



Sharing

Faith



On a rainy Sunday afternoon in October, 72 friends and family members of Kathy Mills came together to take part in a beautiful prayer service in Kathy's front yard in Troy.

One to One is devoted to the on-going support of those newly diagnosed, those in remission and those in recurrence.

100% of contributions directly benefit our group by providing activities and paying for expenses.

Donations are gratefully accepted and can be made by check payable to **One to One Ovarian Cancer Support Group** c/o Marilyn Brozovic 4793 Alton Dr. Troy, MI 48085

A receipt will be provided for tax purposes.

Kathy has remained tenaciously filled with grace and positivity since her ovarian cancer diagnosis on December 23rd of 2020, and she has relied on family from across the country, and friends from many different areas of her life, to lift her up when she needed it most. The prayer service was profoundly inspirational. The theme of the service was taken from a prayer card which Kathy's husband, John, had received when he was sick with esophageal cancer seven years ago. The prayer card contained promises that God has made to us. Kathy's story of how each one of these promises -

I will protect you ... I will comfort you ... I will give you peace

- have come to fruition for her throughout these last few months, was both heart-warming and uplifting.

The St. Thomas More Parish choir, of which Kathy is a member, led the group in several hymns. Information about ovarian cancer was shared, a few others spoke, and it wasn't long before the umbrellas were put away, jackets were taken off as the rain stopped and the sun began to pop through. What started as a cloudy, rainy day at the time of the first hymn (appropriately titled "Rain Down"), ended with the sun brightly shining and everyone in attendance filled with HOPE.



PROFILE IN *Courage*

By Marilyn Brozovic and
Jeanine Dunaj



Marcia Gurche doesn't have much time to think about the fact that she is an ovarian cancer survivor. She is too busy working to raise awareness of this disease, calling on newly diagnosed patients, volunteering at events such as the Reeling and Healing fly fishing experiences, and serving as co-facilitator of the *One to One* Support Group.

Marcia was diagnosed at age 52 with Stage IIIC clear cell epithelial ovarian cancer in December 2000. Her story is fairly typical, in that for months she experienced uncomfortable GI symptoms and sought the help of her internist and a gastroenterologist. She suffered two gallbladder attacks and began to lose weight and have difficulty eating. Her internist sent her for an ultrasound of the gallbladder, which confirmed gall stones, and then to a surgeon who performed gall bladder surgery. After the surgery Marcia continued to lose weight and did not have an appetite, due to a feeling of fullness and discomfort in the abdomen. Her internist did a blood workup and because her hemoglobin was low, he suspected a recurrence of a previous ulcer. A subsequent endoscopy showed no ulcer present, which led Marcia to suspect the worst. When a tumor was discovered, the doctor could not tell if it was cancerous and ordered a hysterectomy, assuring her that 90% of the time, these tumors are benign. Because they anticipated just a routine hysterectomy, Marcia told her children not to take time off from work or school. To this day, she regrets that her husband, **Al**, was alone when the surgeon gave him the news that the tumor was malignant and that she had ovarian cancer. She underwent an intense round of chemotherapy in early 2001 and thankfully has been in remission ever since.

Marcia's family has always been a strong support for her, never more so than during her bout with cancer. She and Al, a retired schoolteacher and guidance counselor, first met in 1967 at a high school function. Three years later they were married, and in 2020 they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Their daughter **Allison**

is a special education teacher at Fraser High School. She has three lovely girls of her own: **Kyra** is in her third year of college, **Payton** has just completed her certification in the field of HVAC and has landed a new job, and **Brielle** is a high school senior. Marcia and Al's younger son **Rob** works in architectural design and recently married his sweetheart, **Emily**. **Greg**, the Gurche's older son, passed away unexpectedly in February 2020. It was a blessing that the Covid lockdown had not yet begun, so they were able to celebrate the life of this remarkable young man in an especially meaningful way.

(Cont.'d on next page)




Marcia's passion for ovarian cancer awareness led her to take on the role of Michigan Coordinator for presenters in the *Survivors Teaching Students*® program. This educational program brings ovarian cancer survivors and caregivers into the classroom to educate future healthcare providers about the disease by sharing stories of their own cancer journeys. Marcia recruits presenters for 16 participating schools in Michigan and is also a facilitator for the presentations. In a similar vein, she is a speaker and facilitator for the **SPEAK** program (Survivors Providing Early Awareness and Knowledge) to educate the general public about ovarian cancer.

In addition to her volunteer work, Marcia drops by regularly to provide care for her 101-year-old mother, Mary McIntyre. (There are definitely strong genes in her bloodline!) In her free time, Marcia loves to read, take walks, and visit family. She is also very willing to try her hand at any new craft and always seems to have a project in the works.

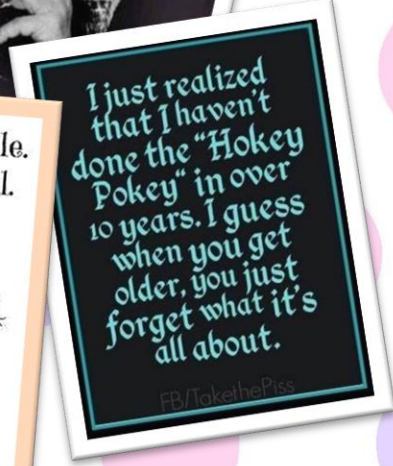
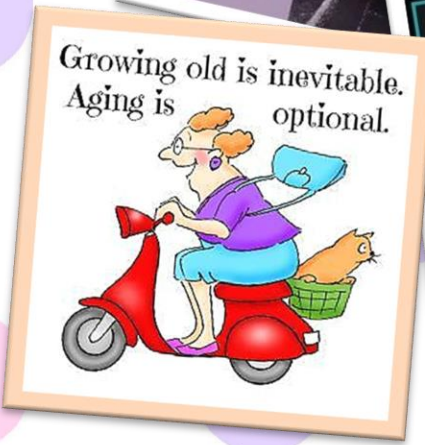
Marcia would be the first to tell you that even a cancer journey can have bright moments. For instance, at the time of her chemo treatments, Marcia's daughter and granddaughter accompanied her to a shop to purchase a hairpiece. Seeing baby Kyra take her first steps while Marcia was trying on wigs made for an especially sweet memory. And, she relates that one of the best things to happen to her following her diagnosis was that her oncology nurse, Anna, encouraged her to join this ovarian cancer support group! Here, Marcia has met some of the most courageous and fun-loving women she could ever imagine. Many of them have become her closest friends and she refers to them as "*cancer rewards*."

So, what else should you know about Marcia? Know that she is the one who:

Writes dozens of articles for the *One to One* newsletter yet balks at any mention of her own name; "teals" multiple towns each September to raise cancer awareness; always finds time to listen and console and encourage those who are struggling with their own disease; would have you believe that she is nothing special. We all know better. 



Old age is golden, or so I've heard it said,
But sometimes I wonder, as I crawl into bed,
With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup,
My glasses on the table until I get up.
As sleep dims my vision, I say to myself:
Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf?
The reason I know my youth is all spent?
Is my get-up-and-go as got up and went!
But, in spite of it all, I'm able to grin
And think of the places my getup has been!





HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Our annual Holiday Luncheon will be a little different this year. For those who are comfortable going to a restaurant, we will be meeting at

The Masters Restaurant
1775 E. Thirteen Mile
Madison Heights
Saturday, December 11th
at 11:30 AM



The Masters Restaurant

Each guest will pay for her own meal. If you would like to join us and haven't already done so, please email Marcia at mgurche@gmail.com by **November 25th**. Hope to see you then!



Hired a handy man and gave him a list. When I got home, only #1, 3, & 5 were done. Turns out, he only does odd jobs.

HAPPY SURVIVORSary!



Barbara Solms	30 years!
Georgia Roed	16
Anita Dukich	13
Janice Fero	8
Krystal Donovan	6
Jen Murakami	4
Jo Kwasny	3
Tina Roberts	3
Desiree Swiney	3
Mimi Gass	2

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Please join us for our ZOOM meetings at 4:00 pm on the second and fourth Thursdays each month.

*** November 11 ***

*** December 9 ***

*** January 13 and 27, 2022 ***

An email will be sent to everyone four days prior to each video support group meeting asking if you would like to participate. A separate email with a link will be sent to those who reply.

If your SURVIVORSary is missing, we did not receive an updated form from you.

Please contact Marilyn Brozovic via email: brozovicm87@gmail.com

Newsletter information is presented in summary form, is general in nature and provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended in any way to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

Objectives of support group:

- ✦ *Provide a forum for ovarian cancer patients to address concerns;*
- ✦ *Support each other through initial treatment phase, during potential recurrence, and with issues related to long term survival;*
- ✦ *Establish core group of survivors willing to visit newly diagnosed patients;*
- ✦ *Increase awareness of ovarian cancer, including its symptoms and risk factors, in the hope of achieving earlier detection and treatment.*