



Motivation for Movement



The physical therapy students from Oakland University outdid themselves once again with the wonderful **Motivation for Movement** event which they presented for our combined *One to One* and *Sharing and Caring* cancer support groups.

The students, with the support of their amazing instructors, did an outstanding job in organizing and executing the event. They shared a lot of helpful and interesting information about health and body function and how it impacts our lives. They then turned up the heat by getting us up and moving with some catchy music and aerobic dance moves, followed by a few helpful exercise examples which can be done at home. Additionally, each participant went home with a packed swag bag and there were seven lucky winners of a Garmin watch, which the students gave away as door prizes. We are so fortunate to be able to partner with these dedicated young people each year and we know they are going to make wonderful physical therapists when they graduate in May.

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.



Girls Getaway weekend

It could safely be said that a good time was had by all who attended this year's *Me, Myself & I* weekend. Marilyn Brozovic worked her magic planning, coordinating, checking, and double-checking details to ensure that every possible element was seen to. We experienced Tai Chi, Integrative Oncology & Survivorship, a craft making holiday gnomes, laughter yoga, massages, music therapy, and the Power & Brilliance of our Brain. So much laughter, sharing and support! Here are a couple testimonials from two of the retreat attendees:

From **Nancy Nordlie**:

I have already submitted my survey, but wanted to email you three wonderful women to offer a heartfelt thank you for an unforgettable weekend. I have not laughed so much or felt so much joy since, well, I just don't know when! All the presenters were lovely, and Gail's presentation brought the importance of the mind/body/spirit connection, plus our experience over the weekend, into one focus. It showed us how important humor, playfulness, self-care, and joy are for healing. I, for one, plan to prioritize these aspects of self-care in the future. Breathing, laughing, creative crafting, music, mindful movement, healthy eating, joyful socializing and the grounding of guided meditations and the opportunity for spiritual reflection at mass - what a recipe for healing.



From **Melinda Mack**:

This was my first time attending this retreat. I had heard good things about it from others but I really didn't know what to expect. The whole experience exceeded my expectations. I came in knowing a few people and when I left, I felt I made some friendships with people that truly understood what I had just gone through and it was a bond that could last a lifetime. I laughed until I cried and had so many reflective moments that will enrich my days going forward in so many ways. This was truly a memorable experience and one that created so many fond memories that will continue to warm my heart for years to come. I look forward to meeting up with my sisters again soon and I'm so thankful for the opportunity to grow closer to my teal sisters and to understand myself and to use the tools I gained to love myself more along this journey of healing. I thank all those who planned such a wonderful experience.



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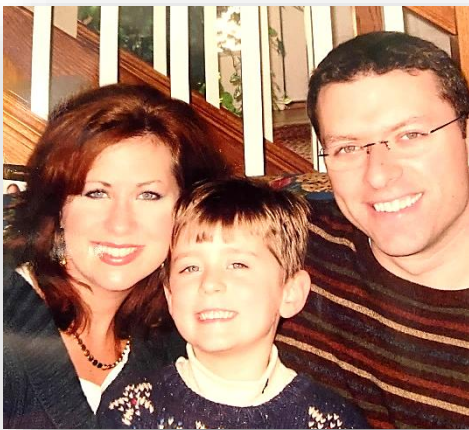
Courage



By Marcia Gurche

After being a caregiver for almost half of her life, it was extremely difficult for **Melinda Mack** when she had to switch roles and become a patient following her ovarian cancer diagnosis. As a neonatal intensive care nurse and then a wife and mother, Melinda was used to taking care of people, not being taken care of. At age fifty-four she had been through a lot of extremely stressful situations in her life and she always had to be strong, but facing an ovarian cancer diagnosis as a single woman with a son was one of the most difficult things she had encountered.

Melinda knew something was seriously wrong and sought medical attention, but it took a couple of months for her ovarian cancer to be diagnosed. Being a nurse for many years, she knew that the blood tests which her primary care doctor ran were off, and even though nothing specific was showing up, she was adamant that more testing be done. Her doctor called her late one night with the news that she did indeed have cancer, even though she had repeatedly assured Melinda that it was not cancer. Being her own advocate paid off. While Melinda has been declared NED (No Evidence of Disease), she is taking the bull by the horns and seeing a naturopathic doctor to help her stay healthy.



Melinda grew up on the west side of Detroit. She was an only child to her young parents, **Brad and Karen**. Sadly, her dad passed away a number of years ago, but her mom has since remarried a wonderful man, **John**, and he is a great addition to their family. Melinda attended St. Gemma Grade School and Ladywood High School. When she began college at Wayne State University, she had thoughts of going into marketing, however, her priorities changed and she opted for a career which she felt would give her more flexibility as a mother. She transferred to Madonna College and graduated with a degree in nursing.

After college Melinda got the idea to bypass the bar scene in search of eligible men, and she convinced her friend to attend the Detroit Sport and Social Club where they joined a recreational volleyball league. Though neither of these ladies were particularly interested in volleyball, the social aspects of the club were outstanding and they led to her attending a wine tasting one evening in Birmingham. There Melinda met the love of her life. **David** was a brilliant, laidback young man, who was also a competitive volleyball player. Imagine a recreation volleyball player just happening to meet a competitive volleyball player at a random social occasion ---it must have been fate! Dave worked as an engineer for EDS and Ford during his career. During that time, he created a number of inventions, one of which is in the Smithsonian, and many others for which he owned the patents.

Dave and Melinda married in 1998 and they have a handsome son, **Connor**. At a family reunion ten years into their marriage, Dave, who was just thirty-seven years old, died tragically of a massive heart attack, as the result of a genetic heart condition they had not been aware of. Melinda grieved and still does; however, she had a five-year-old son to raise and she needed to be as strong as she could be for him. Connor is now twenty-two and has just graduated from University of Michigan-Dearborn with a degree in Marketing. He has a job lined up with Pepsi/Frito Lay, which will begin in February. In the meantime, he is first going to enjoy a graduation trip to Barcelona, a place he has always wanted to visit.




(Cont. 'd on next page)

Eleven years ago, Melinda met and married a widower with two children. Connor liked having siblings, however, too many negative factors came into play and the relationship ended in a divorce six years ago. Once again, Melinda had to overcome adversity and be strong and independent.

Her ability to rebound is more than likely the result of her career choice of being a NICU nurse. She must be strong to keep the tiny infants in her care alive and to help their parents navigate an extremely difficult time. For most of her working life, she has been employed by Corewell Health. In addition to working in the NICU, Melinda works in the Clinic with the premature babies and does follow-up visits with them, helping them get further care if needed. She finds it very rewarding to help the families and to see how far those babies have come.

Melinda's interests are widespread and varied. She hopes to be able to ski and ice skate again someday. She enjoys concerts, all crafts, particularly scrapbooking, painting and doing anything creative. She likes walking in nature, reading, and 'fun' cooking. She loves her King Charles Cavalier puppy, **Sophie**. Melinda says Sophie is a darling little dog who brings joy to everyone and is a great cuddler and support dog. She loves all animals, particularly her son's cat, **Mikey**.



Life hasn't been easy for Melinda, but she is resilient and she has a lot of faith. She said that she wasn't a strong Christian before meeting Dave, but she became one because of him. One day when she was feeling particularly tested, she questioned God and felt Him speak to her: "Haven't I provided?" Her answer is "Yes," and this conviction will surely be important in her life's journey. 

HAPPY SURVIVORsary

January

Molly Goodman	29 yrs!
Jen Poore	29
Elaine Greenberg	25
Patty Kurpinski	17
Nancy Evanson	13
Janice Murphy	10
Nancy Nordlie	10
Barb Teach	10
Alyson Denyer	9
Nancy Minckler	3
Melinda Mack	1

HAPPY SURVIVORsary

February

Ella Steele	16 yrs!
Ann Ayers	5
Karen Simister	5
Rosemarie Bautista	1

happy  **New Year 2025**

Group Meeting

Group meetings will be held at
4 pm on the 2nd Thursday
of the month at

Gilda's Club

3517 Rochester Rd.
Royal Oak, MI 48073
(located north of 13 Mile Rd.)

January 9
February 13
March 13

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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This educational newsletter is supported through philanthropic donations to the *One to One* ovarian cancer support group through Corewell Health Foundation Southeast Michigan (formerly the Beaumont Health Foundation).



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.*