

myoutreach reporter



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Fund-raising bagels will help provide free mammograms

Holly Conner remembers the terror of breast cancer. How much scarier it would have been if she couldn't afford treatment.

"Of course, I'm going to the doctor," she said. "Of course, I'm having the mammogram. Of course, I'm having the surgery. ... What if you got the news, and there's nothing you can do?"

Now the Choctaw woman, 54, is a breast cancer survivor. She and other survivors, volunteers and health advocates gathered at the state Capitol last week to kick off a month-long fund-raiser to help hundreds of Oklahoma women.

They met to celebrate a bagel, of all things.

The Pink Ribbon Bagel, sold at Panera Bread, is cherry dough folded into the shape of a ribbon, and it will be sold all month long in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Panera will donate 25 cents of each Pink Ribbon Bagel to local breast cancer organizations.

In the metro area, that's the Project Woman Coalition, a non-profit group that gives struggling Oklahomans free or cheap mammograms. These purchases directly help Oklahoma women. Local women.

This is the first year the Pink Ribbon Bagel, created by a Tulsa woman, will be sold nationwide. That means nearly 1,000 restaurants will donate thousands of dollars to women's health care because of one Oklahoman. Officials hope to sell 22,000 Pink Ribbon Bagels in the metro area alone.

The Pink Ribbon Bagels are made with cherry chips, cherries, cranberries, vanilla, honey and brown sugar. So, basically, it's a big pile of deliciousness.

The bagel, Conner said, is an easy way for Oklahomans to help improve health in our state. Nearly 3,000 Oklahomans will be diagnosed with breast cancer in Oklahoma this year, according to Project Woman. About 550 Oklahomans will die.

"When you survive something like that," she said, "you know how important it is for somebody who's going through it to have hope."

Panera Bread locations in the metro area:

- 3321 Northwest Expressway
- 4401 W Memorial
- 6800 N Western
- 2035 S Meridian
- 10600 S Pennsylvania
- 2200 W Main in Norman
- 1472 S Bryant in Edmond