

## Craft Beer? Breast Cancer Fundraiser? That's the Breastfest

**15th annual beer festival and benefit bash is Saturday,  
July 18, at the Marin County Fairgrounds**

By [Brent Ainsworth \(Open Post\)](#) July 15, 2015



One of Marin's homegrown beer festivals and heartwarming fundraisers is back after a hiatus across the Golden Gate Bridge. The 15th edition of the [The Breastfest](#), a benefit for the [Charlotte Maxwell Complementary Clinic](#), will continue its tradition on Saturday, July 18, at the Marin County Fairgrounds following a few years held at Fort Mason in San Francisco.

Co-founder Jenn Procopio is proud the beerfest has contributed to the Oakland-based clinic for so long no matter where it's been held. She watched her mother fight breast cancer for years and was shocked to find that alternative treatments to soothe the side effects of cancer treatments were only rarely covered by health plans. Inspired, she helped start the festival in 2000 and held it at Marin Country Mart, then called the Larkspur Landing shopping center, just out the back door of Marin Brewing Company.

How much as The Breastfest meant to the Charlotte Maxwell Complementary Clinic? This year's event will push the 15-year donation total over the \$500,000 hump.

"The people at the clinic are so grateful for this event," said Procopio, general manager at Marin Brewing Company. "It's such a fantastic clinic. They have helped so many people who need it."

The nonprofit Maxwell clinic, which has offices in Oakland and San Francisco, offers free alternative medicine treatments (acupuncture, massage therapy, Chinese and Western herbs, therapeutic imagery), organic foods, transportation services, social services and educational workshops for low-income women with cancer. The Breastfest routinely raises tens of thousands of dollars that go directly to the clinic.

Procopio said almost all the 40 microbreweries participating are from California and will be pouring samples of their brews Saturday on the island at Lagoon Park – the same spot where major touring bands play during the Marin County Fair. Brewmaster Arne Johnson is celebrating his 20th year at Marin Brewing and has brewed a special batch of Preservation Ale for the event. Other breweries include Moylan's, Iron Springs, Broken Drum, 21st Amendment, Lagunitas, Magnolia, Bear Republic, Rubicon, Russian River and Third Street Ale Works.

This is a festival organized for the purpose of helping those in need, created in an era in which beer-tasting events were far and few between. In Marin, only the Fairfax Brewfest is older (now 20 years old). The Breastfest has become an elite presence for breweries on the West Coast and beyond.

“It gives the craft brewing industry a way to create camaraderie for a worthy cause,” Procopio said. “We get outstanding support from the breweries, who really get behind the cause. It’s an event where our local beer pioneers, cancer survivors and regular old craft beer geeks can join hands and give back to the community.”

Kingsborough, an upbeat band from Santa Rosa, will entertain the crowd. The quartet offers a modern twist on classic, soulful rock. There will be an array of tasty foods and non-alcoholic drinks (covered by the ticket price) and, of course, a mind-boggling selection of beers.

The festival, which features raffle prizes, is from noon to 4 p.m. Admission is \$55 in advance and \$65 at the ticket booth. There will be plenty of free parking in lots at Marin Center and Lagoon Park, just off Civic Center Drive in San Rafael. Go to [thebreastfest.org](http://thebreastfest.org) for online advance tickets and other details.

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With all due respect to the wonderful work the Charlotte Maxwell Complementary Clinic does for women, the Breastfest is out of date and out of place. The latest research from around the world shows that alcohol is a leading cause of breast cancer. The Breastfest event would be similar to having Coke or Pepsi sponsor a diabetes health fair or Philip Morris hosting a lung cancer awareness festival. It is simply not ethical and also not honest to those affected by an illness to promote such a cooperation.

In effect, the young women who are being told to drink beer against breast cancer are themselves being misled by the event and participating in an activity that will over time increase the likelihood that they will develop breast cancer. If "Pinkwashing" was a crime, the Breastfest promoters and the County of Marin (it's being held on their property) could be prosecuted.

Please send the Charlotte Maxwell Complementary Clinic a generous donation but do not encourage this type of event by buying a ticket. And read more:

- **Fact Sheet: Women and Alcohol**  
Society finds that consumption of one alcoholic beverage per day increases the lifetime risk of a woman developing breast cancer by 10%. This increases the chance of breast cancer diagnoses from one in eight to one in seven for the average woman...  
<https://alcoholjustice.org/?id...>
- **Pinkwashing Risk**  
Pinkwashing is a term coined by the group Breast Cancer Action and “used critically of corporate campaigns and practices in which the sponsoring companies position themselves as leaders in the struggle to eradicate breast cancer while engaging in...  
<https://alcoholjustice.org/?id...>
- **New Study: Moderate Alcohol Consumption Linked to Breast Cancer**  
A new study from the University of Victoria has confirmed the statistical link between moderate alcohol consumption and breast cancer, with results showing that women consuming 2 drinks per day are 8.5% more likely to develop cancer than those who...  
<https://alcoholjustice.org/new...>