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Cold hands, warm hearts at breast cancer run

By DON FRASER Standard Staff
Updated 16 hours ago

It was a brush with a life-threatening disease that gave Annie Eckhardt, 61, a fresh perspective on living.

Nearly five years ago, Eckhardt found a lump in her right breast.

She thought it might be a cyst, but when it was examined doctors realized it was a cancer mass.

Three months later, the Beamsville office worker had surgery to get it removed. She's been breast-cancer clean since.

She realizes not all women or men have such a good outcome.

"My situation was very simple, compared to what a lot of people go through," said Eckhardt, who was taking part in the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation CIBC Run for the Cure at Grantham Lions Park in St. Catharines.

"Even going through chemo, I had an easier time of it than a lot of others," she said, adding her experience was



St. Catharines CIBC Run for the Cure

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Brock students win fundraising award at CIBC Run for the Cure



Ben Perez/Tw Brock Press

BRYAN MEDLAND
Internal News Editor

On Oct. 2, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation CIBC Run for the Cure took place at almost 60 locations across Canada, including one here in St. Catharines. Families, friends, co-workers and Breast Cancer survivors of the Niagara Region gathered this past Sunday to show their support for what truly is a notable cause. This year, Canadians raised over \$30 million for Breast Cancer research.

The Run for the Cure is Canada's largest volunteer-led fundraising event in support of Breast Cancer and Breast Cancer research. Participants of the 1k or 5k walk or run were encouraged to register as a team and join together to make the experience more enjoyable and to help each other raise money. One team in particular from Brock University did just this, and did so in award-winning fashion.

Bryan Keenan, a property owner who rents his houses to Brock students, decided to put together a team for this year's Run for the Cure. The team was called Brock View Rentals and consisted of himself and 26 of his student tenants. The team raised over \$5,400 and won the "School Team Challenge Award", which is awarded to the top fundraising school team from each location. Keenan also personally won an award for the top fundraising Post-Secondary individual.

"I wanted to show the good that students can do," said Keenan. "I see these girls, I know them. They can do great things for the city and this was a great way to bring all my students together. This whole thing was about getting students to contribute."

Every team that registered for the Run was given its own page on the Run for the Cure Web site. Each team's page included a list of all the team members and gave people the ability to donate money to either the team or a specific team member. The team Web page also indicated how much each team member had raised, and displayed the team's and each individual's fundraising goals.

Brock View Rentals surpassed their goal of \$3,300 by over \$2,000, Keenan attributes this to the hard work and determination of his team. "I can't believe we hit it," he said. "I was on the Web site every 10 minutes watching the donations come in. I'm extremely proud of them, they deserve to be recognized."

"It sets the bar for next year. Next year is going to be huge."

Student team members felt the same way about their accomplishments with the Brock View Rentals Team.

"It always feels good when you set a goal and are able to achieve it," said team member Jessi Sandercock.

"And it feels even better when you can surpass it," Madison Vine, another teammate, said. "It's a good feeling to raise money and give back. We're all healthy and able to give back, so we might as well."

Some members of the team were even generous enough to donate their own money for the Run for the Cure. Given the financial constraints a lot of students have, donating money is a truly generous and unselfish gesture. According to members of the team, it is not just about how much money people can raise.

"It's not just about raising money, it's about raising awareness in the community," said team member Jenna Davis.

Another team member who believes this is Alyssa Redfern. Redfern was the top student fundraiser on the team and the issue hits close to home for her.

"My landlord brought it up to us and gave us the opportunity to be a part of the team," she said. "I also have friends who are in battles with breast cancer, so that was definitely a big part of it too."

"It feels really good being able to give back and not just focus on yourself all the time," said Redfern.

"A lot of adults think that we're not at a point in our lives where we can be that considerate of others, so it's nice to come out in support and show the community that we're not just a nuisance and that we can make positive changes," she said.

Keenan explained how important it is to give back to the community. He said that as a country there is only so much money the government can contribute to causes such as the Run for the Cure.

"As a country we have got to self-produce because we're maxed out," he said. "Whatever the issue is, we have to step forward as citizens and contribute."

For more information on the CIBC Run for the Cure, please visit nfortheCure.com.

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Bryan Keenan, Brock View Rentals Team Leader

THE BROCK PRESS
Tuesday, October 4, 2011

Volume 47 Number 8
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About This Student Newspaper
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