

Cancer survivors celebrate

CIBC Run for the Cure

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Sun Media

Bankers Hall was tinted pink yesterday as hundreds of breast cancer survivors joined together in a tearful celebration of life to kick off the 16th annual CIBC Run for the Cure.

About 200 survivors, wearing pink shirts and scarves and white cowboy hats, filled the lobby of Bankers Hall before walking along Stephen Avenue to mark their successful battles over cancer, with 432 pink bows lining the way to symbolize the number of Canadians diagnosed with the disease every week.

The parade launched Think Pink Week, which runs until Friday, while the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation's CIBC Run for the Cure begins Sept. 30 at Southcentre Mall.

Gaydon Willis, 64, who was diagnosed with breast cancer last year despite two negative mammograms, and is con-

tinuing treatment after the disease spread to her bones, said being with other survivors and seeing the courage on their faces is inspiring.

"They've taught me how to live my life," she said, adding she is seizing all kinds of opportunities and holding her own against the disease.

"You start to realize every day is a gift — this is just a part of all that, celebrating all of that."

Heather Webber, 45, co-director of the Run For The Cure, has lived with breast cancer since 2000. She said the number of survivors in the parade has grown to 200 from the 100 who participated four years ago — which fosters an atmosphere of hope.

"You need to see what it looks like on the other side," she said.

"It takes a bubble of fear in your heart and makes it hope."

Last year, the run raised about \$2 million in Calgary



BRETT GUNDLOCK/SUN MEDIA

Gaydon Willis, who's fighting breast cancer, and Heather Webber of the CIBC Run for the Cure appear at a 200-strong parade for survivors of the dreaded disease at Bankers Hall yesterday.

and \$23 million across Canada, Webber said, adding the funds raised for research buy precious time for people afflicted with the disease.

This year's run has a golden

girl as its chairwoman in two-time Olympic speed skating gold medallist Catriona Le May Doan, who issued a big thank you to yesterday's participants on behalf of all peo-

ple who dream of a future without breast cancer.

"You are an inspiration to all of us," she told them.

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