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# Between Us Women

"empowering women through awareness and education"

NOVEMBER /DECEMBER 2008

## A New Tree Planted

To recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month, speakers participated in a ribbon ceremony at the County's memorial tree on Commemoration Day, October 2.

The event was sponsored by the Alliance of Domestic Violence Agencies (Brighter Tomorrows, Suffolk County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, The Retreat, and VIBS—the Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk).

This new evergreen, in its new location on the Suffolk County North Campus in Hauppauge, replaces an earlier tree planted in 1990. That tree stood on the site of what will soon become the new Fourth Precinct headquarters of the Suffolk County Police; the earlier tree was found to be too sick to be moved.

Also on display—both outdoors for the tree ceremony, and indoors for the dinner presentation later last month—was the Clothesline Project, a visual display of T-shirts with graphic messages and illustrations that were designed by survivors of domestic violence, or their friends and families. All the colors signify a meaning: WHITE for women who have died as a



result of violence; RED, PINK or ORANGE for women who have been raped or sexually assaulted; YELLOW or BEIGE for women who were beaten; BLUE or GREEN for survivors of incest or childhood sexual abuse; PURPLE or LAVENDER for women attacked because of their sexual orientation; and BLACK or GRAY to represent handicapped abuse victims. The Clothesline Project was loaned to the County courtesy of the Suffolk County Coalition Against Domestic Violence.



## Lab Closing In on Cancer

Dr. Paula Smith, development officer and grant writer at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, was the featured speaker at "Closing in on Cancer," a special third annual Sunday brunch program hosted on October 26 by the West Islip Breast Cancer Coalition for Long Island.

Dr. Smith's topic, which she narrated in a PowerPoint presentation, was recent progress in understanding how cancer spreads—and how to treat it—at the molecular and genetic level.

More than 60 percent of research conducted at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory is cancer research; it is a National Cancer Institute-

affiliated center.

We all have oncogenes (accelerators) and tumor suppressors in our DNA, Dr. Smith said. Cancer is caused by "mistakes" (bad copies of genes) in a person's DNA—and CSHL has a tool to detect amplifications and deletions in the DNA.

It turns out that there are at least three specific types of breast cancer, according to a 15-year study in Norway that compared the DNA in 243 breast tumors with DNA in normal tissue. And each type of breast cancer has different outcomes.

Tumor cells in one type of breast cancer produce too

much of a protein called ErbB2 (also known as HER-2) which drives the cells to proliferate unchecked. Patients unlucky enough to be in this group—about one in four—have poorer prognoses and clinical outcomes than those who don't.

The use of two drugs, Herceptin and Lapatinib (whose advantage is that they are less toxic than the commonly prescribed Taxol), has greatly improved this picture but more work needs to be done. They suppress ErbB2 but are effective against less than half of ErbB2-producing tumors. Plus, patients usually develop resistance to these drugs.

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### Learn About Resources

Working harder but still finding it tough to make ends meet? Then come to the County's free community resource fair from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 19, 4:00-7:00 p.m. at the Brentwood Public Library, 34 Second Avenue, Brentwood.

Working families and individuals can meet with program specialists to learn about tax credits, energy assistance programs, counseling and family support, literacy, senior services, immunizations and health, child care subsidies, food and nutrition programs, Social Security, child support enforcement, employment and training, and Child Health Plus insurance.

Presented by Suffolk County and the Brentwood Library. For details call 273-7883, extension 347.

## Other Resources for Women Cancer Patients

Other Resources for Women Cancer Patients

Along with the need for medical treatment, any patient with a serious illness has a host of other non-medical, but nonetheless challenging needs. The need to look good, for example, despite chemotherapy treatments that often lead to hair loss. Or the need to keep a clean house—despite a lack of energy.

Fortunately, there are resources available to help women carry on a life that's as close to normal as possible.

A local textile designer named Madonna Cole-Lacy recently launched a line of "turwraps" (which can be worn as either a turban or a head-wrap) as part of her Madonna Cole Originals Dignity™ Headwear Collection. They were designed for patients of all ages, as well as hat lovers (or anyone who has bad hair days). Each is one-of-a-kind. Fabrics available range from casual to ornate.

Cole-Lacy donates 15 percent of sales to the My Time Has

Come nonprofit program, which conducts workshops for child and adolescent cancer patients. Visit

[www.madonacoleoriginals.com](http://www.madonacoleoriginals.com)

For more information call (516) 783-9178.



Continuing on the subject of beauty, the "Look Good, Feel Better" program is offered free at numerous local hospitals, with a goal of showing women how to modify their skincare and makeup routines and care for their hair (or wigs) to "look good and feel better" even while undergoing chemo or radiation. Details are available through the American Cancer Society, (631) 436-7071.

The American Cancer Society

itself has an online/catalog shop to make available headwear—wigs and hairpieces (bangs, falls, sideburns), turbans, hats, headscarves, kirchiefs—and mastectomy products (breast forms, post-surgery bras, swimsuits and camisoles). Visit [www.tlcdirect.org](http://www.tlcdirect.org) or call 1-800-850-9445.

Particularly when one is a patient, one way to simplify life is to get housecleaning help. Cancer patients can reach out to one of the cleaning services that work with the Cleaning For A Reason Foundation (877-337-3348 or

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

In Suffolk County, several private cleaning services will donate a housecleaning under this program. They can be found in the following areas: East Northport (368-8511), Rocky Point (744-4021), Southampton (283-6886), Huntington (423-4080), Sag Harbor (725-2408), and West Babylon (943-2390 or 491-7400). Be sure to mention Cleaning For A Reason when you call.

### Lab Closing In on Cancer-continued

At CSHL, a team of scientists led by Dr. Senthil Muthuswamy has just published a study identifying an enzyme called Brk that may serve as a target for future drugs developed to fight these particular tumors. According to the report, Brk helps these tumors become virulent and drug-resistant.

Their study of more than 200 patients found that overproduction of ErbB2 in breast cancer is due to a gene mutation that results in the accumulation of multiple copies of the erbB2 gene. The team found that the brk gene—which instructs cells to manufacture the Brk protein—mutated quite often in tandem with the erbB2 gene.

Brk doesn't induce cancerous proliferation by itself, but it does enhance the process, the

team found. Dr. Muthuswamy compared the cooperation between Brk and ErbB2 this way: "If ErbB2 is the accelerator that makes the car move, Brk helps shift the gear to gain more speed." The findings reinforce the need for combination therapies—drugs against both Brk and ErbB2, or Brk-inhibitors on their own. The team favors the strategy of inhibiting Brk because, since it may produce fewer unwanted side effects. (The paper will appear in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*; it was released online August 21.)

Also at CSHL, using improved technology, Drs. Mike Wigler and John Hicks have analyzed more than 600 patient samples of DNA from all 23 chromosomes. The goal is to develop a DNA biopsy for

breast cancer which is more sensitive, more accurate and ultimately less costly—and also lead to more personalized and effective treatments.

Soon to join CSHL is Dr. Mikala Egeblad, whose live imaging (which she developed) will help science understand why white blood cells, which normally kills invading cells, get essentially recruited into a tumor and "go over to the other side," helping the tumor metastasize.

Dr. Smith concluded by inviting audience members to make a reservation to tour the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory on two remaining dates this year, November 8 or November 22. The tour costs \$5; to reserve a space, call (516)367-6895.

Event chairperson was Alice Lynch.



Pat Licata, left, of the West Islip Breast Cancer Coalition, with Dr. Paula Smith from Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

After Dr. Smith's presentation, coalition president Licata presented her with a \$10,000 check for the laboratory.

For more information about the West Islip Breast Cancer Coalition, visit [www.wibcc.org](http://www.wibcc.org) or call 669-7770.

## Lab Closing In on Cancer-continued

### What is the National Women's Law Center?

If you have questions about retirement planning, tax credits, or other subjects relating to personal finance, here's another—and free—source of unbiased information:

The National Women's Law Center, headquartered in Washington, D.C., offers an ongoing series of free webinars (internet-based seminars) called the Citi Education Series on Economic Security. You can download the presentation materials and watch recordings of the sessions that have already taken place, on topics like:

- When Retirement's Approaching: What Women Over 50 Need to Know About Social Security and Retirement

Income

- Tax Credits: What Working Families Need to Know

- Planning for the Future: What Working Women Need to Know About Social Security and Retirement Savings

- When Girls Don't Graduate, We All Fail: Strategies to Help Girls Stay in School

For details about past webinars, or to find out when the next one will take place, go to [www.nwlc.org](http://www.nwlc.org).

The stated mission of NWLC is "to protect and advance the progress of women and girls at work, in school, and in virtually every aspect of their lives." Founded in 1972, NWLC uses the law in all its forms to improve women's

lives—getting new laws on the books and enforced; litigating ground-breaking cases in state and federal courts; and educating the public about ways to make the law and public policies work for women and their families.

Also available through the NWLC website are reports such as "Nowhere to Turn: How the Individual Health Insurance Market Fails Women," "State Child Care Policies: From Modest Improvement to Loss of Ground," "GAO Report Confirms More Needs to be Done to Combat Pay Inequity"—all issued in September.

### Equal Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence

New legislation extends access to civil orders of protection and other safety benefits afforded to domestic violence victims through New York's Family Court to dating couples or any other individuals who are or have been involved in a non-family, intimate relationship.

Prior to this legislation, state law only gave this right to domestic violence victims who were married, divorced, blood-related or couples with a child in common. Other victims were forced to go to Criminal Court to get an order of protection.

(Courtesy of Nassau-Suffolk Law Services Committee.)

### Better Indoor Air = Better Health

- ◆ With winter coming on, we'll be spending more time indoors. And if your residence is well-insulated, that's great for energy efficiency—but the flip side is indoor air pollution caused by toxic household chemicals.

- ◆ Here are a few tips to reducing your (and your family's) exposure to these chemicals, courtesy of the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell.

- ◆ **Household cleaners:** Avoid using cleaners that contain nonyl- and octylphenols, which are used to make alkyphenol ethoxylate(APE) detergents—suspected hormone disruptors.

- ◆ **Disinfectants:** Overuse of disinfecting products can lead to the growth of "superbugs"—bacteria that are resistant to penicillin and other common medicines. Not only that, but the Environmental Protection Agency categorizes disinfectants and antimicrobials as pesticides.

- ◆ **Lawn care and indoor pests:**

Avoid pesticides outside (children and pets can track them into the house) and inside (instead, remove food sources and use boric acid and traps).

- ◆ **Vinyl floor and wall coverings:** Flexible vinyl household products are made using PVC that may have toxic chemical additives including lead and phthalate plasticizers. These chemicals create dust and so the chemicals accumulate. Instead, choose non-PVC products.

- ◆ **Building materials:** Plywood, oriented strand board, kitchen cabinets and home insulation are all products that can contain formaldehyde, a known carcinogen. When constructing or renovating your home, choose solid woods and formaldehyde-free insulations.

- ◆ **Personal care and beauty products:** Reduce your use of nail polish and acetone nail-polish remover. Choose fra-

grance-free cosmetics.

- ◆ **Dry cleaning:** Ask your dry cleaner to offer you safer alternatives (such as liquid carbon dioxide or "wet cleaning") rather than perchloroethylene, a suspected carcinogen.

- ◆ **Moths:** Mothballs contain naphthalene or paradichlorobenzene. Instead, clean and seal wool clothes, use cedar blocks, shavings or oil.

- ◆ **Mold:** Prevent mold and the overuse of bleach by preventing moisture buildup in the first place. Make sure that water slopes away from the foundation of your home; fix leaky pipes and faucets immediately.

- ◆ **Basement and garage:** Do not leave a car running, ever (carbon monoxide can easily seep through walls and floors). If you have oil heat, have your boiler cleaned each summer. Test your house for radon.



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Visit us on the web  
(download newsletters past and present)

## New County DSS Open for Business

The Suffolk County Department of Social Services is pleased to announce the opening of the new South West Center at 2 South Second Street, Deer Park. It combines the South Shore and Wyandanch centers and provides the following enhanced client services:

- ◆ Full Department of Labor Services; registration, assessment, training and referral;
- ◆ Child Care Resource and Referral provided by the Child Care Council of Suffolk;
- ◆ The HEAP fuel site;
- ◆ A Child Support Enforcement Bureau representative;
- ◆ A dedicated drop-off window for client documentation.

The center is open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday to Friday. The general client phone numbers are 854-6600 or 854-1800 for

applications and 854-6630 or 854-1816 for active cases. You can reach the South West Center via Suffolk County Transit Bus routes S27 and 2A.

## Around and About

**Tuesday, November 18, 7:30 p.m.**—“The 7 Steps to Achieving Holiday Joy for Single Parents and all Parents.” Stressed-out? Alone? Overwhelmed? The economy not helping either? Come to this November workshop offered by the Town of Brookhaven Office of Women's Services. Presented by Ron Dilbert and Single Parent Power, at the Brookhaven Town Hall Auditorium, 1 Independence Hill, Farmingville. Fee: a bargain at \$1, collected at the door. Take control and bring joy back into your holidays. To register, call (631) 698-2074.

**Wednesday, November 19, 4:00-7:00 p.m.**—Community resource fair for working families and individuals, at the Brentwood Public Library, 34 Second Avenue, Brentwood. Free. Talk one-on-one with program specialists to learn about tax credits, energy assistance programs, counseling and family support, literacy, senior services, immunizations and health, child care subsidies, food and nutrition programs, Social Security, child support enforcement, employment and training, and Child Health Plus insurance. Presented by Suffolk County and the Brentwood Library. For more information call 273-7883, extension 347.

**Thursday, November 20, 6:00 p.m.**—“Wealth Transfer and Protecting Your Assets,” part of an ongoing Planning With Pride financial planning seminar series, at the Long

Island GLBT Community Center, 34 Park Avenue, Bay Shore. Free. For information call Robert at 665-2300 or RSVP at [www.liglbtnetwork.org](http://www.liglbtnetwork.org) under the Events menu.

**Thursday, November 20, 6:00- 8:00 p.m.**—2008 Holiday Wine Tasting Reception, fundraiser for Nassau-Suffolk Law Services Committee, at the Nassau Bar Association, 15<sup>th</sup> and West Streets, Mineola. Tickets \$50. Buy them online at [www.nslawservices.org](http://www.nslawservices.org) or call (516) 292-8100, extension 3176.

**Friday, December 5, 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**—15<sup>th</sup> annual Teen Parent Conference hosted by SNAP Long Island (formerly known as the Suffolk Network on Adolescent Pregnancy, Inc.), at Touro College-Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center in Central Islip. Students free, professionals \$40. Space is limited; early sign-up encouraged at 447-0698.

**Tuesday, November 9, 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.**—“Growing Your Small Business in a Tough Economy,” Free seminar presented by the Thypin Oltrchick Institute for Women's Entrepreneurship at FEGS. Event will take place at the TD Bank Regional Office at 45 Melville Park Road, Melville. Registration and a light breakfast between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. All seminar participants will receive resource materials. Register online on [www.yourfutureinbusiness.org](http://www.yourfutureinbusiness.org) and click

on “Register Here for Our Next Event.” FEGS is a strategic associate of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

**Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 9:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**—Eighth annual American Heart Association “Go Red For Women Luncheon,” at Crest Hollow Country Club, Woodbury. Heart health workshop (9:45 to 10:45 a.m.) followed by luncheon, auction and networking. To sponsor or reserve: (516) 777-8447.

**Saturday and Sunday, June 6 and 7, 2009**—Sixth annual LI2Day Breast Cancer Walk, starting at Smith Point County Park, Shirley. Fee \$95. Fundraising commitment \$1,000. Registration will close at 400 walkers or on May 15, 2009. For details visit [www.li2daywalk.org](http://www.li2daywalk.org).

## What is Women's Services?

The Suffolk County Executive's Office of Women's Services is a county agency that serves women in all walks of life, at all times and passages in their lives. This is done through a number of services; most are free, and all are available to everyone.

Women constitute over 51 percent of the population of Suffolk County. They are the majority population in every age group over 30. Many of these women are “head of households.” Any and all programs or services designed to empower the women of Suffolk County have a direct impact, not only on the woman, but also on the entire family, particularly the children.

The Women's Helpline is available from 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Helpline offers information, referrals to resources for further help and emotional support. The Helpline is bilingual. Calls can be anonymous and confidentiality is respected.

**Helpline: (631) 853-8222**