

2005 Winter Dinner Meeting Review

By Inge Ivens

The GETA Winter dinner meeting was held on March 24, 2005 at Hs Lordship's restaurant on the Berkeley marina. We had a great speaker presenting the topic "*Marin County Breast Cancer Rate: Myth and Reality.*" Rochelle Ereman heads up the Epidemiology Program of the County of Marin Department of Health & Human Services. She has first-hand research experience with the subject, which was of great concern in Marin County for some years. Elevated rates of breast cancer in Marin County were first reported in the early 1990s, and the incidence rate between 1990 and 1999 increased 3.6% per year, six times more rapidly than in comparison areas.

Rochelle reported that the rates were based on population estimates from older census data and that it became evident after the new 2000 census that the number of women in the age range of concern were underestimated. Corrected cancer rates are less dramatic and very similar to those seen in San Francisco, but they are still among the highest in the nation. Rochelle initiated a lively discussion about other factors such as alcohol and breast feeding, which may influence breast cancer.

The meeting was a great success with over 30 participants from varied toxicology disciplines. It was a great time for the participants to network and "pick the brain" of the speaker.