



Ovarian Cancer Support Group

THE
POWER
OF

Sisterhood



This year's **Girls' Getaway Weekend** took on new meaning since we have not been able to come together for over a year and many of us were actually meeting for the first time. It was a remarkable Labor Day weekend, with everything coordinated to perfection for our gathering at the **St. Paul Retreat Center**. The cover of our beautiful, printed program depicted a circle of women with the words *"The circles of women around us weave invisible nets of love that carry us when we are weak and sing with us when we are strong."* This set the tone for the entire weekend which was filled with sharing, learning, and growth.



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.

Friday evening's ice breaker was a take on **"Speed Dating,"** where we took a few minutes to get to know a little about each other. Short and sweet, but fun. Saturday morning's first session, **"Good Food Choices,"** with **Deanna Dahlinger**, was informative and interesting, and gave us this fun fact: The **six best doctors** are **Water, Exercise, Sunshine, Fresh Air, Good Diet, and Rest.** **Anita Surma** led a relaxing **Tai Chi session** stressing the importance of being in the moment through movement, breath and mindfulness. Many of us took advantage of the opportunity to receive a **massage** from one of the three incredible massage therapists who, all weekend, worked tirelessly to help us unwind. Our own **Sharon Witkowski** shared her skills as a massage therapist and dedicated a good portion of her weekend so we could be as chilled as possible by the end of our time together. There were a lot of creative juices flowing as the ladies learned **reverse plate painting**, and some beautiful keepsake serving plates went home as a result of their efforts. The afternoon **music therapy** session with Far Conservatory's **Kirsten Kyle**, was delightful! Singing to well recognized popular songs brought out the fun side in everyone. Add in a little opportunity to dance to the oldies and it was a perfect session. Mass was offered in the late afternoon for anyone who wanted to attend, and in the evening, our own chaplain, **Rev. Renee Machiniak**, led an outdoor **meditation walk**. Both evenings allowed for downtime and an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other and enjoy snacks and beverages in a relaxed atmosphere.

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Leaving Sunday morning is always bittersweet. This year we were sent off by a truly empowering talk from [Lizbeth O'Malley](#). She reminded us how important it is to be a part of a sisterhood. She spoke about how women are phenomenal healers and that healing comes through shared experiences. That is something we encounter as members of our support group. Lizbeth's talk was the ideal way to end a perfect weekend.

We hope those who couldn't make it might consider attending next year. Many thanks to [Marilyn Brozovic](#) for all her hard work organizing the event, and thanks to those who came and helped make it so much fun!

- Be brave enough to be the "3:00 in the morning friend."
- We'll hold them up when they can't seem to find the strength to hold themselves up, and they will do the same for us.
- Sometimes that companionship is the only way to get through the day.
- Women are also phenomenal healers. And healing comes through shared experiences.



YOU'RE INVITED

Managing CHEMO SIDE EFFECTS Together

You and a guest are invited to a complimentary morning of education and exercise presented by the students from **Oakland University's Physical Therapy Program** on

Saturday, October 30th
10 am - 12 pm
(Registration begins at 9:30 am)

Our *One to One* group, in conjunction with the *Sharing and Caring* breast cancer group, is coordinating the event and we feel fortunate to have this opportunity to work with these amazing students once again. We have partnered with them in the past and each event has proven to be a truly educational and beneficial experience.

This year's topics being covered are: **Combating Fatigue and Improving Energy**; **Chemo Brain**, which includes education about its effect and how meditation can provide relief; and **Balance in Motion**, which addresses safe exercise techniques and core stability. You are sure to learn something useful from all that these dedicated students have to share, whether you are in treatment now or just getting a little older. And, fear not -- exercises will be adjusted for all levels of fitness.

The event will be held at **Oakland University**, in Rochester, in the **Human Health Building**. Masks will be required for the event. Space is limited so you need to RSVP soon! There will be a door prize exercise ball, TheraBand, and more, for those who attend. Free, easy-access parking is right outside the building.

Please RSVP (you and your guest) by **October 18th**
to **Marilyn Brozovic**: call **248-561-2027** or email **brozovicm87@gmail.com** to reserve your spot!

DID YOU KNOW ... that Beaumont offers \$1 per minute **massage** and **Reiki** for inpatients at Royal Oak or Troy, based on staff availability?

A patient, family member, caregiver, etc. can simply call **Integrative Medicine** at **248-964-9200** and request an inpatient treatment. Credit cards are accepted over the phone, plus you can purchase gift certificates, which make wonderful gifts for a family member or friend. The certificates can be used for any services. If the patient is discharged and unable to use the certificate, it can be used in Integrative Medicine.



PROFILE IN *Courage*

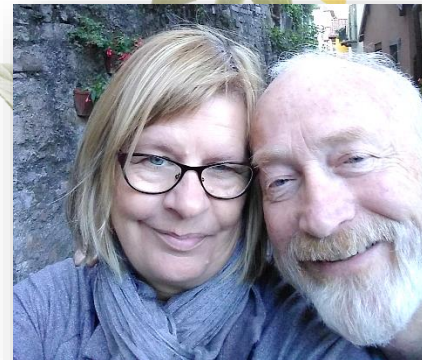
By Marcia Gurche

I caught up with **Bridget Smith** shortly after she and her husband, **Alan**, returned from a vacation at a rental cabin in Leelanau on Lake Michigan. They have been going there for close to 20 years. It is always a wonderfully relaxing trip where they spend endless hours walking along the beach and enjoying the sights of nature, particularly the beautiful birds, which they have learned to identify and appreciate. Their little three-year-old Brittany Spaniel, Sunny, accompanies them and keeps them on their toes.

While their vacation destination was paradise, it sounds like their own home property is heavenly as well. They live on five acres of land in Milford, which borders Kensington Metro Park. Bridget is a big veggie gardener and tending to her large garden has been a perfect way to keep busy once Covid hit and throughout her cancer treatments. She has had to become creative in discovering which plants and vegetables the deer *don't* like, and she calls all her unfenced gardens the “salad bars.”



Besides gardening for their own use, Bridget and Alan were in an early group who started a community garden in Milford which raised food for the Community Food Bank. They raised organic fruits and vegetables to give to those in need – 1200 pounds one year alone.



Bridget and Alan have been married for 26 years. They met through a friend after Bridget returned to Michigan from Austin, Texas to help open the Whole Foods store in Ann Arbor. Alan had three grown sons at the time and Bridget feels blessed to have inherited a ready-made family. Alan's sons are **Ron**, who is married to **Nancy**, **Frank**, and **Brian**, who is married to **Julie**. Everyone lives locally except Brian and Julie, who reside in Tucson, Arizona. Alan and Bridget are proud grandparents to **Frank**, **Alex**, **Nick** and **Samantha** and they are great-grandparents to **Brock**, **Cameron**, **Jack**, **Jordan**, **Connor** and **Luke**. Bridget used to enjoy babysitting for some of her great-grands prior to Covid, but hasn't been able to do that recently. Their home is the perfect setup for family get-togethers and they enjoy hosting parties that include croquet, badminton, and barbeques. Sadly, due to Covid and another recurrence for Bridget, it has been difficult for the family to be able to get together safely.

Bridget was the second oldest child of eight and was born and raised in Royal Oak where she attended Dondero High School. Her dad still lives in the house she grew up in and at age 93 is still active and drives himself around, even though he was diagnosed with rectal cancer three years ago. Unfortunately, Bridget's family has a history of cancer and she has lost two sisters to this disease, one sister dying from breast cancer and the other from cervical cancer. Bridget was a caregiver for her sister, **Julie**, who passed away in 2011. Bridget's own diagnosis of ovarian cancer came in 2003. She was cancer free for ten years and then suffered her first recurrence. Since then, she has been on numerous chemotherapy treatments and PARP inhibitors.

Alan and Bridget have a shared love of travel and adventure. They have always enjoyed camping and canoeing, and Alan was an avid rock climber at one time. In 1996 they took a nine-week tent trip into the Rockies from Vancouver and down into San Francisco. They described themselves as the “Cabernet Campers,” since they were rigged with L.L. Bean cots and some of the more comfortable equipment on the market.

Bridget has also enjoyed some extensive international travel. Her sister, Julie, was a teacher for the Steiner Schools in London, so Bridget visited her there many times. She actually landed in London on 9/11/2001 and was shocked to hear about the devastation which had occurred in New York that day. She was amazed by the outpouring of love for our country, which she witnessed from the British. Bridget has also been to France and Italy and once made a jaunt to Ireland to visit with relatives. Here she was amazed to note the striking resemblance to members of her immediate family.

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Bridget has a creative soul and enjoys trying new things. Being detail oriented, she particularly enjoyed studying book binding at Hollander's. She has also been very interested in basket making – mostly sculptural ones. Her newest interest is embroidery, which she has done in the past and is just now getting back into it.



In her younger years she played the violin and for her birthday, Alan gave Bridget a ukulele. She took it up north with them and has just begun to get used to the strings. Since Alan has previously studied classical guitar, it seems that there might be a dynamic musical duo on the horizon!



October 14 Meeting Info



Guest Speaker: Dr. Julie Fattore, DDS
Topic: Dental Care During and After Chemotherapy

Dr. Fattore has been passionate about the field of dentistry for over 30 years. She was graduated from U of M School of Dentistry with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and Dental Hygiene. She values her patient relationships, delivering gentle and compassionate care with a high level of doctor accessibility.



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

- * October 14 and 28 *
- * November 11 *
- * December 9 *

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.

HAPPY SURVIVORsary!

Linh Cundiff	36 years!
Shirley O'Brien	29
Jill Price-Winters	26
Norma Sullivan	24
Carol Holder	20
Carol Kay	20
Toni Tarczy	18
Robin Binder	12
Carol Kausch	9
Adele Megdall	5



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.

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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.*