

bloom

Issue

10

November
2011

Reach to Recovery International - RRI

Reach to Recovery International is committed to improving the quality of life for women with breast cancer and their families.

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Countdown to Cape Town

Message from Ann Steyn

President of Reach to Recovery

Greetings to you all!

This issue of Bloom is dedicated to "Innovative Programmes and Partnerships". I think you will agree that the articles included showcase some amazing programmes and partnerships.

Who would have thought that Livestrong would partner with YMCA to deliver a 12 week physical activity programme for cancer survivors?

In addition to the physical benefits the programme also provides a supportive community environment for cancer survivors and their families to connect during treatment and beyond. This successful partnership is making a difference in the lives of cancer survivors in the United States. Read more about their work on pages three and four.

The International Breast Cancer Paddlers Commission is an umbrella organisation encouraging the establishment of breast cancer dragon boat paddling. This contributes to a healthy lifestyle and at the same time raises awareness of breast cancer. Learn more about their activities on pages five and six.

Another interesting programme linking

Palestinian and Australian Communities (page six) shows how a single volunteer can initiate a programme and help Palestinian women to openly discuss breast cancer.

Panagia Philanthropini is well known in Greece for its breast cancer and cervical screening centres. It specializes in training medical practitioners from developing settings. If you want to know what Byzantine icons, mammography and turkey legs have in common find out on page seven!

You will find plenty of photographs of the Taiwan RRI Conference in this issue. All the hard work put into this conference over the past two years resulted in three days characterised by vitality, enthusiasm, networking and learning. The Therese Lasser award went to Ranjit Kaur of Malaysia. Ranjit who is a past President of RRI truly deserved this award for her years of dedicated service both as a volunteer in Malaysia and as an administrator of the Reach to Recovery programme. Congratulations Ranjit!

Dr Jacqueline Whang-Peng was a worthy winner of the RRI Medal for Health Professionals.

Email annsteyn@reachtorecoveryinternational.org



Ann Steyn

The venue of the 17th RRI Breast Cancer Support Conference was announced during the Gala Dinner: Cape Town, South Africa will host the next conference from March 19th -23rd 2013. Please diarise the dates and start saving! It will be a conference not to miss so make sure you make your bookings early! Details can be found in this issue.

Warm Reach to Recovery Greetings to you all!

Ann Steyn



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06 Linking organisations to bridge gaps

We share the story of an Australian volunteer who started a breast cancer awareness program in Syria.

09 Countdown to Cape Town

Cape Town, South Africa, will host the 2013 17th Reach to Recovery International Breast Cancer Support Conference.

09 Countdown to Cape Town

Cape Town, South Africa, has been announced as the host city for the 2013 17th Reach to Recovery International Breast Cancer Support Conference.

10 Highlights from Taiwan

This edition of Bloom brings you photos from the 16th Reach to Recovery International Breast Cancer Support Conference held recently in Taiwan.

Submissions

Email your stories and photos to Bloom. The theme of the next edition will be 'Sustainability of Groups and Organisations'. Submissions close on January 26, 2012.

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Bloom is published by Reach to Recovery International. Contributions to Bloom are welcome, please email info@reachtorecoveryinternational.org. For more information about RRI, go to www.reachtorecoveryinternational.org.



We respectfully acknowledge the Indigenous women of our global community, the traditional custodians of our environment.

Reach to Recovery International is supported by the UICC and Cancer Council Queensland





LIVESTRONG at the YMCA is a twelve-week, small group program for adult cancer survivors. The program is conducted outside of medical facilities to emphasize that LIVESTRONG at the YMCA is about health, not disease.

The treatment of breast cancer can lead to long-term physical effects such as limited range of motion, weakness, neuropathy and lymphedema. Since the first research study on cancer patients and exercise was conducted in 1986, there has been a growing body of evidence to demonstrate that exercise during and after cancer treatment is safe and helps to minimize the adverse effects of treatment.

Access to physical activity programs designed to meet the specific wants, needs and interests of cancer survivors have been limited. In 2006 to address this gap in survivorship care, LIVESTRONG partnered with the YMCA, the nation's leading nonprofit dedicated to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility, to create LIVESTRONG at the YMCA, a twelve-week physical activity program for cancer survivors.

LIVESTRONG at the YMCA engages cancer survivors through an approach that focuses on the whole person. Participants work with trained Y staff to build muscle mass and strength, increase flexibility and endurance, and improve functional ability. In addition to physical benefits, the program focuses on the emotional well-being of survivors and their families by providing a supportive community environment where people affected by cancer can connect

during treatment and beyond.

Development of LIVESTRONG at the YMCA

In 2007, the organizations convened a group of experts in cancer survivorship—researchers, academicians, and public and private practitioners and administrators. These experts helped identify and define a set of gaps in service to cancer survivors that Ys could fill, specifically:

Target Population Gap: Ys should make an effort to understand and reach out to health-seeking cancer survivors in their communities.

Relationships Gap: Ys should seek to develop genuine, caring relationships with and among cancer survivors in their communities.

Program Gap: Ys should offer a variety of programs, activities, clubs, and events developed for and with cancer survivors.

Staff Competency Gap: Y staff should have special understanding and skills to support cancer survivors in their pursuit of health and well-being.

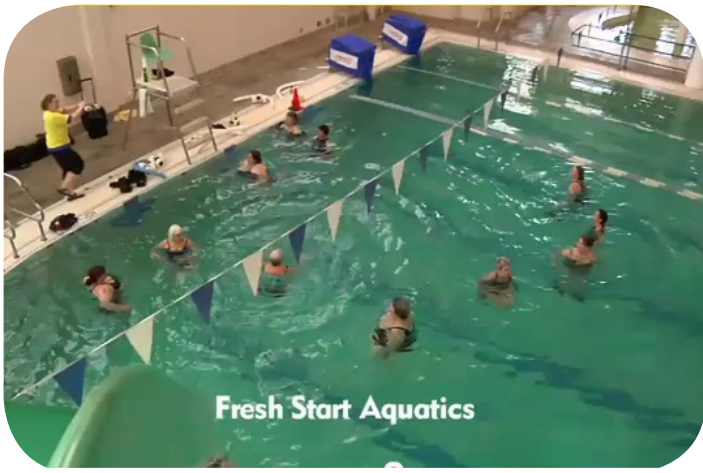
Environment Gap: Y environments should be conducive to cancer survivors' pursuit of health and well-being.

Partnerships Gap: Ys must build partnerships with targeted organizations in the cancer community to better support the cancer survivor population.

In 2008 and 2009, two cohorts of 10 YMCAs sought ways to close these gaps, including piloting physical activity programs for cancer survivors using the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's (IHI) "Breakthrough Series."

IHI is an evidence-based model designed to help organizations achieve breakthrough innovations to better meet the needs and interests of their constituents. Through this formal learning process, participating Ys worked together to develop leading practices and its signature program, LIVESTRONG at the YMCA. These leading practices now comprise a 6-month learning and implementation process that Ys must commit to in order to offer LIVESTRONG at the YMCA.

Ys chosen to participate in this learning and implementation process must meet minimum criteria, demonstrating their capacity and willingness to develop and sustain LIVESTRONG at the YMCA. After selection, Ys engage in activities to close service gaps, including creating and/or enhancing partnerships in the oncology community, training program leaders, and modifying the environments in their Ys. Participating Ys must agree to follow program standards, including ensuring required staff competencies and offering the pilot LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program at no charge to participants.



As a result of their commitment and focus on cancer survivors, Ys have achieved some notable organizational changes:

- Program Proliferation: Many Ys are Associations, made up of several branches, with 1-3 branches agreeing to implement the program. Upon seeing the success of their colleagues, leaders at non-participating branches often seek to become involved, spreading the program organically throughout the Association
- Expansion of Programs: Recognizing that they could meet additional needs of cancer survivors and their loved ones, many Ys expand their program offerings. Several, like YMCA of the Treasure Valley in Boise, Idaho, now offer a menu of cancer survivorship programs, including yoga, aquatics, a family cancer program, a cancer lecture series, a support group for caregivers, and cancer screening events.
- Partnership Development: Though the Y has long been a key community

member, it had never before been seen as a credible player in the field of cancer survivorship resources and support. Having developed partnerships with local hospitals, oncology centers, and cancer service organizations like the American Cancer Society, the Y is becoming known in local communities as a valued and respected partner in the long-term care of cancer survivors.

- Increased Volunteerism: Many LIVESTRONG at the YMCA participants seek to give back to the program that has meant so much to them after their participation.
- Membership Conversion: The majority of LIVESTRONG at the YMCA participants are non-members, many never having been physically active. Following their completion of the program, many participants elect to continue their health and well-being journey with the Y by becoming members.
- Laying the Groundwork for Work with Other Special Populations: Having

proved their ability to address the needs, wants, and interests of cancer survivors, Ys are now being invited to the table to apply their expertise to other special populations, including those with diabetes, MS, and heart disease and stroke survivors.

The number of YMCAs around the country that make the commitment to become a place of support in their communities for cancer survivors by offering LIVESTRONG at the YMCA continues to grow. By the end of 2011, LIVESTRONG at the YMCA will be offered at 86 Ys around the country and approximately 6,000 cancer survivors have participated in the program nationwide. YMCA of the USA and LIVESTRONG plan to continue to engage Ys in the 6-month learning process in order to deliver LIVESTRONG at the YMCA to additional communities. With Ys in more than 2,600 locations, serving over 10,000 communities, the YMCA and LIVESTRONG are poised to make a real difference in the lives of cancer survivors throughout the country.

**For more information, please visit
LIVESTRONG.org/YMCA**



Women affected by breast cancer participating in a Dragon Boat Racing event.

Paddle up with Dragon Boat Racing!

Across the globe, many breast cancer survivors have embraced the sport of Dragon Boat Racing. For many, there is a significant change of pace following treatment and they are now faced with rebuilding their health and fitness.

Breast cancer survivor dragon boat paddling began at the University of British Columbia, in Vancouver, Canada in 1996. Dr. Don McKenzie, a Professor in the Department of Sports Medicine and exercise physiologist challenged the prevailing medical thinking that women treated for breast cancer should avoid rigorous upper body exercise for fear of developing lymphoedema, a debilitating and chronic side effect of treatment. He developed a programme to determine the impact of exercise on breast cancer survivors, choosing dragon boat paddling as the epitome of strenuous, repetitive upper body exercise. He trained twenty four breast cancer volunteers in a gym for three months, introduced them to dragon boats and taught them paddling techniques. At the end of the three month season on the water none of the volunteers had lymphoedema.

While Dr. McKenzie's medical experiment/project was complete, the women found they were fitter, healthier and happier. They loved the camaraderie and support of their fellow paddlers and had regained control of their lives. They realised that dragon boat paddling could become a means to raise awareness of breast cancer and of the ability of survivors to lead normal lives. They named their team 'Abreast In A Boat' and invited other survivors to share their exciting experience.

Where does the International Breast Cancer Paddlers Commission Fit?

Over the years the movement progressed to other areas in Canada and was introduced to other countries by breast cancer survivors who saw the benefit for survivors. These inspirational individuals started communicating across the miles, providing much support and encouragement to see other survivors reap the benefit of dragon boating and the health and fitness benefits it provided. Special mention should be made also to the amazing awareness made to the public on breast cancer.

Since 1996, as more and more interest came about we saw representatives from different countries joining together to paddle together in different places including Canada, Australia, Italy, Penang, New Zealand, Singapore, Poland and the United States. In 2005 a celebration of the start of Abreast In A Boat occurred in Vancouver, Canada – an international event with over 2000 breast cancer survivors from around the world. Following this festival Australia hosted 'Abreast in Australia' in

2007, and more recently Peterborough, Canada in 2010 (both of which had over 2000 participants). Each festival provided breast cancer survivors with the opportunity to network, attend workshops, paddle and celebrate life! The next international festival will be held in 2014 – the venue is yet to be announced.

During this time it became apparent that we need to ensure international festivals continue to promote participation and inclusiveness – this is where the IBCPC comes in.

What is the IBCPC?

The IBCPC is an international umbrella organisation whose mandate is to encourage the establishment of breast cancer dragon boat teams, within the framework of participation and inclusiveness. We support the development of recreational dragon boat paddling as a contribution to a healthy life style for those diagnosed with breast cancer.

As the breast cancer dragon boat movement grows internationally, we have a unique opportunity to raise awareness about the disease and about life after breast cancer. We know a full and active life is possible. The IBCPC was created to spread this message. Together we are stronger, our voices are louder and the message is clearer.

Being part of the IBCPC provides breast cancer survivors with the opportunity to network with international teams. This enables the teams to share information, receive regular newsletters and updates, and also to share best practices with other teams and to interact with fellow paddlers around the world.

Paddles Up!

Jo Parry
Vice President, IBCPC

Find out more!

If you would like to learn more about IBCPC or get in contact with a team in your area, visit our website or email us.

You can also follow us on Facebook!



Denise McArthur (second from left) at a breast cancer awareness community evening in Yarmouk Camp.

Bridging gaps in breast cancer support

Having survived early breast cancer, Australian woman Denise McArthur decided it was time to accept a different kind of challenge...

I volunteered with Australian Volunteers International (AVI) to work as an English Language Teacher Trainer with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the UN branch that supports Palestinian refugees.

In January 2009, I arrived to my new home, the Palestinian camp of Yarmouk, in Damascus, Syria, where I was to live and work for the next 18 months. Syria hosts more than half a million Palestinian refugees, as well as refugees from other countries.

At that point, I had no idea how my role was going to develop and expand.

During workshops and discussion groups with the Palestinian English teachers and conversations with Syrian medical oncologists and community people, I learnt more about people's awareness and attitudes towards cancer. Understandably, cancer was thought of in a very negative way. A general lack of awareness had contributed to a level of secrecy surrounding this disease and 'death' was the first word that most people associated with cancer.

As in Australia, breast cancer is the number one cancer for women in Syria. However, in Syria, a higher percentage of women are presenting at an advanced stage and young women are heavily represented. Also, there is an increasing number every year.

I successfully applied for some funding from Australia (AVI and Planet Wheeler) and this was supplemented and supported by UNRWA. This enabled me to co-ordinate a Breast Cancer Awareness Program utilizing my education and Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) Community Liaison skills combined with my personal knowledge and experience. The grant from Australia provided funding for; the printing of brochures, posters, invitations, pink ribbons on health message cards, a community event and the provision of a number of mammograms. The materials that were produced incorporated Palestinian women's embroidery designs.

UNRWA in Syria, decided to include Breast Cancer Awareness in their Human Resources Work Plan – an incredible step. Funding and support from UNRWA allowed us to implement a 'Training of Trainers' (ToT)

program and Breast Cancer Awareness talks for all the camps in Syria, thus ensuring sustainability of the program. My life became very busy co-ordinating, preparing materials and implementing all the facets of the program with the support of UNRWA staff, designers, translators, community workers and a team of specialist doctors from the Syrian Senology (Breast Cancer) Society.

The awareness talks, ToT sessions and community evening, a total of 14 sessions, enabled the provision of information about 'when and how to check', 'changes to look for', 'the importance of early detection', 'ways to reduce risk' and 'statistics'. Sessions also included the showing of the film, 'Fatenah', a film produced in West Bank, about a young woman in Gaza and her life after being diagnosed with breast cancer. Question time was also a feature of every session. The women were very keen to hear about my experiences with breast cancer, it was unusual for someone to speak publicly about their experience. In fact, I believe my openness encouraged more discussion. The sessions proved to be very popular and were mainly attended by women, and a

few men, from the Palestinian community. However, news of the program had spread so women from the Syrian community and other refugee communities, such as the Iraqi and Somalian community, were also welcomed.

At the final community event before my departure, the Palestinian Women's Committee hosted a Community evening in Yarmouk, at which two trainees from the ToT program spoke with the women, along with specialist doctors' support and input from another survivor.

At the end of the evening, another survivor approached and hugged me and told me her story. It was a very emotional end to the evening and the awareness program for me.

I was thankful for the support from UNRWA, the people of Syria and Australia who helped make the program successful.

Denise McArthur

Today Denise is teaching English to refugees and migrants in Brisbane, Australia, and running breast cancer awareness sessions.

Destination Greece



What do Byzantine icons, mammography machines, and turkey legs all have in common?

These are all items that can be found within the walls of 'Panagia Philanthropini', the Ormylia Foundation's Centre for Disease Prevention and Medical Research.

Panagia Philanthropini is a member of the International Cancer Screening Network, the European Breast and Cervical Cancer Networks, and the European Cervical Cancer Association.

Since 2000 at the initial behest of the European Union, the Center has specialized in the training of medical practitioners from developing settings, employing the help of internationally recognized experts as faculty members.

Combining theory and faculty lectures with hands on experience and practicum workshops, practitioners experience a holistic approach to training, interacting with populations often not too different

than their own and focusing on the neediest segments of society who do not have access to screening otherwise.

This past month, Panagia Philanthropini has been blessed with yet another successful training program, bringing together participants from six countries and faculty members from three.

With financial support from the Susan G. Komen Foundation For the Cure and equipment provided by Hologic, Inc., Panagia Philanthropini was able to host more than 50 people. This year, the international breast care workshop had an interactive lecture style, personal consultation for case studies, and even

biopsy guided MRI practice on a turkey leg stuffed with olives practitioners left satisfied and energized.

In this way, the Ormylia Foundation's Center for Disease Prevention and Medical Research enable practitioners at other centers to provide the same quality care and love that Panagia Philanthropini seeks to provide for all.

By simultaneously providing breast cancer care for the surrounding area and training international practitioners, Panagia Philanthropini desires to wholeheartedly contribute to the global fight against breast cancer.



Snapshot from South Africa

In early September Representatives of Reach to Recovery in Johannesburg, South Africa, celebrated the launch of the October Women's challenge at a special breakfast.

They were joined by athletes, dignitaries and supporters at a colourful event resplendent with spring flowers.

Reach to Recovery was the fortunate recipient of the funds raised from annual the fundraising event.

Funds raised will go towards enhancing Reach to Recovery programs in South Africa.



Breast cancer survivors Dorothy Lewis, Rachel Katz, Cherry Hart and Beulah Jankelowitz attended the launch.

Online support connects survivors to services

Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) is taking a new approach to user-generated content available to members through its website.

Not only does the Network offer members an online peer-support network where they can find and connect with others affected by breast cancer, it also actively seeks out recommendations from members about support services in their local communities that they have found beneficial.

The idea for the Local Services Directory, as it is called, came from BCNA's members. It has been designed to help people find services such as:

- A hairdresser who is understanding and will provide assistance and a private space for a woman who wants her hair shaved.
- A specialist lymphoedema massage therapist.
- Counselling services that extend to families as well as those who have been diagnosed with breast cancer.
- Wig and prosthesis suppliers.
- Breast care nurses and other health professionals.

Local knowledge is key to the success of the Directory, so members are encouraged to submit and maintain their own entries, and service providers can also submit entries for the directory.

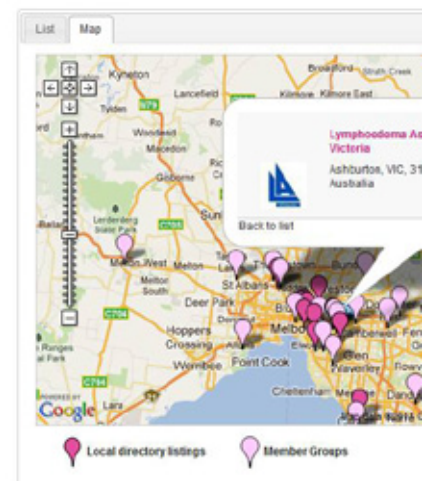
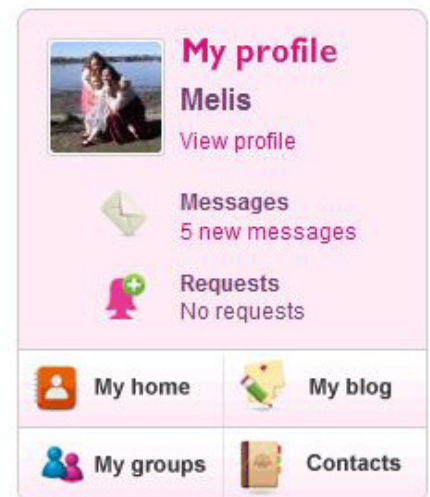
Users can search the directory by:

- Keyword e.g. wigs, hairdresser.
- Categories e.g. Health services, Emotional wellbeing, Physical wellbeing, Practical support or Products.
- Location eg. distance of 3, 5, 10, 30 and 100kms from a specific postcode.

The online network is another key initiative that helps BCNA members connect and stay in touch. Members can use the network to:

- Connect with others of similar experience, regardless of location.
- Set up a profile and personal blog to keep a record of their breast cancer journey.
- Create and join online interest and support groups
- Use the privacy settings to control who can access their information and the content they create.

BCNA has provided these projects as part of the 'Supporting Women in Rural Areas Diagnosed with Breast Cancer' Program, funded by the Australian Federal Government.





17th REACH TO RECOVERY INTERNATIONAL
BREAST CANCER SUPPORT CONFERENCE
20 – 22 MARCH 2013
CAPE TOWN
SOUTH AFRICA

Together We Reach for South Africa in 2013!

Mark your diary to be in Cape Town, South Africa, for
The 17th Reach to Recovery International Conference
from March 19 to 22 in 2013.

Cape Town, South Africa, has been announced as the venue for the 2013 17th Reach to Recovery International Conference, to be held from March 19 to 22 in 2013.

The bid was not just for South Africa but for AFRICA and the African delegates present were delighted that the 17th RRI Conference would be the first International Breast Cancer Conference to be held in Africa .

Centuries ago Pliny the Elder said “Out of Africa always something new”, and we can promise you a conference that will live up to that!

The theme of the conference is TOGETHER WE REACH and we intend to look at breast cancer from the perspectives of the patient (both the newly diagnosed and those with metastatic spread) the survivor, the partner, the family, the community, the breast cancer activist and the health profession. All those components reaching together will improve the quality of life for women.

This will be a conference with content that will appeal to women wherever they live in the world. We will reach for :-

- *better knowledge of breast cancer
- * better understanding of the needs of lower resource areas,
- * improved services delivery and support for patients, survivors and families,
- * sustainable solutions that can be used across borders
- * increased network opportunities to facilitate skills and knowledge transfer and
- * empowering survivors to be advocates for their rights

Pre-conference workshops will include workshops designed for health workers associated with breast cancer as well as for R2R members.

Importantly there will be time to enjoy one another's company and to experience the beauty of Cape Town.

There are plenty of high quality hotels

within comfortable walking distance of the convention centre and shopping at the world famous Waterfront is on the doorstep!

We invite you to a truly memorable African event!

In the words of Nelson Mandela “Few places in the world offer you that special hospitality, for which the South Africans have become famous – we invite you with open arms to our wonderful country –and our continent.”

See you all in March 2013!

**Visit
the RRI
website
to find out
more!**



邁向新境界

REACH TOWARDS A NEW HORIZON

台灣
Taiwan



Reach Towards a New Horizon

16th Reach to Recovery International
Breast Cancer Support Conference

Highlights from Taiwan!

In mid-November, breast cancer survivors from around the world converged on Taiwan for the **16th Reach to Recovery International Breast Cancer Support Conference**. In this edition of Bloom, we share just some of the Conference highlights with you...





Visit the conference website to see the full photo album!
www.reachtotherecovery2011.org

Reach Towards a New Horizon

16th Reach to Recovery International
Breast Cancer Support Conference



Reach Towards a New Horizon

16th Reach to Recovery International
Breast Cancer Support Conference



Ann Steyn and Jeff Dunn present Ranjit Kaur with the Terese Lasser Award



Ranjit Kaur of Malaysia was presented with the Terese Lasser Award and Dr Jacqueline Whang-Peng was awarded the RRI Health Professional Medal (below right)



Please visit the conference website
<http://www.reachrecovery2011.org/Presentations.asp>
to view the conference presentations!

Global Kitchen

This edition, Global Kitchen brings you a dish from Africa



Welcome to Global Kitchen, where we feature exotic recipes and home cooking from cultures around the world.

Kachumbari

Kachumbari is Kenya's favorite salad and is usually served alongside main meals or snacks. It is similar to South America's salsa due to its similarities.

Ingredients

- 1 red or green chilli
- 1/2 cup finely chopped coriander leaves
- 2 small onions thinly sliced
- 5 tomatoes thinly sliced
- Juice of 1 lime
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- Pepper and salt to taste

Method

Place the sliced tomatoes, onions, chilli and chopped coriander into a large serving bowl.

Add the lime juice and olive oil; toss the mixture.

Season the kachumbari with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Kachumbari is ready. Serve immediately.



If you have a recipe to share, please email info@reachtorecoveryinternational.org

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EVENTS

NEW ORLEANS, USA February 2012:

C4YW: The Annual Conference for Young Women Affected by Breast Cancer

February 24 - 26, 2012

Go to <http://www.c4yw.org/>

VIENNA, AUSTRIA March 2012:

8th European Breast Cancer Conference

March 21 - 24, 2012

Go to www.ecco-org.eu/Conferences-and-Events/EBCC-8/page.aspx/2163

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA March 2013:

The 17th Reach to Recovery International Breast Cancer Support Conference

March 20 - 22, 2013

Go to <http://www.reachtorecovery2013.org>

Our mission

Reach to Recovery International is built on a simple yet universal principle: a woman who has lived through breast cancer and gives of her time and experience to help another woman confronting the same experience is a valuable source of support. Reach to Recovery International is committed to working to improve the quality of life for women with breast cancer and their families through a wide range of services offered worldwide.

To contact RRI please email info@reachtorecoveryinternational.org or visit the website. The material published in Bloom does not necessarily express the views of RRI but is provided for the information of readers.

