

# Breastlink Matters

Quarterly Newsletter

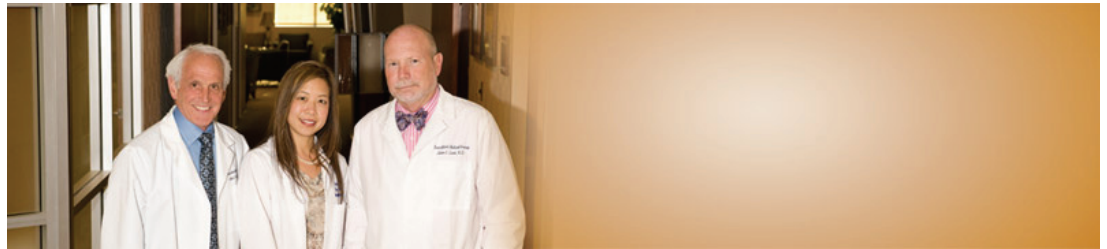
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## **Breastlink at The Breast Care & Imaging Center of Orange County offers comprehensive breast care services in one location**

Typically, when a woman has her annual mammogram and an abnormality is found, the process by which she pursues further diagnosis and treatment can be a frustrating and anxiety-ridden period, often endured for weeks and sometimes months. She must pursue referrals and tests; investigate treatment options with multiple physicians in various locations. Often this leaves the patient confused, discouraged and uninformed.

Breastlink at The Breast Care and Imaging Center of Orange County is the solution to alleviating this anxiety. By providing a comprehensive approach to diagnosing and treating all forms of breast cancer and breast disease and by combining focused breast disease expertise, including imaging, interventional procedures, medical oncology, surgery and second opinions, Breastlink is offering an efficient and comprehensive solution for women in an environment that they can trust.

As imaging is essential to the continuum of breast care, Breastlink can now utilize state-of-the-art equipment for mammograms, breast MRI, stereotactic MRI and ultrasound guided biopsies and other radiology services that are integral in identifying and determining the most favorable courses of action in a woman's treatment. The Breast Center is fortunate to have an esteemed team of prominent radiologists, surgeons and oncologists all working side by side for the benefit of the patient. Dr. June Chen, breast radiologist; Dr. John West, breast surgeon; and Dr. John Link and Dr. James Waisman, breast medical oncologists all make up the team of Medical Directors at the Center. The team completes the continuum of optimal care by delivering comprehensive, individualized treatment, partaking in treatment planning meetings and participating in clinical research. Women are living longer after their initial diagnosis therefore bone and cardiovascular health are addressed as important issues, as well as diet, exercise, sexuality and body image. Breastlink focuses on the whole woman, views metastatic breast cancer as a chronic disease and embraces quality of life and survivorship.

According to the American Cancer Society, women living in North America have the highest rate of breast cancer in the world. Following skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States. With an emphasis on providing a top quality Breast Center for women, Breastlink welcomes patients to a warm, caring environment. The goal of the very passionate and dedicated staff working at Breastlink at The Breast Care & Imaging Center of Orange County is to make the patient's experience the best one possible.

**Breastlink at The Breast Care & Imaging Center of Orange County is located at 230 South Main Street, Suite 100, Orange, CA 92868. To schedule an appointment, inquire about a second opinion or to receive more information call 714-541-0101.**



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# CANCER FOUNDATIONS SUPPORTING YOUR COMMUNITY



## Breast Cancer Care & Research Fund *By Michele Rakoff, Executive Director* Care, Advocacy, Research, Education

Breast Cancer Care & Research Fund's mission is to educate and to promote clinical research, access to quality care and advocacy for women with breast cancer and their supporters.

Our commitment is to:

Care- targeting populations including the underserved, minorities, young women living with breast cancer and metastatic patients

Advocacy- educating and involving advocates in every aspect in the fight to end breast cancer

Research- providing information on clinical research and educating patients about participating in clinical trials

Education- providing information to the community through conferences, community forums, website and educational materials

We offer scholarships for survivor/advocates to attend national meetings to learn the science of breast cancer, understand public policy issues and join other survivors in the fight against breast cancer. The information learned is brought back to educate the public through community lectures and written articles on our web site.

BCCRF is developing a mentoring program for young women facing breast cancer and their families. The Young Women's Advisory Council was formed to help develop this needed program.

Our new website will be launched this fall to provide a comprehensive listing of research articles, resources, advocacy information, calendar of events and even a section "For You". If you are interested in participating in any of our programs or lending your support, please contact us at 310-927-7606 or visiting our website at [www.breastcancercare.org](http://www.breastcancercare.org)



## Breast Health Awareness Foundation

*By John West, MD, Chariman*

Despite remarkable advances in the treatment and understanding of breast cancer, we still commonly encounter women whose diagnosis was delayed, and as a result, the odds for survival are reduced. Our experience suggests that at least 20% of women diagnosed with breast cancer in Orange County could have been diagnosed at an earlier stage.

To meet this challenge, we have created the Be Aware Foundation. Our mission is to motivate and inspire women to consistently follow early detection guidelines. The program has three basic components.

Peer education: Taught by a registered nurse and supported by a breast cancer survivor, this program provides basic information on mammography guidelines, breast self-examination, high risk screening, and other early detection strategies.

Web site: This web site provides comprehensive information on early detection and presents real life stories that are filled with inspirational messages.

E-mail reminder: Women are sent monthly reminders to do BSE and yearly reminders for mammograms. The reminders contain brief messages of information or inspiration with links to our website.

The Be Aware program saves lives, but to meet its life-saving potential, we need your support. Visit our web site at [www.beawarefoundation.org](http://www.beawarefoundation.org) or call us at 714-915-3101.



*By Jean Sedbrook, Executive Director*

I am extremely pleased to introduce you to the Cordelia Knott Center for Wellness, a 4,000 square foot, state-of-the art facility, located in Orange, California. The Center, which opened in October 2002, is dedicated to healing and health and offers programs and services to cancer patients to complement mainstream medical care.

The Wellness Center has three distinct areas of specialty. The Moretti Family Resource Library, a community education lending facility, contains over 1,600 books, periodicals, tapes, and CD/DVD. Material is available in English and Spanish plus Chinese, Korean, and Thai.

Our retail boutique, Irene's Shop on Main, offers a wide variety of specialized products designed for cancer patients such as hats, wigs, bras and prosthetics plus a full line of gift items.

Support groups and wellness programs are held in Johnson Hall. Many of our classes are designed for cancer patients. Past programs include Look Good/Feel Better, skin care before and after treatments, caring for others and eating well during and after cancer treatment. We also provide classes, such as meditation, tai chi, drum circle and yoga, and we encourage the healthy community to join us.

The Center for Wellness is supported by the Cordelia Knott Wellness Foundation through charitable contributions, annual fundraising events, as well as grants and corporate underwriting.

If you would like more information about our services or would like to receive our program, please call the Program Director, Judy Grant at 714 541-9355.

# John S. Link, MD



Breast Medical Oncologist

I feel so fortunate that I enjoy being a medical oncologist specializing in the care of women with breast disease. There was a time, when I was twenty that I questioned whether I would go into medicine. My beloved track coach at USC developed a fatal cancer and died during my sophomore year. Naturally I was devastated and I questioned whether I could become a physician. At that point I switched from pre-med and became an English major. As I matured over the next two years, I had second thoughts and decided I did desire to become a physician, but not a medical oncologist! Ironically, that is what I became. Ultimately, I decided if I was going to be a doctor, I wanted to make a difference in people's lives.

I happened to enter practice at the very time that treatment of breast cancer rapidly evolved from a "single treatment disease" into a disease that required a multidisciplinary team approach including radiology, surgery, medical oncology, psychotherapy and research. That was 1980. The cure rate then was 50 percent, now it approaches 85 percent. This progress has been due to earlier detection and clinical research. I found myself being consulted by newly diagnosed breast cancer patients to help them make treatment decisions and also provide second opinions. Additionally, I became keenly interested in breast cancer clinical research and consequently involved in establishing one of the first comprehensive breast centers in the country.

Since then I have been fortunate to have participated in the development of several comprehensive breast centers in Southern California. I am excited about moving forward by participating in innovative research and breakthrough treatments for newly diagnosed as well as for metastatic breast cancer patients. The next stage in my career with Breastlink and RadNet will further refine this breast cancer care model.

With our team of highly trained and dedicated experts in their fields, our goal is to develop a coordinated system of breast care centers of excellence that use state-of-the-art technology and deliver optimal care, which are not hospital based, are cost effective and focus on the care and well being of our patients. We will continue to participate in clinical research so our patients have access to the latest and most effective treatments. Today women are living longer as survivors and breast cancer is becoming a chronic disease for many women.

There is much to be done and progress to be made towards the goal of curing breast cancer. I really do feel blessed that I am able to continue to take care of women and men with this disease and I have no intention of stopping until the battle is won.

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**Dr. John Link** is a medical oncologist dedicated to the care of women with breast cancer. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from the University of Southern California (USC) and went on to graduate USC School of Medicine. He completed his Internship and Residency at USC, an additional residency at Memorial Medical Center of Long Beach and Fellowship in Medical Oncology at USC. Dr. Link founded one of the first comprehensive diagnostic and treatment centers at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center in 1985 and Breastlink Medical Group, Inc. in 1995. In 1998 he founded the Breast Cancer Care & Research Fund, a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate and to promote clinical research, access to quality care and advocacy for women with breast cancer and their supporters. Dr. Link conducts research, writes books, lectures and delivers "optimal care" to his patients. Patient care is his top priority.

# John West, MD



Breast Surgeon

Two major events have had a profound impact on my medical career. The first was the case of an 8 year-old boy who bled to death in a local emergency room. This needless death led me to become an advocate for the development of an organized system of trauma care. After years of effort, a national system of trauma care centers was created, and thousands of lives have subsequently been saved.

The second event occurred 25 years ago, when a woman came to me with tears in her eyes: she stated that she had found a lump in her breast 3 months prior, and it took until the previous week for her to receive a diagnosis. "Now", she said, "they want to do a mastectomy". We were ultimately able to save her breast with excellent cosmetic results. Her story tugged on my heart strings. I knew that the problem of delayed access and inefficiencies of care were solvable problems. My personal dilemma was to determine if I was ready to revise my career plans and meet this challenge.

Obviously, I did make the commitment to proceed, and in 1988 we opened our original Breast Care Center. We brought together experts in the fields of breast imaging, breast surgery, and oncology. The service model was simple: get the patient into the center within a day of her phone call, and provide her with answers on the first day of her visit. We provided an integrated approach to care that included comprehensive emotional support.

We have now been in the business of providing optimal breast care for over 20 years. Based on this extensive experience, we are now taking breast care to a new level of quality and efficiency. We have recently created Breastlink at The Breast Care & Imaging Center of Orange County that focuses exclusively on the entire spectrum of breast care. We have brought together medical experts in all fields of breast care; radiology, surgery, medical oncology and research. Each of the physicians selected is a recognized authority in the field, and each is dedicated to creating a world class breast care and research program.

Another important lesson that we have learned in the past 20 years is that the optimal care of patients with breast problems is becoming increasingly complex. Issues such as providing state-of-the-art breast imaging and information technology are daunting. In addition, managing a breast care program that involves integration of multiple complex services can be overwhelming. The bottom line was that in our previous breast center, an increasing proportion of doctors' time was being directed away from patient care to solve management problems.

We have resolved this problem in a unique manner that may have a profound influence on how breast care is practiced in the future. We have recently joined forces with RadNet, the largest supplier of women's imaging services in the U.S.A. The RadNet organization is widely known for its efficiency in providing high quality women's imaging service. RadNet has recently made a major commitment to extend its service model to include the full spectrum of breast care, from well-women services to the care of women with advanced breast cancer. Their ultimate commitment is to help us create the world's finest breast care center.

We are obviously quite excited about the future and are convinced that these bold steps to upgrade the quality of breast care will set the standard for the future. We are thrilled to be part of this exciting process, and are anxious to share our vision and services with the community.

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**Dr. John West** is a general surgeon by training who became fascinated with the multidisciplinary team approach to breast cancer care in the mid 1980's. His previous experience as a pioneer in the development of regional trauma systems set the stage for his interest in developing a team approach to breast care. He opened Orange County's first breast care center in 1988, and over the past 20 yrs has been on the cutting edge of developing a team approach to the care of patients with breast problems. Dr. West did his undergraduate work at U.C. Berkeley, and continued medical and surgical training at U.C.S.F. Dr. West has been named a "Best Doctor in America" and has been recognized as one of the "Best Doctors in Orange County". He has been the lead author in 20 peer- review articles and has written two books. Dr. West's interests include physical fitness, gardening, and scuba diving. He is a workaholic who often jokes that his favorite saying is "Thank God it's Monday."

# James R. Waisman, MD



Breast Medical Oncologist

Since I was 8 years old I wanted to be a physician. My father was an orthopedic surgeon and I was drawn to the thrill of seeing young children who were crippled from polio and cerebral palsy successfully helped by my father's surgery. As I grew up I learned that these successes were attributed to a team of people; a surgeon, a nurse, a physical therapist, a psychologist, a brace maker, a parent and a teacher. It took a lifetime commitment of coordination and communication to help these children who suffered due to their chronic debilitation and rehabilitation needs, often with recurrent problems. When I decided to become an internist and then a medical oncologist, I remained compelled by the challenges to patients and their families dealing with chronic illness. So in 1982, when I became part of the first multidisciplinary breast center in California, the Van Nuys Breast Center, my childhood dream to substantively address the needs of patients suffering with life altering illness was actualized.

The diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer has changed significantly since 1982. Breast conservation became an alternative to mastectomy, breast reconstruction evolved beyond implants, hormonal therapies and chemotherapy expanded beyond a few drugs with limited successes to many drugs with much more success and many fewer side-effects. Breast imaging was revolutionized and with better mammography, ultrasound and breast MRI, patients' cancers were found earlier resulting in superior outcomes. All of this has led to a 50% improvement in the breast cancer cure rate compared to 30 years ago. Because of new research into molecular genetics and biology, we have the ability to identify "targets" for diagnosis and treatment that are the heralds of a new era in which we can routinely use the word "cure" for most women diagnosed with breast cancer. For women living with advanced breast cancer, we are now treating them as having a "chronic" disease, similar to diabetes and heart disease, in which "life goes on" even as the disease is treated.

As we grow in our understanding of the complexity of early and accurate diagnosis and treatment, the need for more sophisticated technology becomes even more central in the delivery of state-of-the-art care. Physicians, nurses, therapists and researchers must function collaboratively in an environment appropriately called a center of excellence. After more than 25 years as a breast medical oncologist, it is gratifying to be partnered with RadNet, a company committed to the vision of medical professionals with superb technological skills dedicated to the highest level of patient care possible.

Much has changed in oncology practice, but for me it started with patient care and the challenges which illness inflicts upon patients, physically, emotionally and mentally. The helping relationship that I share with the patient and their loved ones continues to compel me in my work. While the drugs and the technology have changed the paradigm, the fundamental call to care remains in the privilege and honor of being entrusted with caring for each patient.

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**Dr. James Waisman** is a medical oncologist who began his sub-specialty in breast cancer in the mid-1980s. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin and received his Medical Degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin. He completed his Internship, Residency and Fellowship at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. Dr. Waisman and his colleague, Dr. Melvin Silverstein founded the Van Nuys Breast Center in the mid 1980's conducting some of the pioneering work on the management of ductal carcinoma in-situ (DCIS). In 1998 he went to USC, where he became head of translational research for breast cancer at the USC Norris Cancer Center. In 2002 he joined Breastlink Medical Group and became Director of Translational Medicine at the Barbara K. Robinson Breast Cancer Research Program. Additionally, he leads the collaboration with the University of Washington Vaccine Program. Dr. Waisman has authored numerous peer-reviewed articles, abstracts and books/book chapters and lectures to patients, survivors and advocates in the community. He is committed to patient care, treating each woman as an individual.

# June Chen, MD



Breast Radiologist

When I am asked what is most enjoyable about being a breast radiologist, my response is quick and obvious—it is the opportunity to save women’s lives. Studies have time and time again shown that the survival rate in women diagnosed with breast cancer is dependent on how early it is diagnosed. It is a personal goal of mine that we diagnose breast cancer at its smallest size and in its earliest possible stage in every woman who walks through our doors, thus giving them the best possible chance for cure.

Early on, it became apparent that in order for a breast imaging center to be able to find curable tiny cancers, we needed a team of expert breast radiologists rather than general radiologists who only occasionally dabble in breast work. This is why, at the Breast Care & Imaging Center of Orange County, all of our radiologists are dedicated breast radiologists who devote their entire practice to

the subspecialty field of breast imaging. We are all committed to and passionate about the early detection and diagnosis of breast cancer.

Along with expert breast radiologists, state of the art technology is also necessary to find breast cancer in its earliest stage. As a result, we have the technologically advanced digital Hologic mammography equipment for all our screening and diagnostic mammograms. Additionally, we utilize a computer-aided detection system, and perform breast ultrasound and breast MRI. Furthermore, we proudly provide the service of core needle biopsy procedures which can be performed under the guidance of any and all imaging equipment (i.e. ultrasound, stereotactic x-ray, and MRI).

Finally, knowing that getting a mammogram can be a daunting experience, we are committed to treating each and every patient as an individual with her own personal history. We have a friendly and experienced staff on site to help with the special and particular needs of our patients. We provide our care in a serene and calm environment and provide results to our patients in the timeliest manner possible. Now, with the creation of Breastlink at the Breast Care & Imaging Center of Orange County, we are uniquely able to provide breast imaging, surgery, medical oncology, and complimentary care all under one roof. We are truly a comprehensive and integrated team with a common passion and an unwavering commitment for delivering the best possible breast care.

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**Dr. June W. Chen** is a radiologist specializing in breast imaging. Having completed a fellowship in the subspecialty of breast imaging at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City in 1998, she currently devotes her entire practice to breast imaging and diagnosis. She is a board certified radiologist who completed her Diagnostic Radiology residency at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York. Dr. Chen earned her medical degree from Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons. She attended college at the University of Michigan, where she was Phi Beta Kappa. Prior to joining Breastlink at The Breast Care and Imaging Center of Orange County, she was Medical Director of Orange Women’s Center from 2006-2007 and Co-Medical Director of Breast Imaging at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange, California from 1998-2006. She has lectured to physicians and technologists and educated patients on breast imaging, and is currently involved in a clinical research study involving breast ultrasound. She is committed to delivering superb patient care in every sense of the word.

# Helen Mabry, MD



Breast Surgeon

## Breastlink at The Breast Care & Imaging Center of Orange County Welcomes Dr. Helen Mabry, Breast Surgeon

Dr. Helen Mabry is a breast fellowship trained, board certified breast surgeon who specializes in oncoplastic techniques for breast conservation, sentinel node biopsy, skin and nipple sparing mastectomies with immediate reconstruction for the treatment of ductal carcinoma in-situ (DCIS) and invasive breast cancer.

Dr. Mabry joins us from John Wayne Cancer Institute at Saint John's Hospital in Santa Monica where she practiced for three years with Armand Giuliano, MD. She completed her breast fellowship at USC with Dr. Melvin Silverstein in 2005. Before completing her general surgery residency at the University of South Florida, she attended Ohio State University medical school. Dr. Mabry obtained a Master's degree in chemistry from Bowling Green State University and attended Smith College for undergraduate studies.

Dr. Mabry's research interests include oncoplastic surgery, molecular markers, ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS), tumor ablation, nipple preservation and intra-operative margin analysis. She has authored and co-authored many publications for The Journal of Surgical Oncology, The American Journal of Surgery and The Breast Journal.

Dr. Mabry will be available to greet patients as well as physicians at the Open House Reception on October 15, 2008 from 6:00 to 8:00pm along with Dr. Link, Dr. West, Dr. Waisman, Dr. Chen and all the supporting staff. We welcome the arrival of Dr. Helen Mabry at the Breast Center on Wednesday, September 3, 2008 when she will begin seeing patients.

## Inspiration by *Maureen Moak*

It's hard to believe that in just a few short weeks it will be 10 years since I first heard those awful words, "You have breast cancer". I can honestly say that these have not been easy years with chemotherapy 3 times, a couple of major surgeries and radiation; not to mention all the doctor appointments, drugs and scans. But I would not trade them. I have learned that cancer, as brutal as it is, is also an amazing gift.



*Maureen & granddaughter*

Part of the gift is the kindness you experience. This life moves so quickly that most people never get to encounter the wonderful kindness of others. There is so much love and generosity in this world and cancer has allowed me to see and feel it. And for that I am sincerely grateful.

Cancer teaches you how to be truly thankful. I thank God everyday for my wonderful husband and children, for my parents and family, for Dr. Link and his staff, and for all my amazing friends. And I think when you are truly thankful there is a need to give back and help other people. Because of that my girlfriend and I have created a business designing the softest, most amazing hand-make blankets ever! We have a special Breast Cancer Blanket that we call our BFF Series or Breast Friends Forever Series. We are donating all our profits to breast cancer research. To learn more contact us at

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

## ▶ ▶ ▶ Optimal Care Team Profile

### Melissa Ortega M.A.

I am a Medical Assistant in oncology at Breastlink at the Breast Care and Imaging Center of Orange County. Originally I was hired at the Breastlink Long Beach office, transferred to our former Fountain Valley office and happily now work in our new facility in Orange, California. I have been a part of the Optimal Care Team for more than a year and a half.



Some of my duties include rooming patients and taking their vitals for Dr. John Link, as well as scheduling appointments and drawing blood. I am also responsible for our laboratory processing, maintenance of our Cell-Dyn (CBC) machine, equipment and supplies.

Working as a Medical Assistant and catering to the needs and care of women has inspired me to go back to college to become a Registered Nurse (RN). I am currently busy taking college courses to pursue my career. This is my dream and goal so I can truly make a difference in patient's lives.

**Breastlink Medical Group, Inc.  
Office Locations:**

**LONG BEACH**

701 E. 28th Street, Suite 201  
Long Beach, CA 90806  
(562) 933-7820 *phone*  
(562) 933-7819 *fax*

**MANHATTAN BEACH**

14650 Aviation Boulevard, Suite 200  
Hawthorne, CA 90250  
(310) 539-2300 *phone*  
(310) 539-9185 *fax*

**ORANGE**

**Breastlink at The Breast Care &  
Imaging Center of Orange County**

230 South Main Street, Suite 100  
Orange, CA 92868  
(714) 541-0101 *phone*  
(714) 541-0450 *fax*

E-mail us at [info@breastlink.com](mailto:info@breastlink.com) if you would like to have a friend receive future Breastlink newsletters  
or if you would like to be removed from our mailing list

**OPEN HOUSE  
Reception**

**Breastlink at The Breast  
Care & Imaging Center  
Of Orange County**

**October 15, 2008  
6:00-8:00pm**

**230 South Main St. Suite 100  
Orange, CA 92868  
(714) 541-0101**

**Events**

**Sept. 27** James Waisman, MD and  
Lisa Donley, MFT  
Life After Breast Cancer :  
Managing Emotional &  
Medical Concerns  
The Wellness Community ,  
Redondo Beach  
10:00am to 12:30pm  
Please RSVP (310) 376-3550

**Oct. 25** James Waisman, MD and  
Lisa Donley, MFT  
Life After Breast Cancer :  
Managing Emotional &  
Medical Concerns  
Sponsored by BCCRF  
2100 Park Place  
El Segundo  
10:00am to 12:30pm  
Please RSVP (310)927-7606

**Re-Opening  
Breast Imaging  
at Breastlink  
Manhattan Beach**

**September 2008**

**14650 Aviation Blvd.  
Suite 200  
Hawthorne, CA 90250  
(310) 539-2300**

We want to hear from you! If you have a thought or an idea, please submit it to [info@breastlink.com](mailto:info@breastlink.com)