, Uganda and Germany.

While there is too much to recap from a two-day conference in one article, here are some of the areas highlighted during that time. Please note that not all of these ideas are established practices or have approval yet in the US.

1. Genistein, a soybean derivative, has been shown to severely undercut the development of mammary cancer when ingested during pre-pubescence (prior to age 15).
2. Due to the many and varied types of breast cancers, a preventative vaccine for all would be nearly impossible, but the use of individualized, targeted vaccines to prevent metastasis in patients is promising.

“...the importance of early detection cannot be overemphasized and remains one of the established methods to conquer the disease.”

The large variability in the diseases, grouped as “breast cancer,” is likely why past progress has been both slow and inconsistent, and when we segregate the types, both prevention and treatment can escalate.

Dr. Janssens explained that “the good news about breast cancer is that more women are cured than ever before. New and better treatments lead to longer survival with better quality of life, and much hope has been raised from the implementation of individualized, targeted treatments. The importance of early detection cannot be overemphasized and remains one of the established methods to conquer the disease.”

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Welcometo
Our NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

Kim Augustine
Kim Augustine is honored to join the Board after serving as a co-chair of the 2012 luncheon benefit. She attended Bryant University and graduated with a BS in Accounting. She was employed as a CFO for eight years by Ernst & Young in Hartford, CT and New York City. She also worked in Risk Management for Bayerische Landsbank in Manhattan. She and her husband Neil moved to Greenwich in 1994 where they are raising their four children. After “retiring” from her professional life to raise a family, Kim has been actively involved in local charities as well as her children’s schools.

In addition to the BCA, she has been involved with Kids in Crisis, REACH Prep and the Boys and Girls Club of Greenwich. She is a Past President of thePutnam Indian Field School Board and currently sits on the Board of Eagle Hill School. She co-chaired the Brunswick Annual Benefit in 2014, and is a member of their Parents Association, as well as Sacred Heart. Kim and her husband have been involved with the Fresh Air Fund for several years and have hosted to a 13 year old boy for the past four years.

Having lost too many dear friends to breast cancer, and seen too many family and friends battle this terrible disease, Kim is thrilled to be involved with this incredible organization, which is determined to change that.

Lisa Fischer
Lisa Fischer moved to Greenwich in September 2013, after having lived in Brussels, Belgium for 24 years, and raising three daughters abroad. Lisa was the 2014 co-chair of the BCA Benefit and is very pleased to be able to give back to a cause that she deeply cares about, having herself been diagnosed in April 2004. It has been exciting to learn about the research that the BCA funds, particularly research into therapies dealing with triple negative breast cancers. The progress is amazing. Just 10 short years ago, the medical community did not refer to her cancer as triple negative, nor understand the efficacy of certain methods of treatment.

Lisa holds an MBA from Duke University Fuqua School of Business. Prior to moving to Belgium, she worked in the marketing departments of the Pittsburgh cable franchise (formerly known as Warner Amex Cable Communications) and a fast food company in Ohio. While in Brussels, she co-chaired the publishing of a hardcover cookbook for the American Women’s Club of Brussels.

Lisa and her husband, Scott, especially enjoy the community life of Greenwich. “In a very short time, I have met amazing and very dedicated women through the BCA. I am truly honored to be asked to join the Board of the BCA, and I hope that my dedication to the cause and my participation on the board will positively impact the future of the Breast Cancer Alliance.”

Nancy Rosen
Nancy Rosen joined the Board of Directors in 2015. She has served on the Education and Outreach Committee since 2015 and has been an enthusiastic supporter for many years. Nancy has lived in Greenwich with her husband Robert since 1988 and has two adult sons.

Nancy is a retired hospital administrator having worked most recently as Vice President of Operations at NYU Medical Center. She also spent many years in hospital administration at Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Nancy is a graduate of University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she graduated with honors in biochemistry. She earned an MBA degree in health care administration from the Baruch College/Mount Sinai Medical School. Since her retirement, Nancy has been involved in many philanthropic causes including having served on the boards of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, Kids in Crisis, and the UMASS Foundation. She currently serves on the Leadership Council of the NYU Heart Rhythm Center and is an active volunteer at Planned Parenthood.

Nancy is honored to join the BCA Board, a cause which has affected too many friends and family members. She looks forward to working with these dedicated individuals to help make an impact on this devastating illness.

Loren Taufield
Loren Taufield has been actively involved in supporting the Breast Cancer Alliance over the past several years, including co-chairing the 2013 Annual Benefit, and both launching and chairing GO FOR PINK, a community event in Greenwich kicking off Breast Cancer Awareness Month beginning in 2014.

Loren is currently a consultant specializing in event management, experiential marketing and protocol having worked over 25 years in the strategic development and implementation of high profile sponsorships, community affairs and event marketing programs worldwide. Until 2008, Loren was an Executive Director and Head of Sponsorships and Events in the U.S. for UBS AG. She began her career at PaineWebber and established their sponsorship and events department which she led.

Loren has a B.S. in Economics from Boston University. In 2008-2009, she served as the underwriting chair for the Annual Ball of the Greenwich Chapter of the American Red Cross and continues to be a committee member. Since 2011, Loren has served as a member of The George Washington University Parents Campaign Philanthropy Board. She resides in Greenwich with her husband and two children.

Elisa Wilson
Elisa Wilson is honored and delighted to join the Board of the BCA at this time. Elisa has volunteered for the BCA for many years and has co-chaired the Annual Luncheon raffle committee from 2012-2014.

Elisa received her B.A. from Boston College and an M.A. and Ed.M. in Counseling Psychology from Columbia University’s Teachers College. Elisa is employed as President of the Gabelli Foundation, Inc. She also serves on the Board of Directors of Gamco Investors, Inc. (NYSE:GBL), and is a board member of the American Red Cross Metro NY North Chapter. Elisa currently sits on the President’s Advisory Council of Teachers College. She has long been a member of the Riverside School PTA and served on various committees, she is an ongoing supporter and volunteer for various other organizations including, but not limited to, the Sacred Heart, Brunswick School, The Ursuline School, and the Fairfield County Fund for Women and Girls. Previously, she served three years on the Board of the Putnam Indian Field School of Greenwich. Elisa is married to Dr. Tom Wilson and has three children.

Meg Russell
Meg Russell is honored to join the Board of Directors in 2015. Meg moved to Greenwich in 2001, after a short stint in London. She graduated from Emory University in 1990 with a BA in Political Science and then worked for a New York City non-profit which served the homeless. In the past ten years, she has become very involved as a volunteer at Brunswick School, where her two sons, Charlie and Zach, are current students and her husband, Stew, is an active alumnus.

Among other volunteer positions, she served on the Executive Committee for the school’s Parents Association. Other local non-profits where she has donated her time are Adopt-A-Dog, Kids in Crisis and The Nathaniel Wilherr Home. Meg is also a freelance writer and has recently had articles published in Senority Magazine.

Jeuen Wax
Jean Wax has been a resident of Greenwich for over ten years. She graduated from the College of Notre Dame in Maryland and started her career as a certified public accountant at KPMG. She moved to corporate finance with Rothschild Inc., followed by a senior position with WL Ross & Co. Since she left the finance sector, she has devoted her professional skills to charitable organizations. She joined the YWCA Greenwich board in 2010 and served as vice chair of the board in 2012 and 2013. She was co-chair of the Old Bags Luncheon in 2011 and 2012. As a trustee of the Couture Council of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology in Manhattan, she co-chaired the 2013 Artistry of Fashion Award luncheon. In 2014, Jeuen co-chaired the Breast Cancer Alliance Annual Benefit. In addition, she has served on various committees at the Bruce Museum, Silver Hill Hospital and Hole in the Wall Gang Camp. She has been working as a liaison for corporate giving efforts by hosting events with various sponsors. In the past six years, she has volunteered with the Good Dog Foundation. She and her three therapy dogs have been working with patients and children at Greenwich Hospital, Silver Hill Hospital, Hamilton Avenue School and New Lebanon School. She is also a volunteer for Meals on Wheels in Greenwich.

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A REVIEW
OF OUR
CELEBRATION
AS WE
BRANCHED OUT,
CAME TOGETHER
AND ASPIRED
TO A CURE

Survivors celebration

Dr. Steve Lo, Chair, BCA Medical
Advisor Board and Dr. David Gruen
Sharon Phillips, BCA President
and Frank Corvino
Margaret Sinclair, Dale Pinto, Carol Santora and William Sinclair
Sue Delepine, Courtney Olsen and Elisa Wilson

Producers of this year's event!

Dr. Barbara Ward, Mike Greenberg and
Yonni Wattenmaker, BCA Executive Director
Simi Ahuja and Nisha Arora
Nat and Lucy Day and Terry Teflou

Natasha and Massimo Caronna of Brunello Cucinelli,
Lisa Fischer and Andrew Mitchell-Namdar
Lee Woodruff, Lisa Walsh and
Staci Barber

Many of our wonderful Westchester supporters

Designs by Brunello Cucinelli

Janet Wilson, Lynn Brown, Anne Ardery and
Peggy Van Huyning
Lisa Fischer, Benefit Co-Chair
Ann Flood Granath
Sue Delapine, Courtney Olsen and Elissa Wilson

Designs by Brunello Cucinelli

Bari Merlau
Mari Ponti
Lee Woodruff, Lisa Walsh and
Staci Barber
3. In the UK, if an individual has an 8% or higher risk of breast cancer, physicians often recommend chemoprevention. Four successful trials have already been conducted using Tamoxifen and other related treatments. 

Presentation by Jack Cuzick, MD, PhD, University of London

4. A summary was presented of recent studies discussing the evidence for breast cancer–preventive effects. Omega 3, when combined with Omega 6, has been shown to have preventative properties.

Presentation by Andrea Manni, MD, Professor and Chief, Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, Penn State College of Medicine

5. In a study comparing rates of breast cancer in Israeli women versus Arabic women in Israel, a diet with more mono-unsaturated fatty acids, such as olive oil, and fewer n-6 poly-unsaturated fatty acids appears to be associated with a lower risk of cancer than a diet higher in n-6 poly-unsaturated fatty acids.

Presentation by Niva Shapira, PhD, Institute for Nutrition Research, Rabin Center, Beilinson Hospital, Israel

6. A number of presenters noted that resveratrol, found in red wine, has shown in certain studies to help prevent breast cancers, although to get the recommended amount, supplements are suggested.

Presentation by Coral A. Lamartiniere, PhD, Director of Pharmacology and Toxicology Program, Director of Integrative Biomedical Services, University of Alabama

7. A current trial with 6527 hormone receptor positive (HR+) patients in over 9 countries is being conducted. So far results suggest that the majority of those patients may be successfully treated while being spared chemotherapy.

Presentation by Ulrike Nitz, MD, Chefarztin Brustzentrum Niederrhein, Germany

8. The Oncotype DX breast cancer assay for DCIS patients, for node-positive HR+ patients or for node-negative ER+ patients, can demonstrate the likelihood of recurrence post treatment.

Presentation by Ulrike Nitz, MD, Chefarztin Brustzentrum Niederrhein, Germany

“A number of presenters noted that resveratrol, found in red wine, has shown in certain studies to help prevent breast cancers.”

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**OUR BENEFIT IS BACK IN OCTOBER!**

**20TH ANNUAL BENEFIT LUNCHEON AND FASHION SHOW**

Thursday, October 22
11am til 2pm
Hyatt Regency Greenwich
Old Greenwich, CT

**Invitations to Follow**
Hi, my name is Niko Harriton, I’m 39 years old, and I am currently being treated for breast cancer.

As I was sitting down last night to collect my thoughts for this article, my husband said to me “Did you ever in your wildest dreams think that we would be sitting down to write your story about breast cancer?,” to which I answered “Honey, you are not in my wildest dreams.”

Around Thanksgiving 2013, I felt a small bump under my armpit while shaving. Both my OBGYN and internist told me it was nothing to worry about. I was relieved and went on with my merry way. Over the next several months I still felt it but didn’t pay it much heed. In April of this past year, I decided to get final resolution on the bump. Previous experience taught me that mammograms do not show everything in women with dense breast tissue so you should also get a sonogram. So I made an appointment myself and demanded my OBGYN prescribe a mammogram and bilateral sonogram.

On April 19th 2013, I had these tests. Afterward a doctor came in and basically he told me I had cancer without saying the words “You have cancer.” I sat there in shock listening but not hearing anything. The next thing I knew was I was walking out of the office and saw my husband in the waiting area and I burst into tears.

The biopsy was done on April 21st, 2013 and on Wednesday, April 22nd, 2013 the results of my tests came in and revealed that I had breast cancer, more specifically HER 2 NEU positive breast cancer that was poorly differentiated.

Second bit of advice: DON’T HESITATE!

Next was chemotherapy. I received a regiment of six cycles of chemo that caused me to lose my hair. This was and still is a constant reminder of my illness. At this time we decided to tell our 7 and 4 year old, they were going to wonder what was wrong due to the side effects. No one explained to me how to tell my children or what to say. We decided to go with honesty. I remember sitting them down and saying “Mommy has something called cancer in her breast. Mommy had surgery to take the cancer out and would now be getting medicine that will make her lose her hair and make her sick but that will prevent the cancer from coming back.” The next day my son asked my husband, “Daddy, can I catch the cancer from Mommy?” we had taken for granted that they would know it wasn’t contagious.

My life had just changed and I had no idea. I was petrified.

My lumpectomy was on May 7th, 2013 at Sloane Kettering. To be honest, the surgery was not that bad, the worst part was waiting for the pathology to come back to determine what stage I was in. Luckily I was Stage 1, but I was told that the cancer was on its way to my lymph nodes and I had caught it just in time.

My first words of advice: BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE!

The next part was in some ways the most stressful. I had no idea what stage I was, what to do next, or where to go from diagnosis. I went on the internet, huge mistake. I thought I was doomed. My mind went into overdrive and all of a sudden I was reaching out to breast surgeons and oncologists.

My lymphectomy was on May 7th, 2013 at Sloane Kettering. To be honest, the surgery was not that bad, the worst part was waiting for the pathology to come

Continued on back cover
A few days later it came back to me from school that my son had told his whole class. This was his way of dealing. I was exposed.

Third bit of advice: YOUR CANCER NOT ONLY EFFECTS YOU BUT THOSE AROUND YOU!

At this point, I had no choice but to go public. I found myself talking very openly about my situation and experience. Because of my story, one friend went and got a sonogram and caught her cancer at a very early stage. During this time, I really got to see the best in people, so many stepped up with offers of help and support, many who I would never have expected. I also got to meet new people, some of whom were at later stages of the disease, who were there every step of the way.

I started a chemo regiment on June 4th. I won’t lie, it was not enjoyable but I always had tons of support between my family and friends. We treated each chemo session as a party with laughter and funny stories to detract from what was really going on. I finished my last chemo cycle on Sept 15th, 2013. I am continuing medication for a year and finished radiation in November. Since then I have also been hospitalized with Pneumonia and broke three ribs from coughing. Some may say this was the worst year ever, but in reality it was the best, it was the year of saving my life and now there will be many more summers I will get to share with family and friends.

Everyone says how strong I am or how much they admire me but to be honest with you I don’t view myself like that and laugh when I hear people saying this to me. I view myself as someone who did what they had to do to not succumb to this terrible disease and whose mind just went into survival mode for myself and for my family. I still felt fear and still have fear when I think of my upcoming scans. I’m not sure if everything happens for a reason, but I do know that you can turn negatives into positives, whether that was learning not to sweat the small stuff, or to conquer my fears or just to become a young advocate for sonograms for women under 40 or all of the above. I also know I will continue to overcome my fears, overcome adversity and help others do the same.