

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PINK INVITATIONAL RAISES OVER \$65,000 FOR LIVING BEYOND BREAST CANCER

West Chester, PA – April 2, 2009 – They planned, they dreamed, they hoped...but the support and encouragement they received from the gymnastics community exceeded all their expectations. AJS Pancott Gymnastics National Training Center owners, Steve and Louise Pancott, and coach Sue Weldon were amazed that on February 27, 28 and March 1, gymnasts participating in the Pink Invitational~Gymnasts Unite competition helped raise over \$65,000 in support of women with breast cancer. The event, held at the United Sports Training Center in Downingtown, PA, featured over 1,100 level 4 – 10/Open gymnasts representing 36 teams from five states. The positive energy in the field house was contagious, and touched all who attended the event. The Pink Invitational brought together skilled and talented gymnasts, as well as families with heartfelt stories of amazing, strong and courageous women who have fought this disease.

Lauren Ainsworth, LBBC's Special Events Manager, said, "The event was so rewarding. I saw the gymnastics community come together for a wonderful cause, I saw women, young and old, give a little bit to make a big difference, and I saw a terrific inaugural event go off without a hitch. The money you've raised has closed the gap left due to the economic crisis and enabled us to continue to help women affected by breast cancer."

The Pink Invitational not only provided an opportunity for excellent gymnastics competition, it allowed the girls and young women who participated to stand up to breast cancer through a sport they love. For each 9.0 or higher they scored, \$1 was donated by the Pink Youth Board to LBBC, and gymnasts were given a pink ribbon with their name on it to hang in the awards area. Over the three days, nearly 1,400 pink ribbons were earned and displayed as evidence of their unity and gymnastics achievement. In another demonstration of unity, each gymnast received a pink breast cancer leotard to wear for competition. Because one of the primary goals of the event was to educate gymnasts about breast cancer and prevention, each participant also received an educational bag that contained information about nutrition, organic products, and healthy lifestyle choices.

The gymnastics teams that registered for the event were issued a challenge to raise \$500 or more for LBBC through their own fundraisers. Seven teams took up the 'Above and Beyond Challenge' and together their total donations were over \$10,000. Those teams were Action Gymnastics, AGRA Springers, AJS Pancott Gymnastics, Lakettes, Gym Dandy's, GymOlympic, and Silvia's Gymnastics. Action Gymnastics of Howell, NJ won the contest by raising an incredible \$1,800. Region 7 of USA Gymnastics was an event sponsor and pledged to give seven times the score of the winning level 10/Open team. At the team awards, Region 7 Technical Committee Chairman Myra Elfenbein presented a check to the Pink Invitational for \$793.63. The PA State Board and the National Association of Women's Gymnastics Judges also made generous donations.

The Pink Invitational was hosted by AJS Pancott Gymnastics, located in West Chester, PA, and sponsored by Verizon. We are proud to say that through the hard work and participation of the gymnasts and many volunteers, along with individual and corporate donations, over \$65,000 was raised for LBBC. The gymnastics community, with the support of our local community, came together that weekend to make a difference in the lives of others and help women who are battling this devastating disease. We hope this successful beginning is just the start of a long tradition for the Pink Invitational.

About AJS Pancott Gymnastics National Training Center:

AJS Pancott Gymnastics began in 1997 as an expansion of Pancott Gymnastics, one of the oldest gymnastics programs in the country. It has grown to be one of the largest competitive women's gymnastics programs in Pennsylvania, sending numerous gymnasts to Nationals and to university programs on scholarships. AJS Pancott Gymnastics offers competitive training and recreational gymnastics to hundreds of local athletes from ages 18 months to 18 years. AJS Pancott Gymnastics is owned and operated by Steve and Louise Pancott. The training center is located in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

About Living Beyond Breast Cancer:

Living Beyond Breast Cancer is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering all women affected by breast cancer to live as long as possible with the best quality of life. Programs and services include lbcc.org, the Survivors' Helpline at (888) 753-LBCC (5222), conferences, teleconferences, networking programs, newsletters, publications, and recordings.

Contact:

Sue Weldon, Event Director (610) 431-2477
Steve Pancott, Meet Director (610) 431-2477
AJS Pancott National Training Center
991 South Bolmar Street
West Chester, PA 19382

e-mail: pinkinvitational@yahoo.com

Website: www.pinkinvitational.com

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