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'City of Roses'



Volume XLV
Number 37



www.portlandobserver.com
Wednesday • September 14, 2016



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Impressive Record

Race for the Cure survivor gives back for 24 years

Dorothy Fuller holds an impressive record on the eve of Portland's annual Race for the Cure. She has walked and raised money for every Race for the Cure since it began in Portland 24 years ago, no matter what.

Fuller had just been diagnosed with breast cancer when she saw a race flyer on the bulletin board at the doctor's office back in 1991. She immediately decided she was going to be there. Friends definitely motivated her to join, and they also raised money in her honor.

When she talks about attending the annual event over the years, she says, "I love that it isn't competitive, but just genuine camaraderie. There is a feeling of excitement, and the atmosphere is just loving and kind."

She appreciates seeing the number of pink hats and pink bibs worn at the event by survivors. The increasing number is a clear symbol of the progress that has been made.

Fuller is a huge advocate for breast cancer awareness and is adamant that women push to get answers for their health concerns.

"I found a large lump, which I had not felt before. It concerned me. One day at work, I asked a friend and nurse if she would take a look. Her response was not to worry about it. I just couldn't let it go, so I asked a second nurse to look at it, and she suggested I visit the doctor. I did so, and the doctor also indicated that it was likely a cyst, and not to worry. My concern grew, and I pushed for tests, since I felt something was wrong and wanted more answers. Finally, the doctor gave me a biopsy, and it was cancer.

"My biggest lesson from the experience was to keep pushing, and that is what I tell others too," she says. "It can happen to anyone. My sister passed away from breast cancer very quickly just a few years ago. I remember making the decision to stay positive and focus on taking care of myself. Anyone who was negative, I just wouldn't be around them, and I didn't talk about it a lot then."

In fact, Fuller has become more of a Race for the Cure advocate

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Dorothy Fuller of Portland brings the issue of breast cancer health to her community. A cancer survivor of more than two decades, she has participated in every Portland Race for the Cure since it began 24 years ago and serves as a Komen Worship in Pink ambassador, promoting early cancer detection and screenings to church congregations.

