



# Girls' Getaway

weekend

A special delivery early Saturday morning started off our 2022 Girls' Getaway Weekend in a unique way, as each lady attending received a vibrant rose and a beautiful ovarian cancer bracelet from **Dan Bowdich**, husband of **Joline**. A special thank you to Dan for such thoughtful and heartwarming gifts!

We kicked off our Saturday program with giggles during an invigorating session of Laughter Yoga, led by **Laura Lerman**, Certified Laughter Yoga teacher. We learned that laughter boosts our immune system by decreasing stress hormones and increasing immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving our resistance to disease. It relieves pain, gives our abs a workout, and protects our heart and lungs by increasing our heart rate and oxygen levels, which both improve the functioning of blood vessels and blood circulation.

Each attendee had the opportunity to receive a relaxing massage by one of our amazing massage therapists, **Heather, Anna**, or our own **Sharon Witkowski**.

An additional opportunity for relaxation was the chance to experience acupuncture administered by **Dan Devine**, licensed Acupuncturist with Beaumont Integrative Medicine. Private and group sessions were offered, and it was a great opportunity to try this form of traditional Chinese medicine.

**Anita Surma**, a physical therapist and certified Tai Chi instructor, was back due to popular demand, and she did not disappoint. Her session on "Moving Meditation" was informative and rewarding and brought awareness of the fact that *being in the moment* washes away stress, anxiety, and even pain.



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.

**Emily Olson**, Arts and Mindfulness Coach, took us through a session using writing as a tool for self-discovery. New techniques and a different spin on journaling were shared, and we thoroughly enjoyed Emily's "Seeking Wisdom with Words-Assembly."

While cutting ribbons and twist-tying them onto the wreath forms proved to be a bit tricky, many beautiful fall wreaths were created by the ladies during our crafting session. As more and more ribbons were added to the forms and the wreaths began to take shape, a sense of accomplishment emerged. Being able to take home a beautiful, "trendy" wreath in the end proved to be well worth the effort.

Our Teal Trading on Saturday was especially fun as the ladies engaged in some lively exchanges. The gloves came off when one person's gift looked too good to pass up, and a "steal" was called for. No hard feelings, of course, as every transaction was legal!

Sunday morning's session, led by **Denise Ervin**, was entitled "Storytelling for Health & Wellbeing." Denise encouraged us to become empowered to serve as our own advocates in our healthcare journey by creating our own story, which can help give us strength when dealing with health care issues.

We are grateful to **Marilyn Brozovic** for organizing this wonderful weekend and being at the helm of our *One to One* group. Thanks for all you do, Marilyn!



# PROFILE IN *Courage*

By Marcia Gurche

**C**hristine Babisch had accepted that she would lose her hair after her first chemotherapy treatment following her ovarian cancer diagnosis in March of 2017. When she had her fourth recurrence in February 2022, she was not happy about the prospect of losing her hair yet again, so she became her own advocate and began researching ways to receive the treatment she needed and still keep her hair. She had learned about polar cold caps when she was first diagnosed, but at that time she thought they would require too much work. Last February, however, after a pre-training for the cold caps, Christine began her diligent quest to keep her hair through her treatment. We were grateful that Christine shared her knowledge of cold cap therapy with us at one of our recent Zoom support group meetings and we followed it up with an article in our newsletter.



A quick recap (no pun intended) of how cold cap therapy works: *The cold temperature of the cap constricts the blood vessels beneath the skin of the scalp, preventing the chemotherapy medicine from reaching the hair follicles, therefore allowing the patient to preserve their hair. This process is referred to as vasoconstriction. The cold also slows down the hair follicle metabolism, making the hair cells dormant or less active, further preventing the absorption of chemotherapeutic drugs. The caps are kept in a freezer until the day of chemotherapy. They are then removed and placed in a cooler of dry ice the day of treatment. The first cool cap is placed on the patient's head to cool the scalp one hour prior to beginning treatment. The caps must be changed every 30 minutes during treatment and for three hours after treatment. It's important to have a support person to help with the packing and unpacking of the cool cap and applying the cold cap to the patient's head. Ears and other exposed skin must be protected during the entire process. Proper technique and making sure that the temperature of the cold caps is optimal are very important.*



Use of cold cap therapy takes a lot of effort and a lot of determination by an individual. Christine is definitely a determined person who feels that the effort is worth it, and she is once again undergoing treatment for a recurrence and is using the cold cap method to thwart hair loss.

Christine has been married to her husband, **Todd**, for 22 years. They met when they were both working for the same company, DCT. They were married in Hawaii and enjoyed taking their

daughter back there in 2019 for their 19<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. At the time Christine met Todd, she was going to school and working on an associate's degree in Business Management. After completing this program, she had begun working on a bachelor's degree when she switched gears and changed her focus to computer technology. She worked in the IT field for 25 years. After 16 years with Comerica Bank, she retired from her job as a Network Administrator in order to concentrate on her health. Todd is presently a director of Auto Sales


for Fanuc Robotics. Christine and Todd have one daughter, **Brooke**, (19), who is attending Oakland University and headed for a degree in business.



Christine was raised in New Baltimore and went to school in Anchor Bay. She met her best friend, Mary, at the bus stop when Mary was a first grader and Christine was beginning second grade. She and Mary have remained extremely close for 45 years and they are like an extension of each other. They love to hang out and travel together, know what each other is thinking, and even complete each other's sentences! They have spent so much time together over the years that Mary's dad even taught Christine how to drive. Mary has been Christine's rock ever since her diagnosis and she goes to the doctor with her and asks the questions that Christine doesn't always think to ask. She has been Christine's support person for her cold cap therapy many times. After Christine researched the cold cap therapy and knew it was what she wanted to pursue, she realized she needed an ally. Mary was just that person, jumping right in and learning the process required to successfully apply the cold caps.

Christine's mother passed away from ovarian cancer in 1996. Her dad, **Walter**, has since remarried and lives with his wife, **Carol**, in Clinton Township. Christine has two brothers, **Walter** and **David**, and five nieces and nephews. She and Todd share a cottage in Lewiston with her brother-in-law and sister-in-law. For the last ten years they have loved going up north where they enjoy the beach in the summer and have great fun using the side-by-sides and snowmobiles in the fall and winter. Since Christine, Todd, and Brooke all like to golf, they can golf at Garland when up north and they also do a lot of golfing down state as well. Christine considers herself a "decent" golfer and even though she says that she isn't very competitive, she does have a golf simulator in the garage. (Hmm... maybe just a *bit* competitive!)

Christine is an animal lover, and she has a cat named Lexi. Sadly, she recently lost her beloved cat, Lilly, who was 15 years old, and she had a schnauzer who lived to the age of thirteen. She really enjoys yard work, being outside, and home renovations. That's what keeps her going. She's good at organizing and she and Mary have a trip planned to Florida to clean a new house which Mary has recently bought.

Christine has recently started on treatment with Doxil and Avastin because she has become platinum resistant. Despite her multiple recurrences, Christine lets nothing stand in her way. She is active and determined to stay happy and productive. Christine always tells people to NEVER GIVE UP and ALWAYS KEEP SEARCHING for new treatments and answers. Great advice from an exceptional lady! 



The city of Berkley is looking a little prettier since several of our support group members tied teal ribbons on the downtown lampposts in September to help raise awareness during Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. A special thank you to Karen Simister, Dan and Joline Bowdich, Rick and Marilyn Brozovic, and Al and Marcia Gurche for taking the time to help with this educational effort.



# Physical Therapy Event

Due to the positive response by those who attended last year's event, students from **Oakland University's Physical Therapy Program** will be hosting another morning of education and exercise geared just for us. This amazing group of young people have a complimentary event planned which will bring together both breast and ovarian cancer survivors and their caregivers, in an environment that will leave us empowered to take on the world. They will provide us with a comprehensive, immersive and interactive experience, which will include education, exercise, and mental health components.

Mark your calendars for this "Find Your Happy" program:

**Oakland University**, located in Rochester, in the **Human Health Building**.  
**Saturday, November 12**  
 10 am – 12 pm  
 (Registration begins at 9:30 am)  
**Note: Space will be limited**



*Please support these dedicated students while you benefit from their knowledge and expertise. More details to come!*



Our annual **Holiday Luncheon** is fast approaching. We will once again be holding our luncheon at the **Master's Restaurant** in Madison Heights. This year's event will be held on

**Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>** at **11:30am**. Please mark your calendars now for this enjoyable afternoon with old friends and new. More information will follow in our next newsletter.



## HAPPY SURVIVORsary!

Linh Cundiff	37 years!
Shirley O'Brien	30
Jill Price-Winters	27
Norma Sullivan	25
Carol Holder	21
Carol Kay	21
Toni Tarczy	19
Robin Binder	13
Carol Kausch	10
Adele Megdall	6
Rose Wisniewski	3

**Newsletter Editors:**

**Marilyn Brozovic**

4793 Alton  
 Troy, MI 48085  
 248-561-2027  
[brozovicm87@gmail.com](mailto:brozovicm87@gmail.com)

**Marcia Gurche**

42508 JoEd  
 Sterling Hgts., MI 48314  
 586-323-0838  
[mgurche@gmail.com](mailto:mgurche@gmail.com)

**Patient Advocate:**

**Patty Kurpinski**

586-850-0152  
[patkurp@yahoo.com](mailto:patkurp@yahoo.com)

**Asst. Editor/Layout:**

**Jeanine Dunaj**

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**meeting**

Group meetings are held on the **2nd Thursday** of the month at **4 pm**. Meetings are in-person at the **Berkley Public Library** and are also held via Zoom. You are welcome to join us for dinner at **The Avenue Restaurant**, located on Woodward just north of 13 Mile following the meeting.

**October 13**  
**November 10**

***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.*