

# Bristol is turning teal

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BRISTOL – In what has become a seasonal tradition, Bristol is turning teal this September with teal ribbons distributed throughout the city as a means of raising awareness to the fight against ovarian cancer.

Teal ribbons have been run along the length of Main Street, currently, as September is National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

Judie Lodovico, an ovarian cancer survivor, said that just a few words noting one had such a condition could change lives forever. Roughly a decade ago, Tony Lodovico sought to place ribbons throughout Bristol as a means of raising awareness because he had been informed of a national campaign that also sought to bring light to ovarian cancer struggles. After time, the pair were approached by Main Street Community Foundation President and CEO Susan Sadecki.

Through a partnership, the Bristol Talks Teal Fund was created in 2013 by Tony in Judie’s name at the foundation.

“My mantra has always been the earlier the diagnosis, the better the prognosis,” she said. “I’m here because of that. I was diagnosed at a very early stage and that is the key to why we raise awareness here, so people can recognize potential symptoms. It really is possible.”

Judie stressed the campaign was not meant to be about scaring others but about being aware and having hope.

“It does not discriminate. There is no truth that you can’t be too young to not be diagnosed with ovarian cancer,” she said. “We’ve still been pushing and been very successful in Bristol.”

This will be Judie’s 20th year of surviving ovarian cancer. At one point, she had a recurrence of cancer in her spleen nearly five years after her original diagnosis but was able to overcome the challenge..

According to statistics shared by the Lodovico family, around 12 years ago, 22,000 women in the U.S. would be diagnosed with ovarian cancer, making for roughly 1 in 75 women. Around 15,000 of those would die.

“I feel sad saying this but the statistics haven’t changed. There is still much research being done,” said Judie. “The statistics haven’t changed but the awareness has and is there. People are being diagnosed earlier.”

“While she might sound cavalier about having made it this far from her original diagnosis and recurrence, she is identical to the thousands of ovarian cancer patients and survivors everywhere who have gone through surgeries and chemo and radiation and CT scans and blood tests and the safety net of regular



Dean Wright | Staff From left to right, Main Street Community Foundation President and CEO Susan Sadecki and Bristol City Marketing and Public Relations Specialist Dawn Nielsen place teal ribbons along Main Street in recognition of National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

oncologist visits and who, like her, are now cancer free,” stated a letter by the Lodovico family to be shared with potential donors to the campaign’s efforts.

Judie said while the primary goal of the “Turn the Town Teal” campaign was awareness, its ultimate goal was to save lives through early detection. The fund can also assist individuals who suffer from ovarian cancer and who can qualify for medical support.

For those interested in assisting the fund or getting a teal ribbon, call the Main Street Community Foundation at (860) 583-6363, visit 120 Halcyon Drive in Bristol or visit the foundation’s website.