



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 25, 2011

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COUNTY RECOGNIZES BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. During Tuesday's General Session meeting, Franklin County Commissioners showed their support for the residents in Franklin County who are affected by breast cancer by wearing pink.

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month is an annual international health campaign organized by breast cancer charities each October to raise awareness of the disease and to raise funds for research into the cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure. National Breast Cancer Awareness Month first began in 1985 and since then mammography rates have more than doubled for women age 50 and older and breast cancer deaths have declined.

According to James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute at Ohio State's Comprehensive Cancer Center, a woman's risk of developing breast cancer over her lifetime is 1 in 8, or 12 percent. Breast cancer affects hundreds of thousands of women in the United States each year, including more than 200,000 newly diagnosed cases.

"We all know someone who has fought or is currently fighting breast cancer. And, we know that breast cancer is treatable if it's detected early," said Marilyn Brown. "I strongly encourage all women – regardless of their age, family history or race - to put their health first and get a mammogram."

The risk of getting breast cancer increases as you age. The two most important risk factors for breast cancer are being a female and getting older and most breast cancers and breast cancer deaths occur in women over the age of 50. Until more is known about preventing breast cancer, early detection and effective treatment are the best defense.

Commissioner Paula Brooks noted that breast cancer remains the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. According to information released recently by the White House, 3,700 lives would be saved each year if 90 percent of women 40 years and older received breast cancer screenings.

“I watched as my sister and aunt struggled to overcome this terrible and debilitating disease,” said Commissioner Paula Brooks. “I am so grateful to the talented medical team that supported my family during those difficult times. And, while there are significant advancement’s being made in medicine, we remain our own best advocates. We must be even more vigilant in the fight against Breast Cancer. Women, and frankly men too, should see their doctors regularly and perform self exams at home.”

Commissioners, along with agency directors and staff, wore pink on Tuesday to bring attention to Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer, other than skin cancer, among women in the United States and the second-leading cause of cancer death. This year alone, it is estimated that 207,000 American women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and nearly 40,000 will die from the disease.

“I am wearing pink today in support of my family, friends and neighbors that have fought this battle,” said Commissioner John O’Grady. “Breast Cancer affects men and women and is the most prevalent cancer in the world today. Individuals should talk with their doctor about their personal risk for breast cancer, when to start having mammograms, and how often to have them.”

Megan Savage, with Komen Columbus, joined Commissioners to speak about the importance of early detection in order to have the best chance at overcoming the disease.

The Columbus Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure® began in 1993 by a group of motivated and hardworking volunteers. That same passion, carried on throughout the years by thousands of volunteers and dedicated board and staff members, has sustained Komen Columbus and enabled us to raise more than \$13 million to support breast cancer education, screening and treatment.

2011 marked the 19th anniversary of Komen Columbus and its marquee event, the Susan G. Komen Columbus Race for the Cure®. The Komen Columbus Affiliate ranks in the top 10 for Race for the Cure participation. The 20th Annual Race for the Cure will be held on May 19, 2012.

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