Ostomy Outlook

NEWSLETTER OF THE OSTOMY ASSOCIATION OF THE MINNEAPOLIS AREA
Volume XXV, Issue XIII, June/July/August 2011

	NEXT MEETING	HAPPY SUMMER!!
Date:	**Monday, June 20, 2011**	
Time:	**6:00 PM (note time change)**	
Place:	**United Methodist Church of Peace** 6345 Xerxes Avenue South Richfield, MN 55423 612-866-0069	
Program:	**Antless Picnic** Bring your appetite and jokes for a fun evening!	
Date:	**Monday September 19, 2011**	 **Have you paid your 2011 dues?**
Time:	**6:30 – 8:30 PM**	
Place:	**United Methodist Church of Peace**	
Program:	Appliance Fair (see page 4)	

Mailing Address:
Ostomy Association of the Minneapolis Area
PO Box 38543, Bloomington, MN 55438-5453

The Ostomy Outlook is printed and circulated for people with colostomies, ileostomies, urostomies & alternative procedures, their families and other interested persons.

Consult your MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL before using any product or procedure published in this newsletter.

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Ostomy Association of the Minneapolis Area Web Site: www.mplsuoaa.org
United Ostomy Association of America Web Site: www.uoaa.org **or** www.ostomy.org

Marlee Kivens and Amy Finley Co-President's Message/s

Don't forget the UOAA Conference is August 7-11, 2011 in Reno, Nevada. Check it out at http://www.ostomy.org/conference_2011.shtml. If you are a member of the Ostomy Association of the Mpls Area and are going, let us know. We know of a few already who are going.

Hey, look at our members here and at the National level and what they are up to:

Brenda is again riding in the Get Your Guts in Gear bike ride. This time she'll be riding through Wisconsin. Check it out. at http://www.ostomy.org/gygig.shtml. She is raising $1,800 in order to do the ride. She will also be at the Conference in August promoting her new book and speaking. Way to go, Brenda!

UOAA member Bob Baker is riding 4,000 miles on the Phoenix Tour to raise ostomy awareness and to dispel the myths and stigmas surrounding ostomy surgery. He came through Lakeville, MN last week as he continues on to Washington. Check it out at https://ostomy.myetap.org/fundraiser/phoenixtour.

If you would like to contribute to either cause, we know they would appreciate it. Most of the info can be found on the links given, or reply to us with your info and we will get you the right contact.

Amy

****Please remember to send in your Membership Renewal for 2011!**
See Page 8 For Details.

Remember: Bring your Ostomy Supplies you no longer use to the next meeting, or call any board member to arrange pickup or ship those supplies to:

FOW-USA
1500 Arlington Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206-3177

Patient Power

If you have any ideas or issues you'd like us to address, please send them in to the newsletter editor or directly to us, Darlene Hafner and Anne Marie Kronick." You can reach us by emailing dmhafner@yahoo.com or amkronick@comcast.net

By DAR HAFNER

OK... here's a little trivia question for all of you. What do all these words have in common? Balance, due date, electronic pay, co-pay, charges, account number, closing date, responsible party, allocation of a credit balance, obligated to pay, transaction, outstanding balance, pay online.....oh, and I can't forget....customer service! By now, I'm sure you have figured it out - all these words are about INSURANCE. I actually have my latest bill of an abdominal MRI next to my computer that totaled $3200, out of which I must pay $720. All these words were on the statement.

Of course I called my insurance company and customer service to verify my share that I must pay, but in some recent phone calls to my Insurance carrier I found out something new and I wanted to share it all with you.

The new word is GLOBAL INDICATOR. This word was used when I called about another bill my husband received after his recent knee replacement. We had our first post-operative appointment and the front desk lady said sternly, "You have a co-pay of $50." I told her I thought we usually had the first post-op visit free. Oh no...she was doing her job and we owed $50 on the spot. We reluctantly paid her. We got home and I went directly to the phone to call about our benefits.

During this phone call, the insurance company explained to me the GLOBAL INDICATOR. Here's the deal: When a person has a surgery the surgeon assigns the patient a GLOBAL INDICATOR. This the number of days that you can be seen by the surgeon without a charge. In my husband's case the global indicator was 120 days. The insurance company explained to me that whenever my husband saw the surgeon within that time span there would be no charge.

So I asked what my GLOBAL INDICATOR was for my abdominal abscess...well I only got a whopping 7 days, which doesn't help me much being I'm going on over 365 days. Another interesting thing I was told was if you have a surgery and the hospital staff says at discharge "Make an appointment with your regular doctor between 7-14 days," find out what your Global Indicator is and try to see your physician within that time period. Depending on the "indicator" you were assigned, it might make sense to go sooner rather than later.

If you do call your insurance company and ask about the Global Indicator after a surgery, you will feel empowered and informed...and that's what this column is all about! As for me, I still have to write my check out for $720. And I'm STILL trying to get our $50 back from the clinic that shouldn't have charged us. But I guess that's another column.

THANK YOU OAMA MEMBERS

I am truly thankful for the donations to CCFA's walk "take steps to be heard". I found OAMA members had STUFFED my donation box with $61.00. Thank you all so very much. This money will go to research so that maybe one day there will not be Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis. *Eileen C Bohrer*

Ostomy Association of the Minneapolis Area Membership Creed

As members of this group, it is important to be ever *mindful* of our many *blessings*;
our understanding families and friends, our homes, and our way of life. Most of all, as *OSTOMATES*, we need to be ever *mindful of the life* which has been given back to us and to find the *courage* to face our daily challenges. Let us continue to be *concerned for people* who need our help, our support, and the *knowledge* that we have gained. Let it be our task to *reach out* to others and to ourselves. May we do this in a *spirit of fellowship* and *fond regard*.

"As soon as you can hold a pencil, you have a job…"

At our January 17th meeting, Bob Peters recalled how those simple spoken words changed the course of his life. On July 25, 1964, while playing with his nieces, nephews and his dad's step-children in the water, Bob made a dive too deep, hitting the sandy lake bottom with his forehead. He narrowly escaped drowning. Bob was rushed to the hospital, given heavy drugs and told later he "probably would never get out of bed and would never live much past 40."

Later, his boss from Control Data (Bob was a draftsman) came to visit him. He told Bob, "It doesn't matter how long it takes. When you can hold a pencil, you have a job." That message gave Bob a promise of life. Fourteen months of rehabilitation later, he did have a job and worked for the company for 39 more years.

Bob would be the first to say to people he succeeded in life not in spite of his disability, but because of his disability. Besides writing a book, *Easy Wheelin,'* Bob has received prestigious awards from Courage Center and from the United States Congress. He also won the "Bloomington Community Foundation's Legacy Award."

Bob is a fellow ostomate and once again reminded us of the blessings of having an ostomy. He attributed his positive attitude to being accepted by your peers, and the huge role his wife Penny and his family have played in his recuperation. Now that he is retired, he is speaking to groups, inspiring them with his story of his life. We all went away from the talk feeling uplifted and thankful for the wonderful gift of life that we have been given. Thank you, Bob

***Bob would appreciate some feedback on his talk. His email address is rpeters540@aol.com

Membership Memos:

Don't' Forget!

Membership Dues are due for 2011, if you haven't paid them already!

Meetings are the third Monday of every month except for July, August, and December.

Could you bring treats to a meeting? Contact one of our board members.

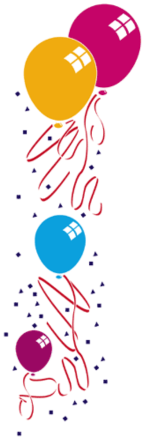
2011 Ostomy and Services Fair

This is a free event for people with ostomies and their friends and families. All are welcome!

When: Monday, September 19, 2011, 6:30-8:30pm
Where: United Methodist Church of Peace
6345 Xerxes Ave. S., Richfield, MN 55423

At 7:30pm, Brenda Elsagher will be presenting "A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to My Crisis!" Each person with an ostomy will receive one of Brenda's books, compliments of Hollister Incorporated.

Door prizes, snacks and beverages are compliments of our vendors and OAMA. Questions? Call Marlee at (612) 701-4805.



Laugh with Brenda

Best Supported Comedian

Brenda gets by with a little help from her friends

By Brenda Elsagher

There are unusual rewards that come with having an ostomy. You might say I have a "Pollyanna" attitude, but I can live with that. Life is good, and constantly changing. As my husband always says, "Life is never dull with you, Miss Brenda." I feel grateful to be around to keep torturing him.

At first, it was a tough adjustment as I tried to figure out which pouching system would work best for me. I had my trials of doo doo flying everywhere except into the pouch, and it caused me great stress in the beginning. After some research and development, I got through it with help from others and using better products.

One of the best things I did was seek help from my local ostomy support group in Minnesota. I expected to see sad looking, perhaps smelly people, milling around (I may have been projecting what I felt inside). Instead I saw attractive, smiling people and I couldn't tell who had an ostomy and who didn't. I didn't feel isolated anymore; in fact, I realized I wasn't "special" anymore. There were people like me in Minnesota living life to the fullest and I intended to join them. They gave me tips and encouragement. From that moment on, I knew I was no longer alone.

Two peas in a pod: Brenda Elsagher and Carol Larson

One perk of joining a support group was meeting new friends. One evening, I invited Carol Larson out for dinner. As we talked, we realized we were both writing books about our experiences with colon cancer. The conversation has been nonstop ever since that meeting. We have written three books each, all different from the others.

I joined the support group board and eventually became the president. One year, Carol was elected president, and another year, we served as co-presidents. We even co-taught a class at the UOAA National Conference in New Orleans called *How to Make Meetings Fun*. I don't know if the audience had fun, but we sure did. While I got involved with GYGIG (Get Your Guts in Gear™), a three-day, 210-mile bike ride, Carol got involved with GYRIG (Get Your Rear In Gear), a 5K run that's held across the nation.

Later, Carol would win the Breaking Boundaries award for 3C, Colorectal Cancer Coalition, and I would win the Advocacy to Action award for GYRIG. As a result of our parallel lives, we have shared many dinners, visits with members of Congress, and lots of laughs. Our friendship is a blessed side effect of having an ostomy.

Before ostomy surgery, I was a hairstylist, business owner, wife, and mom. I was happy with my life and then along came an ostomy. Though I was challenged in many ways, I received many gifts, too. I discovered a love for comedy and telling stories. I have been unstoppable in letting everybody know that an ostomy is not shameful, gross, or the worst thing in the world. What's worse is when a small child who has been eating pizza and drinking orange pop suddenly projectile vomits all over your new white cashmere sweater. Okay, there are ostomy moments that are not too sweet, but overall, my ostomy has been a gift — the gift that keeps on giving!

Hollister Incorporated has been a great supporter by allowing me to write this quarterly column. I've witnessed their sincere care and commitment to all people with ostomies. We are fortunate to have them in our corner. These days I enjoy relationships with people who have ostomies via Facebook, my blog on C3Life.com, the UOAA Conference, various audiences, and my books. The riches that my ostomy has brought me include a longer life, great friends, creativity, and a forum to educate the general public about colon cancer screening. Thanks, dear readers, for being part of my life. You enhance it greatly with your phone conversations, lovely notes, book orders, and e-mails. Keep it up!

Brenda Elsagher is a comic, national keynote speaker, and author of three books: If the Battle is Over, Why am I Still in Uniform?, I'd like to Buy a Bowel Please!, and Bedpan Banter. Look for information about her upcoming fourth book, It's in the Bag and Under the Covers, in this newsletter.

Want to order your own copy of one of Brenda's current books? Call Brenda at 1.952.882.9882or go to her website at www.livingandlaughing.com.

C3 COLORECTAL® CANCER COALITION

FightColorectalCancer.org

Dear Carol,

The spending bill the House of Representatives is considering this week proposes drastic cuts to colorectal cancer programs. While everyone agrees that budget cuts are needed to reduce the federal deficit, it is up to us to tell Congress where our priorities lie so that they do not pass a bill that is harmful to cancer patients. **We cannot afford to stay silent and see drastic cuts to funding for federal colorectal cancer programs**.

The majority of all colorectal cancer research, including clinical trials, is conducted by the federal government. Federal funding also supports colorectal cancer symptom awareness and screening programs.

Gordon attributes his survival to government-funded clinical trials.

Eight years ago, Gordon was diagnosed with stage IV colorectal cancer. Since then, he's had radiation, chemotherapy, two liver resections, colon resection, radiofrequency ablation, and two lung resections. Like many cancer patients, Gordon's doctor referred him to a clinical trial. **Gordon and his doctors credit the treatment he received in a federally funded clinical trial and continuing chemo with saving his life.**

"Because of those treatments, I am alive today. *I am staying well, seeing my family grow and prosper, and living a life that wouldn't have been possible without federally funded research," says Gordon. "Though I am grateful for the treatment I received, there is still much research that needs to be done and now is not the time to cut funding for colorectal cancer research programs."*

Like Gordon, many men and women who have been diagnosed with colorectal cancer attribute their survival to clinical trials and research funded by the government.

Tell your Representative to OPPOSE any cuts to colorectal cancer research funding.

TAKE ACTION NOW

C3's mission is to win the fight against colorectal cancer through research, empowerment and access.

Colorectal Cancer Coalition
1414 Prince Street, Suite 204
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-548-1225
Toll Free Answer Line: 1-877-4CRC-111 (1-877-427-2111)

Quote of the Month:

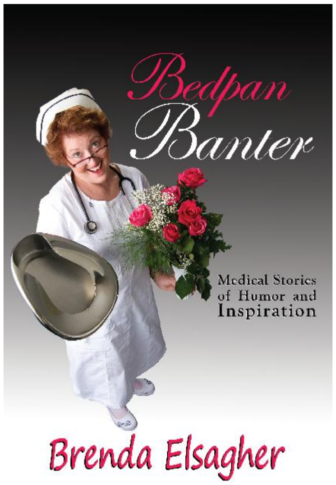
Be the change you wish to see in the world - Gandhi

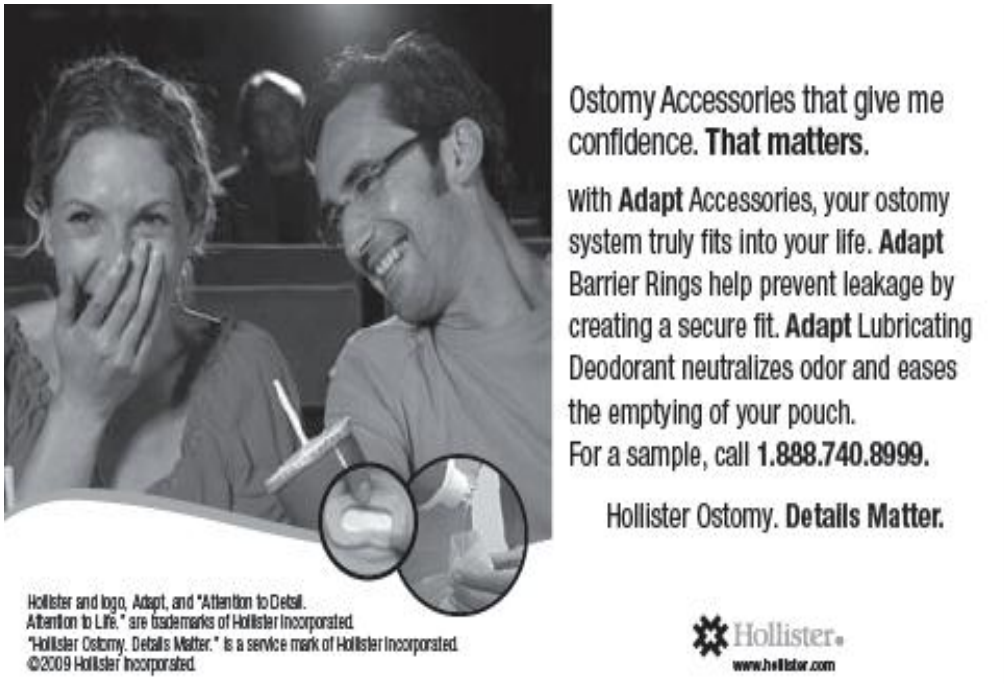
Colon Cancer Coalition

GET YOUR REAR IN GEAR

OUR VISION

- To establish a colon cancer event or align with an existing event in every state to help raise awareness and funds to adequately support colorectal cancer activities at both the local and national level.
- To recruit partners from local and national businesses, health organizations, media and those touched by colon and rectal cancer to help develop these events.
- To assist local organizers in identifying and directing funds raised to the best local organizations or programs that ensure our mission that all citizens have adequate information and access to screening for colorectal cancer.





Ostomy Association Of The
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To:

Please enroll me as a new member of the Ostomy Association of the Minneapolis Area
Or ** Renew My Membership**

If you haven't enrolled, 2011 Annual dues are $25 and are due following your submittal of this form. Membership in the Ostomy Association of the Minneapolis Area includes 8 informative meetings, subscription to the **"Ostomy Outlook"** newsletter and an "Antless picnic" in June.

OAMA
PO Box 385453
Bloomington, MN 55438-5453

I have a: Colostomy ☐ Ileostomy ☐ Urostomy (ileal diversion) ☐ Other ☐ Non-ostomate ☐

Name:____________________________ Email Address: ______________________
Street:____
City:________________________ State:______ ZIP: ____________ Phone: ( ) _________

As a tax exempt Organization, all contributions and dues are tax deductible

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OSTOMY ANNIVERSARY

The Anniversary of my stoma is ____/____/____, and in order to celebrate my return to good health, I am contributing the sum of _________ or $_______ per year for my stoma.
I hereby grant permission to print my name in the Chapter Newsletter.
Name_________________________ Years________ Amount $____________

Send this form with your check, Payable to OAMA

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