

Beyond the Pink Ribbon

Dr. Coral Quiet talks about breast cancer risk, testing and education, and the Arizona Institute of Breast Health

By Michelle Talsma Everson

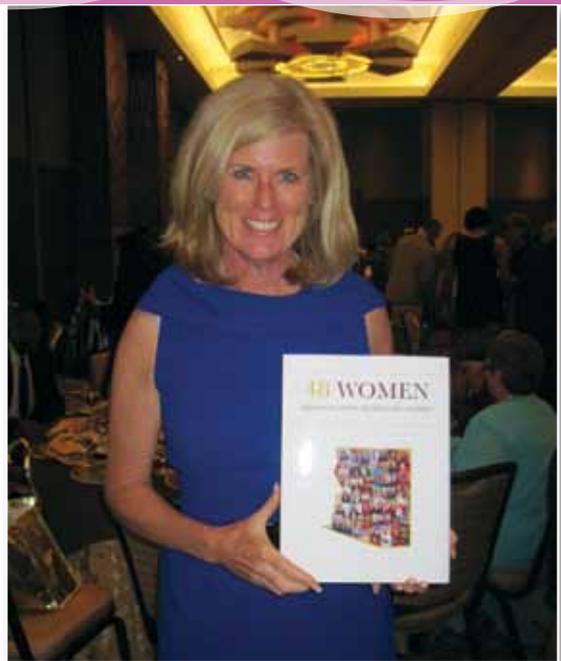
An estimated 232,340 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed this year in the United States alone, according to the Susan G. Komen organization (komen.org). This astonishing number doesn't include reoccurrences among survivors.

Breast and ovarian cancer are more common among Ashkenazi Jewish (of central or Eastern European origin) women due to the prevalence of the BRCA1 and BRCA2 (breast cancer 1 and 2) gene mutations in that population. Like many instances of the disease, survival depends on early detection; for example, genetic testing, known as BRCAanalysis, is available. Women who fall into certain categories – including those of Ashkenazi Jewish heritage – are encouraged to ask their healthcare provider about genetic testing.

“Breast cancer is of special concern to the Jewish community because of the BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene mutation,” explains Coral Quiet, MD, a radiation oncologist with Arizona Breast Cancer Specialists. “Genetic testing has evolved to the point where it can identify patients who are at excessive risk to develop breast cancer. It is known that up to 85% of those who have the gene mutation develop breast or ovarian cancer. It can be inherited from both the maternal and paternal lineage, so knowing about family history on both sides is good.”

Quiet, who was raised Jewish, has both extensive professional and personal experience with breast cancer. She originally planned to be a surgeon specializing in mastectomies and reconstruction, but after two years of surgery experience, she began to focus more on radiation and oncology. The patient interaction and being there for patients in a critical time of their life seemed a natural fit.

“My grandmother is a breast cancer survivor as is my grandfather – yes male breast cancer – and some of his sisters,” Quiet notes. “Working with breast cancer patients was an



Dr. Coral Quiet as One of 48 Most Intriguing Women in Arizona.

intellectual fit, and because it affected my own family, it was an emotional fit, as well.”

Quiet moved to Arizona in 1993 and noticed that only 20% of women with breast cancer were being treated with breast conservation. Even though technology was growing in the late '90s, the numbers of women being treated with conservative methods were not. In response, she helped to cofound the Arizona Institute for Breast Health (AIBH), a nonprofit, 12-member team of leading medical professionals that give women diagnosed with breast cancer a second opinion on treatment options free of charge.

“AIBH was founded to help women and their families get the knowledge they needed to insure optimal therapy,” Quiet explains. “It's about helping women regain a sense of control by understanding their disease and treatment options.”

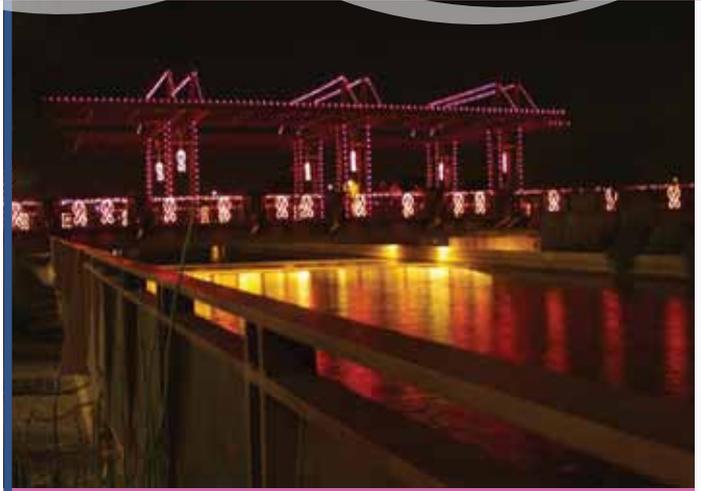
In 2000 Quiet began offering the breast brachytherapy program to her patients. Described as “a five-day radiation therapy alternative for women with early stage breast cancer developed by international breast cancer pioneer Robert Kuske, MD,” it has changed the way early stage breast cancer is treated. “I am proud to not only have helped bring this treatment option to Arizona women, but to have brought Dr. Kuske himself,” Quiet says.

In 2008 Quiet partnered with Kuske to found Arizona Breast Cancer Specialists, which is dedicated to treating breast cancer patients exclusively with radiation. Today the center has offices throughout the Valley and has recently partnered with the Arizona Center for Cancer Care to be the providers of all radiation oncology services for Scottsdale Healthcare hospitals. Arizona Breast Cancer Specialists is also at the forefront of some of the latest breast cancer research.

Quiet advises all women – and men – to understand their risks for the disease and for women to get mammograms and participate in other detection options as prescribed by their healthcare providers. The American Cancer Society recommends



AIBH President Linda Rose, left, with Dr. Coral Quiet at an AIBH event.



The Pink Light District

Throughout October Arizonans have the opportunity to sponsor pink light bulbs for \$25 each, which will be placed on the Marshall Way Bridge in downtown Scottsdale. These thousands of sponsored lights will make up the AIBH Pink Light District and will glow during October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, in recognition of all those touched by the disease. All proceeds generated will benefit AIBH, and the funds will go directly to support women who are dealing with a breast cancer diagnosis. In addition, dozens of Arizona restaurants, in partnership with Belvedere Vodka, Smirnoff Confections and Sorbet, RoseNblum Wines and others, will offer pink food and drink menus to support the cause. To view participating restaurants or to sponsor a pink light, visit aibh.org.

annual mammography starting at age 40.

“Today, so many more people are aware and there is a lot of success in treatment because of early detection,” Quiet says. “Women who are recently diagnosed with breast cancer should understand the disease and treatment options and make decisions that are right for them. Like anything, decisions that are right are based off of education and how to take that first step.” ■

Learn more about the Arizona Institute of Breast Health at aibh.org. To learn more about Arizona Breast Cancer Specialists, visit breastmd.com.

Linda Rose: Breast cancer survivor and AIBH president

Linda Rose’s history with the Arizona Institute of Breast Health is twofold: she’s one of the women the nonprofit has helped and is also the organization’s current president.

Rose, who spent 30 years as a mammography specialist, lost her mother to breast cancer when she was 12 and her mom was only 44 years old. In 2009 she was diagnosed with early stage breast cancer on the right breast, and it was recommended she go through the AIBH program. “After AIBH reviewed all of my tests and films, the doctors recommended a biopsy on my left breast, which showed no signs of cancer on the original X-ray,” Rose recalls. “The biopsy detected an even higher grade of cancer on my left breast. Without the help of AIBH, my experience could have been much worse.”

To treat her disease, Rose had bilateral lumpectomies

with a five-day brachytherapy radiation treatment. Because of her Ashkenazi Jewish heritage, she underwent testing for the BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene mutations, which came back negative. She says these results provided useful information for her family members.

In 2009 Rose joined the board of AIBH and was asked to be a guest speaker at the Pink Light District Initiative, one of AIBH’s main fundraisers. In 2011 she began her two-year term as the organization’s president.

“AIBH empowers women to become their own best advocates; I want everyone to know who we are and what we do,” Rose says. “We offer education, information and support to all that go through the program completely free of charge. We are the only organization of our kind in the country.”

Now that she’s involved with AIBH, Rose feels like her career and personal life have come full circle. “Even though I’m not practicing mammography and sonography now, I still keep up with the industry,” she says. “I love all of the advancement and the tests that are available today. Early detection is key.”