

# Woman reaches out to help those with cancer

**West Linn's Andrea Leonard's Breast Cancer Survivors Foundation will host Dinner by Starlight to benefit those affected by the disease**

By CORNELIA SEIGNEUR  
For the Tidings

When you walk into the office of the year-old Breast Cancer Survivors Foundation, you will see a crib with a bear musical mobile dangling above it, toys on the floor and shelves with baby items.

You see, 7-month-old West Linn resident Marin Leonard shares her bedroom with her mom, Andrea Leonard, who founded the non-profit corporation in April 2000. The foundation works toward improving the quality of life for survivors of breast cancer, and their families.

Still, the just-getting-started non-profit is set apart from other breast cancer foundations in that its focus is not solely about finding a cure for the disease.

On Saturday, the foundation is hosting its first annual Dinner by Starlight at Rivers Restaurant in Portland, which will open to the public sometime after the event. Local community leaders in business, education, news, and politics will be waiters for the \$100-per-person event aimed at raising dollars — and visibility — for this brand new foundation.

The Breast Cancer Survivors Foundation has two programs which help women diagnosed with breast cancer.

Clubs for the Cure will provide physical assessments and post-operative exercise programs to support physical and mental healing. You Are Not Alone has the intention of sending new breast cancer survivors a package containing “feel good material,” including a copy of the book Leonard co-wrote entitled “Essential Exercises for Breast Cancer Survivors.”

In addition, they would like to send catered meals to the family during the week of breast surgery.

“It is so consuming for the entire family,” said the energetic Leonard. Funds gathered from the event will be made available to breast cancer survivors in the Portland area through the Clubs for the Cure and You Are Not Alone programs.

Much of what Leonard is doing today is a result of her background. She had thyroid cancer while in her late teens, “which is what prompted me into getting into personal training. I got into fitness as a way to help myself and other people,” Leonard explained. She currently has 10 clients she sees as a personal trainer.

The concern for the needs of women diagnosed with breast cancer began when Leonard's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer 21 years ago. It recurred six years later, Leonard said.

“When I saw what my mom was going through, I wanted to help people with cancer,” the West Linn resident said. She saw very little information out there to help women rehabilitate from breast can-



A personal trainer, Andrea Leonard got into the business as a way to help herself and others. Leonard has co-written a book on exercises for breast cancer survivors. (Staff photo by Vern Uyetake)

See SURVIVOR, page A12