

# TITANS of Teal



**Diane Skerry-Riche**  
Cotuit, Massachusetts US

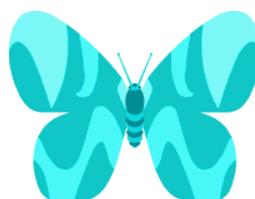
On April 21st, 2010 my life seemed "normal", until around 11:00 pm when I found my mother laying on her living room floor, confused and hallucinating. We called 911 and took her to the emergency room. After four long hours of waiting and wondering, we got a diagnosis...a metastatic brain tumor. Everyone assumed it was a result of her breast cancer returning 8 years later. A few days following the surgery the pathology came back. It was NOT breast cancer but was in fact ovarian cancer. The tests were even repeated as ovarian cancer rarely spreads to the brain, but it still came back as ovarian cancer.

It was then decided a whole body scan was in order. The results of that came back and showed cancer in various lymph nodes, chest, hip, shoulder and liver. The news was too much to digest because there was so much going on in so many different directions. I left my job to be her caretaker as she was receiving daily radiation to her brain to "clean up" any little bit of cancer that the surgery left behind. We were trying to line up health care workers, therapists and visiting nurses as well as get the equipment she needed because the tumors in her hip and shoulder had rendered them almost useless.

Her oncologist was cautiously optimistic yet really would not talk about a timeline but a year or better seemed to be the consensus. Her oncologist said that ovarian cancer usually responds well to chemotherapy treatment so when she started that, we would know more. We could not start that until the 6 week mark when she completed the radiation treatments.

At the 2 week mark after brain surgery my mothers hip broke by simply standing up as a result of the tumor at her hip and she needed femur replacement surgery. She then spent a few days in the hospital and then a week in a rehab facility before returning home.

The following week we went to the doctors to have her chemotherapy port put in and I noticed she was acting more confused again. Her oncologist did some blood work and we went home. The next day was even worse and I called the doctor to get the blood test results. I was informed my mother was suffering "multiple organ shutdown" and it was suggested I call in hospice. My mother passed away 3 days later, 1 day before she was scheduled to begin her chemotherapy and 5 weeks after being diagnosed.





**Sheryl Skerry**

Losing my mother in any way would have been difficult, but like this? I think about the symptoms she complained of; bloating, incontinence, bowel irregularities, reflux, shoulder & hip pain and yet - who would have ever guessed cancer? Since making ovarian cancer awareness my goal in life I want to cry every time I hear these stories because in so many ways they are the same, these women didn't know!

I designed a bracelet for myself as an honor to my mother and a symbol to raise awareness. Based on the feedback I received I named the bracelet Ribbons to Remember and decided to make it available and customizable to suit other's need to raise awareness to their cause or remember someone they've lost. I have since decided to start a non-profit foundation and use the proceeds of the bracelet's sales and now my glass art to help fund ovarian cancer education and awareness programs. With every item I sell, I tie on an ovarian cancer "symptom card" with a teal ribbon. You may see my mission at [www.ribbonstoremember.org](http://www.ribbonstoremember.org)