

Researcher to help kick off Acton's Cancer Society April campaign

The Acton Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society is kicking off Daffodil Month (cancer awareness campaign month) by holding an information and appreciation evening at Knox Presbyterian Church, Acton, at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 26.

It promises to be an informative evening on the latest breakthroughs regarding chemotherapy and other leading efforts by special guest speaker Brenda Coomber of the University of Guelph, Department of Biomedical Sciences, Canada, Molecular Biology, Cell Biology and Cancer Research.

Since 2009, Coomber has received over \$480,000 in research grants from the Canadian Cancer Society. Solid cancers require a blood supply in order to grow and spread. Cancer cells recruit new blood vessels from surrounding tissue in a process called angiogenesis. Treatments are now being tested that seek to destroy cancers or prevent their growth by interfering with this process. Early results are promising, suggesting that this approach could be effective with fewer side effects than anticancer drugs. Dr. Coomber's team is developing a genetically altered mouse in which blood vessels will be easy to identify and count. It is expected that this mouse will be very useful for testing new treatments to see whether or not they kill cancers by block-



BRENDA COOMBER

ing new blood vessel growth.

The formation of new blood vessels is essential to early cancer growth, but it appears that later stage cancers may be less dependent on a blood supply. Dr. Coomber's team will therefore develop two types of genetically altered mice, both

with human skin cancers. One type will be highly dependent on a blood supply and the other much less dependent. They anticipate that these two types will show dramatically different responses to treatments that block blood vessel growth.

Light snacks will be provided during the evening. Daffodil pins will be available during the evening and offered for a donation and pins will be available during the month of April at many locations in Acton.

The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) has arranged with Loblaws to sell bunches of daffodils instore for a very reasonable price with \$2 going to the CCS per bunch.

Anyone wishing to donate a couple of hours to help canvas can call Cathy Gerrow at 519-853-1424.

