

# strong VOICES

SPRING 2009  
VOLUME 13



## Bye Bye, BPA

Bisphenol A, or BPA, has gotten a lot of bad press lately—and for good reason: BPA is a toxic chemical so powerful it can cross the placenta, even at exceedingly low levels of exposure. It's a synthetic estrogen that increases the risk of breast cancer and may interfere with chemotherapy. And it's perfectly legal to use in food and beverage containers.

But not for long.

On March 13, 2009, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) introduced federal legislation that would ban BPA in food and beverage containers. The Breast Cancer Fund worked closely with the legislators to help craft a strong bill that is responsive to the concerns of the breast cancer community.

The legislation comes on the heels of unprecedented pushback against BPA this March. Sunoco became the first chemical manufacturer to acknowledge health concerns when it recently announced that it will sell BPA only to companies that guarantee the chemical will not be used in food and water containers for children under 3. Health Canada released results showing that BPA was detected in 96 percent of soft drink cans the agency tested. Six baby bottle manufacturers said they would stop using BPA. Nineteen states and four municipalities have introduced, or are planning to introduce, legislation to regulate BPA.

*BPA is used in the epoxy resin that lines metal food and beverage cans and can also be found in some plastic food storage containers, baby bottles and water bottles.*

*continued on page 7*

# the Rizzo report



photo: Irene Young

*by Jeanne Rizzo, R.N.  
President and CEO*

Quality. Innovation. Momentum. In January, as the Breast Cancer Fund grappled with the effects of the economic downturn, we reviewed our work with these words in mind. I knew there was no sense in asking what work was not important. This is a strategic and focused organization, and all of our work is mission-critical. But our economic reality necessitated cuts. The process was the most difficult I have faced in my eight-year tenure at the Breast Cancer Fund.

As we move forward, I realized, our organization, like our country, must develop a stimulus program. We won't build roads or bridges—we'll instead build on our excellent work to stop breast cancer before it starts. And we will build on our partnership with you by inviting you to join our Gathering Momentum sustainer program.

I honestly believe that this is the best time yet to invest in the work of the Breast Cancer Fund. On the heels of a major victory—getting toxic phthalates out of toys—and with a promising political landscape in Washington, the Breast Cancer Fund is poised to create significant inroads toward reducing toxic exposures, securing comprehensive chemical policy reform and lowering breast cancer incidence.

But to realize our goals, we need to jump-start our economy. That's where your participation in our sustainer program comes in. Imagine if each of you reading this newsletter committed \$10 a month beyond what you already give. That would amount to nearly half a million dollars this year. Trust me: that would stimulate the Breast Cancer Fund's economy! It would allow us to fully engage in the critical work we have in front of us this year, including working to pass federal legislation to ban bisphenol A from food and beverage containers (see cover story) and to get toxic chemicals out of personal care products (see opposite page).

Invest in us as we invest in a world where breast cancer prevention is a reality.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature of Jeanne Rizzo in blue ink, written in a cursive style.

*The Breast Cancer Fund is poised to create significant inroads toward reducing toxic exposures, securing comprehensive chemical policy reform and lowering breast cancer incidence.*

**P.S.** You can join our Gathering Momentum sustainer program by using the enclosed envelope, or visit [www.breastcancerfund.org/gatheringmomentum](http://www.breastcancerfund.org/gatheringmomentum).

# prevention in action

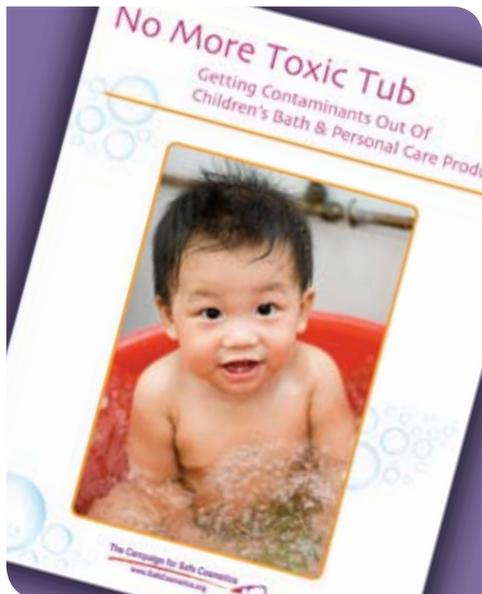
## Report Reveals a “Toxic Tub”

Despite marketing claims like “gentle” and “pure,” dozens of top-selling children’s bath products are contaminated with cancer-causing chemicals, according to tests released in March by the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, a project of the Breast Cancer Fund.

The “No More Toxic Tub” study is the first to document the widespread presence of both formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane in children’s products.

The Campaign commissioned an independent laboratory to test 48 products, including baby shampoos, bubble baths and baby lotions, for 1,4-dioxane. Measurable levels of the chemical showed up in 67 percent of samples. Of the products tested for 1,4-dioxane, 28 were also tested for formaldehyde—and 82 percent came back positive. Many products, including top brands like Johnson’s Baby Shampoo and Sesame Street Bubble Bath, contained both chemicals.

*Baby’s bath bubbles may contain chemicals linked to cancer, according to recent product tests commissioned by the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics.*



None of the tested products listed formaldehyde or 1,4-dioxane as ingredients, because they are contaminants—and therefore not subject to FDA labeling laws. However, among the listed ingredients were chemicals likely to release these unsafe contaminants.

Common ingredients that may be contaminated with 1,4-dioxane include PEG-100 stearate, sodium laureth sulfate, polyethylene and cetareth-20. This contaminant is a by-product created when chemical ingredients are processed with the breast carcinogen ethylene oxide. Manufacturers can easily remove 1,4-dioxane after processing but are not required by law to do so.

Certain preservatives, including quaternium-15, DMDM hydantoin, imidazolidinyl urea and diazolidinyl urea, release formaldehyde over time in product containers.

Both formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane are classified by the EPA as probable human carcinogens. “The levels we’ve found are relatively low, and the industry often says there’s just a little bit of carcinogen in a given product,” Campaign spokesperson Stacy Malkan told the Washington Post. “The problem is, we’re finding a little bit of carcinogen in many products. Many of these products are used every day, so we’ve got repeated and frequent exposure to these low levels of chemicals. They’re not the safest and purest products, and parents ought to know that.”

Besides the Washington Post, the report was covered in more than 1,000 print, online, television and radio news stories worldwide, including USA Today, WebMD, the Wall Street Journal, AP, Bloomberg, China’s Xinhua news service and the international wire service Agence France-Presse.

Visit [www.safecosmetics.org/toxictub](http://www.safecosmetics.org/toxictub) for more information.



*Several members of Congress plan to introduce legislation that would address the lack of regulation of cosmetics and body care products, ensuring that they are safe before they reach store shelves.*

## Legislators Plan to Overhaul Cosmetics Laws

In connection with the “No More Toxic Tub” report release, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Reps. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) and Ed Markey (D-Mass.) pointed to the study’s findings as further evidence of the need for stronger regulation of the cosmetics industry by the FDA. Along with Reps. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisc.) and Jackie Speier (D-Calif.), these members of Congress are working on federal safe cosmetics legislation that will be introduced this spring. The Breast Cancer Fund and the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics will support these efforts.

Unlike many other countries—and contrary to industry statements—there are no laws that limit formaldehyde, 1,4-dioxane or most other toxic chemicals in personal care products sold in the United States, even though safer alternatives exist. Regulation by the FDA would be a positive step, allowing the United States to catch up to other governments’ safety standards and to ensure that safe products—free of chemicals linked to cancer, birth defects and other adverse health effects—are available to everyone.

# The Breast Cancer Fund's 2009 Heroes Leading Us Toward a Healthy Future

## Gathering Momentum

**Breast Cancer Fund  
Heroes Tribute**

On April 30, the Breast Cancer Fund community comes together to celebrate our 2009 Heroes. This year's Heroes Tribute, Gathering Momentum, honors four individuals for their outstanding leadership in science and advocacy and their efforts to create a healthy world for future generations—a world where we have stopped breast cancer before it starts.

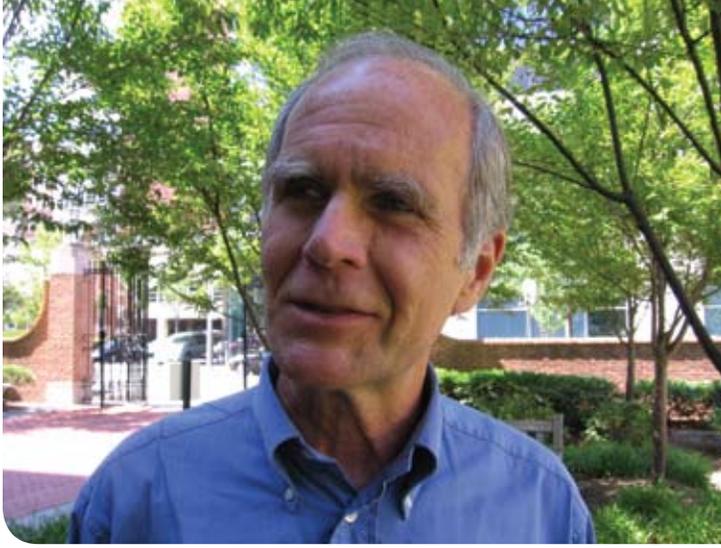
We also celebrate the Breast Cancer Fund's outgoing board chair, Suzy Cain, for her extraordinary guidance during an 11-year tenure. In her honor, the first Suzy Cain Leadership Award goes to two women who lead powerful movements of moms: Mary Brune, founder of MOMS, and Joan Blades, founder of MomsRising.org. Their partnership with the Breast Cancer Fund was instrumental in gaining passage of a nationwide ban on toxic phthalates in toys last year.



*Joan Blades and MomsRising.org, Suzy Cain  
Leadership Award*



*Mary Brune and MOMS, Suzy Cain Leadership Award*



Ted Schettler, M.D., M.P.H., Science Hero Award



Linda Morton, Andrea Ravinett Martin Strong Voice Award

**Mary Brune** was nursing her baby when she saw a news report about breast milk being contaminated with perchlorate, a chemical found in rocket fuel. Frightened for the health of her daughter and determined to preserve this valuable source of nutrition for our children, Mary enlisted five Bay Area mothers in founding Making Our Milk Safe, or MOMS, a nonprofit organization working to eliminate toxic chemicals from breast milk.

After launching the online movement MoveOn.org, **Joan Blades** sought to build a similar grassroots mobilization effort to bring motherhood and family issues to the forefront of the country's agenda. Mother's Day 2006 saw the launch of MomsRising.org, which now

counts more than 150,000 activist-members nationwide.

**Ted Schettler, M.D., M.P.H.**, science director at the Science and Environmental Health Network, is the Breast Cancer Fund's 2009 Science Hero. A physician for more than 30 years, Ted sought to understand the complex relationships between our health and the health of our ecosystem. He has become a leading expert in environmental health, and his groundbreaking research examining the connection between early-life exposures and later-life diseases, including breast cancer, has revolutionized the course we will take for a healthy future.

For her extraordinary commitment to prevention, **Linda Morton** receives the 2009 Andrea Ravinett Martin Strong Voice Award. In 2005, Linda joined the annual Climb Against the Odds expedition after losing her dear friend Debbie to breast cancer. She has since been part of the 2006, 2007 and 2008 teams and will climb again in June. Through her efforts, Linda has raised more than \$100,000 for the Breast Cancer Fund and continues to serve as a strong voice for prevention.

Learn more about our 2009 Heroes at [www.breastcancerfund.org/heroestribute](http://www.breastcancerfund.org/heroestribute).

# science matters

## Reduce Your Family's BPA Exposure

Bisphenol A is one of the most ubiquitous chemicals in modern life. It's used in hard, clear polycarbonate plastics and as an epoxy resin in the lining of food and infant formula cans, among other everyday applications. Leached BPA from food and beverage containers is one of the most common routes of exposure, but also one that we can exercise some control over—until federal law shifts the burden of safety to regulators (see cover story).

### Tips for reducing your family's BPA exposure

- *Check kids' plastics first: Developing children are particularly sensitive to the hormone-disrupting effects of BPA. Though many major manufacturers have stopped making baby bottles with BPA—and retailers have stopped selling them—you may still have old plastic baby bottles at home. Check the code on the bottom of these products and replace #7 plastics with glass or*

*BPA-free plastic versions. Also replace sippy cups and children's dishes and utensils with BPA-free alternatives.*

- *Choose fresh or frozen over canned: Soups, beans, infant formula and other food packaged in cans may leach BPA from the can lining. Alternatives are available but not widely labeled. Some infant formula manufacturers have developed or are working on BPA-free products. Check with the manufacturers for more information about individual products.*
- *Don't heat plastic: Heat and wear increase leaching of chemicals from plastic. Don't microwave or otherwise heat food or drink in plastic dishes, cups, sports bottles or baby bottles.*
- *Replace old or worn plastic dishes and bottles: Upgrade your old sports bottle with one of the many new models labeled BPA-free.*

# strong VOICES

THE BREAST CANCER FUND'S STRONG VOICES PROGRAM IS A NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF WOMEN AND MEN WHO SHARE THEIR STORIES WHILE INSPIRING THE PUBLIC TO TAKE ACTION TO PREVENT BREAST CANCER.



*The Sacred Treks: Bhutan team holds a Breast Cancer Fund prayer flag ceremony at 16,000 feet. Photo: Cathy Ann Taylor*

In 2004, just months after finishing radiation treatment for breast cancer, Leigh Henman of Kentfield, Calif., participated in a snowshoe race benefiting the Breast Cancer Fund. Healthy and active when she was diagnosed, and with no family history of breast cancer, Leigh felt an immediate connection to the organization's mission to identify and eliminate the environmental causes of the disease.

Determined to continue to be a Strong Voice for prevention, in 2005 Leigh joined the Breast Cancer Fund's Climb Against the Odds

*Marjorie Swig, Leigh Henman and Carroll Yandell with Bhutan's Mt. Jichu Drake in the background.*



expedition on Mt. Rainier, where she met fellow climber and expert mountain guide Cathy Ann Taylor (a 2006 Breast Cancer Fund Hero).

Seeking out her next physical challenge for prevention, Leigh was inspired to join Cathy Ann's November 2008 Sacred Trek in Bhutan, a benefit for the Breast Cancer Fund. In support of Leigh, longtime friends Marjorie Swig and Carroll Yandell also joined the nine-day trek through this virtually untouched part of the world. Together, the three friends raised over \$30,000 for the Breast Cancer Fund.

When asked about her most memorable Bhutan experience, Leigh describes the prayer flag ceremony held at 16,000 feet, where the group honored individuals touched by breast cancer and other loved ones lost. The Bhutanese believe that when the flags are blown by the wind, goodwill and compassion spread. For Leigh, the ceremony was a symbol of her journey, which she takes one step at a time.

The Breast Cancer Fund salutes Leigh Henman for being a Strong Voice for breast cancer prevention.

Join the Breast Cancer Fund on our Sacred Treks: Tour du Mont Blanc, July 26 to August 2, 2009. [www.cattara.com](http://www.cattara.com).

# thank you

*The generous contributions of sponsors and supporters fuel the Breast Cancer Fund's work to stop breast cancer before it starts.*

## A special thank-you to our 2009 Heroes Tribute sponsors:

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## We'd also like to thank those who have hosted recent events or promotions to benefit the Breast Cancer Fund:

- 1% For The Planet member business Lorrie Thomas Web Marketing
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- Organic Bouquet
- San Diego Pink Party
- Taos Ski Valley Fashion Show for Breast Cancer Awareness

*If you would like to learn more about hosting an event to benefit the Breast Cancer Fund, please contact Julie Homan at (866) 760-8223 x15, or [jhoman@breastcancerfund.org](mailto:jhoman@breastcancerfund.org).*

### Heroes Tribute

April 30, 2009

San Francisco, California

Join the Breast Cancer Fund in celebrating the movement toward a green and healthy future, and the heroes who are leading us there. This eco-friendly affair includes an organic dinner reception, a green marketplace and an inspirational awards program.

[www.breastcancerfund.org/heroestribute](http://www.breastcancerfund.org/heroestribute)

### Climb Against the Odds

June 21–27, 2009

Mt. Shasta, California

An inspiring team of women and men will climb the 14,162-foot Mt. Shasta for prevention with the Breast Cancer Fund's 10th mountaineering expedition. Read about our 2009 climb team members and what motivated them to choose this extraordinary journey with the Breast Cancer Fund, and please consider supporting their efforts.

[www.breastcancerfund.org/climbteam09](http://www.breastcancerfund.org/climbteam09)

### Sacred Treks: Tour du Mont Blanc

July 26–August 2, 2009

Mont Blanc, France & Italy

Join expert mountaineering guide Cathy Ann Taylor for a trek around Western Europe's Mont Blanc. This eight-day adventure, with six days of hiking through sublime ridges and quiet valleys, will raise funds for the Breast Cancer Fund. Experience Europe in a whole new way, challenge yourself physically and honor those who have faced breast cancer.

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

### Peak Hike

September 27, 2009

Mill Valley, California

Join the Breast Cancer Fund for Peak Hike 2009, our annual hike in Northern California to raise funds to help eliminate the environmental causes of breast cancer. Be inspired by the dedication of hundreds taking one step at a time to stop this disease before it starts. Hike with the people in your life, or register on your own and make new friends along the way!

[www.breastcancerfund.org/peakhike](http://www.breastcancerfund.org/peakhike)

## Bye Bye, BPA

*continued from page 1*

“There is a deep sense of public outrage around BPA,” said Janet Nudelman, director of program and policy at the Breast Cancer Fund. “Scientists across the board are saying we have enough evidence of harm to act, consumers say they don’t want the chemical, and retailers and manufacturers are getting the message. Now Congress needs to pass this bill. There’s no excuse for continued federal inaction.”

A main route of exposure to BPA is through food and beverage containers. It is used in the epoxy resin that lines metal food cans and can also be found in some plastic food storage containers, baby bottles and water bottles. BPA can leach into infant formula and other food products, especially when heated. Once in food, BPA can move quickly into people. (See page 5 to learn about reducing your exposure to BPA.)

Nearly 200 scientific studies show that exposures to low doses of BPA, particularly during prenatal development and early infancy, are associated with a wide range of adverse health effects in later life. BPA has been linked to breast and prostate cancer, birth defects, infertility in men, early puberty in girls, diabetes and obesity.

“Americans should not be used as guinea pigs by chemical companies while we wait for even more scientific evidence showing this chemical is harmful to our health,” said Sen. Feinstein. “The time has come to take action.”

We couldn’t agree more. Join us in our work to ban BPA from food and beverage containers:  
[www.breastcancerfund.org](http://www.breastcancerfund.org)

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**Congratulations to Nancy Seubert of Monroe, Mich., winner of our last e-newsletter prize.**

[www.breastcancerfund.org/enewsdrawing](http://www.breastcancerfund.org/enewsdrawing)

# in this issue..



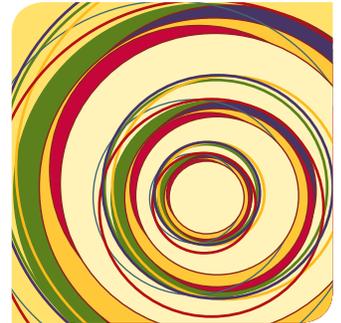
Bye Bye, BPA: 1



Our Stimulus Program: 2



Toxic Tub Report: 3



2009 Heroes Awards: 4

# get involved

**Join the Breast Cancer Fund's Gathering Momentum sustainer program!**

Through a scheduled monthly gift to the Breast Cancer Fund, you'll be investing in us as we invest in a world where breast cancer prevention is a reality. To join our Gathering Momentum sustainer program, use the enclosed envelope or visit [www.breastcancerfund.org/gatheringmomentum](http://www.breastcancerfund.org/gatheringmomentum).