



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**First Annual Bladder Cancer Awareness Day Draws National Attention to Serious, Underserved Illness**

*Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network Hosts Local Events to Raise Awareness About the Fifth Most Diagnosed Cancer in America*

**Bethesda, MD, July 12, 2010 —**

The [Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network](#) (BCAN) will celebrate the first annual Bladder Cancer Awareness Day on Saturday, July 17 with [more than two dozen volunteer-led events nationwide](#). In addition to raising public awareness about the risks and signs of bladder cancer, the events will serve as a forum for bladder cancer patients, survivors and their caregivers to meet and share their stories.

“Bladder cancer is the fifth most commonly diagnosed cancer in the United States, and probably the least talked about,” said Diane Zipursky Quale, president and co-founder of BCAN. “In sponsoring the first annual [Bladder Cancer Awareness Day](#), we hope to send the message to bladder cancer survivors and caregivers that they are not alone. In fact, there are over 600,000 survivors living in this country.”

The planned events, which will include picnics, candle-lighting ceremonies, and educational forums, are designed to encourage interaction between bladder cancer survivors, their families and their local communities to help shed light on this under-recognized and underserved disease. For many people living with bladder cancer, the low level of public awareness of the disease, combined with limited treatment options and relative lack of research funding, contributes to a feeling of isolation.

“I am proud to have the opportunity to share my story about living with bladder cancer, a potentially deadly disease that deserves more attention than it receives,” said [Bob Schieffer, news anchor at CBS News](#), and national spokesperson for Bladder Cancer Awareness Day. “As with many cancers, early diagnosis can increase a person’s chances of getting timely, appropriate treatment. I hope my story will inspire others to seek medical help at the first sign of bladder cancer. If one person goes to see their doctor when they first notice blood in their urine, then I may have had a part in saving a life.”

As an additional way to mark Bladder Cancer Awareness Day, [U.S. Representative Tom Rooney \(R-Fla.\) has introduced House Resolution 1445](#) to recognize July 17, 2010 as “National Bladder Cancer Awareness Day.”

Approximately 70,000 new cases of bladder cancer are diagnosed and more than 14,000 Americans die from the disease annually. Smokers are at high risk of bladder cancer. Other risk factors for bladder cancer include exposure to chemicals found in the rubber, dye, leather, printing, textile, and paint industries, as well as exposure to diesel fumes, dry cleaning fluids, and arsenic in well water. Firefighters, veterans, and hairdressers are also at higher than average risk of the disease. The most frequent symptom of the disease is blood in the urine – a signal that one should see one’s doctor immediately.

Bladder Cancer Awareness Day is being staged with national sponsorship support from GE Healthcare. To attend a local event, or for more information about bladder cancer, please visit [www.bcan.org](http://www.bcan.org) or call 888-901-BCAN.

### **About the Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network**

The Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN – *pronounced beacon*) is the first national advocacy organization dedicated to improving public awareness of bladder cancer, advancing bladder cancer research and providing information and support to people affected by bladder cancer. Founded in May 2005, BCAN is a cooperative effort among bladder cancer survivors, their loved ones and the medical community. For more information, visit [www.bcan.org](http://www.bcan.org) or call 888-901-BCAN.

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