



HOT DOGS

FOR



LEADER DOGS

FOR THE BLIND



Reverend **Renee Machiniak** wears many hats. In addition to volunteering as our ovarian cancer support group's chaplain, Renee is the minister of the Royal Oak Church of the Holy City; she is a volunteer chaplain for the Royal Oak Police Department; she counsels those in need; and she is on the Board of Directors for the Royal Oak Lions Club where she has headed up a number of events since she joined the organization two years ago. Each one of these obligations is multifaceted and Renee is never just a figurehead, but she is always totally engaged and available for those she is serving and for any event she is involved in. A good example of this is when Renee was taking her turn ringing the Salvation Army bells outside a store one holiday season and she decided she would liven things up after being confronted by a cranky passerby. She burst into song and sang Christmas carols for the rest of her shift. She ended up raising a kettle full of money that day.



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.

On January 15th some of our *One to One* members attended the **Hot Dogs for Leader Dogs** fundraising event which Renee co-hosted for the Lions Club to raise money for the Leader Dogs for the Blind. The goal of Leader Dogs for the Blind is to empower people who are blind or visually impaired with lifelong skills for safe and independent daily travel. The event was a lot of fun and included a hot dog dinner complete with baked beans, coleslaw, and delicious homemade desserts; Leader Dog trivia (our table didn't fare too well with that); a 50/50 raffle; silent auction; and karaoke. What a treat to hear Renee and her husband, Joe, sing together! They are so good they could take their show on the road. The entire evening was enjoyable and best of all, money was raised for a very worthwhile organization.



PROFILE in *Courage*

By Marcia Gurche and Renee Gabriel

Renee Gabriel has always been a very proactive and take-charge person, so when she first experienced severe abdominal pain one night last April, she suspected something was seriously wrong. She has experienced abdominal pain many times in her life since she has lived with Crohn's Disease and diverticulosis for many years, but this felt different. The next day she contacted her primary care doctor, and he was able to see her quickly. He ordered a CT and a mass was discovered. He referred her to a gynecological oncologist and that physician ordered an additional CT scan and needle biopsy. These tests confirmed ovarian cancer Stage 3b/c. She was then treated with two rounds of chemotherapy under the direction of her gynecological oncologist.



After her first visit, Renee decided to get a second opinion because she was not comfortable with her doctor or the infusion center. She liked the new physician so much that she decided to switch providers and health care networks and has remained with them since. She completed the third round of chemotherapy before having her debulking surgery in September. That was followed by three more rounds of chemotherapy, which she completed in December.

Renee has been able to work throughout her treatment at her hybrid job as an office assistant at Oakland University where she works in the Biological Sciences Department. Her job entails purchasing all the necessary items for over 20 research labs. Prior to coming to work at Oakland University, Renee worked for Beaumont Health System for over 31 years in different capacities. She started out doing billing and coding in the Radiation Oncology Department and was then promoted to the Residency Coordinator position in Radiation Oncology. She left that department to seek a job in Corporate Finance as an Executive Assistant. Her final position was in the Neuroscience Department where she was also an Executive Assistant.



Renee and her husband, **Tad**, have a blended family of seven children and are blessed that all their children get along famously – in fact, some are best friends! Tad was the baseball coach for Renee's ten-year-old son, **Wade**, and when Renee took Wade to the first practice and introduced herself and her son to Tad, both were put off with each other. Tad thought Renee came off as a "know it all" because she insisted that he "not try to change Wade's batting stance," and Renee thought Tad was "arrogant" the way he responded when Renee introduced her son to him. Renee realized during the season that Tad was an excellent coach, and she soon appreciated his knowledge of the game – but it took awhile for her to become a fan.

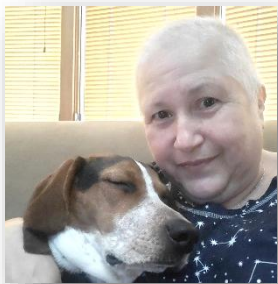
Over the years their sons played on a lot of teams together, attended the same middle and high schools and became good friends. In a way, the boys brought Tad and Renee together. Several years after they met, Tad's son, **Maxwell**, left a backpack at Renee's house, which Renee decided to drop off on her way to a bar to watch a Michigan State game with friends. Tad, an MSU graduate and obviously a fan, was invited to join Renee and her friends, and the rest is history!

(Cont. 'd on next page)


Tad and Renee have been married for eight years. Tad is a territory sales manager for a building materials company, and his territory includes all of Michigan and Northern Indiana and involves weekly travel. Renee had four children when they married and likes to say that she has three bonus children since marrying Tad. Renee's children are **Mallory, Meredith, Austin, and Wade**. Mallory, 38, is a registered nurse and supervisor in the emergency room at Gladwin Hospital and is married to **Nick**. They have four children: **Lexi, Arianna, Molly, and Max**. Meredith, 36, is married to **Joe** and she is a registered nurse at Corewell Health in Royal Oak where she is a Utilization Management Coordinator. Renee's son, Austin, 29, lives in Royal Oak and works as a Shipping & Receiving Specialist. Her youngest, Wade, 27, has a long-time girlfriend, **Jenny**, and works as a Market Development Representative. Tad's boys are **Taylor, Maxwell, and Henry**. Taylor, 31, works as a Maintenance Technician at an aluminum forging company; Maxwell, 27, is an electrician and lives in Clawson with his wife, **Abbey**; and Henry, 26, works as a Sales Representative/Merchandising Supervisor. Tad and Renee are pleased that the entire family enjoys spending time together and some have even stood up at Maxwell & Abbey's wedding. On the first Christmas that they were married, with the goal of bringing the two families together, Tad and Renee made up a road rally with a Christmas theme. It took them all over several local cities and they ended up in a restaurant in Troy for pizza. The kids loved every minute of it. Renee and Tad would love to do this again, but it would be difficult living in the country now.

Renee grew up in Royal Oak where she was the youngest child of five of **J.C. and Rita Walcott**. Renee's dad passed away in January and her mom died in 2002 from cancer. Renee was with her mom every step of the way during her illness and watching her fight her battle with such grace gave Renee the strength and attitude to get through her own struggle. Her mom's courage truly was her compass. Renee has two brothers, **Mitchell and Jim**, and a sister **Tammy**. Sadly her second oldest brother, **Rex**, passed away at the age of twenty-seven. Currently all her siblings live in the metro area.

Renee attended Royal Oak Kimball High School where she was a cheerleader, member of the dance team and involved in student government. These days Renee's interests are focused around her family. She loves to cook and bake, and her newest hobby is canning. Renee is half Mexican, so she makes a lot of Mexican food, and she likes having her pantry stocked with plenty of canned sauces and beans. She enjoys making homemade salad dressings to feed the masses as needed. She loves to read but admits she sometimes gets distracted by Netflix. She loves Christmas, as demonstrated by the seven Christmas trees she puts up. She is also a huge fan of Halloween and similarly enjoys decking out the house in spooky décor to make it fun for her family – young and old.



Her family may tease her about her excessive decorating, but they always have her back. On the day of her surgery, her four children and her husband wore matching tee shirts which said, “No one fights alone.” Her grandkids made countdown signs hour by hour for her first treatment to cheer her up. She had a ton of support from all the family, including her bluetick coonhound/beagle mix, **Missy** – short for Mistletoe – who was her constant companion as she went through treatment.

After the last year of chemotherapy and surgery, Renee and Tad are looking forward to purchasing a small travel trailer so they can camp with Mallory's family around Michigan and so they can begin visiting scenic spots across the country. She has had a rough year, but she is used to bumps since she has lived with chronic health issues for many years. She clearly does not let obstacles hold her back from doing things that mean the most to her in life – not even cancer. 

Using AI To Potentially Detect Ovarian Cancer



A research team led by **Dr. Daniel A. Heller**, PhD, from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, is working to develop a blood test to detect ovarian cancer at earlier, more treatable stages. This innovative new technology is being done using nanotechnology, lasers, and AI with a \$300,000 grant provided by the Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance. According to Dr. Heller, who used to be a middle school science teacher, "if this works, it's going to be a game changer."

It could potentially tell if the blood from a patient shows evidence of cancer. Traditionally, in the United States, tried and true methods get research dollars, not experimental procedures. This is different, since with ovarian cancer we know what the problem is, but it is generally discovered too late. The technology uses multiple sensors, similar to those found in the nose, to detect the molecular signature of the disease, which is then interpreted by a type of AI computer technology. It helps scientists quickly do work never done before. It teaches the computer what the cancer looks like and how to flag it so a doctor knows what to look for and to follow up. Researchers are hopeful that after a few years they will be able to use this new detection method in the hospital's clinic before getting government approval. Dr. Heller is excited about the possibility of having an early detection test so close at hand after so many years of trying other things.

The above article was taken directly from a video posted on the Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance website with their permission.

HAPPY SURVIVORsary

March

Cheryl Meehan	27 yrs!
Lori Coluzzi	15
Lynne Karty	9
Christine Babish	8
Jill Covert	5



April

Roena Sorrels	32 yrs
Suzanne Kauffman	27
Candy Brandon-Watters	22
Michelle Shepherd	21
Barb Livingston	20
Arlene Beyma	9
Kathy Dominczak	9
Pam Peplinski	5
Jena Hermiz	2

think
SPRING

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.)

March 13
April 10
May 8

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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*"You are not a drop in the ocean.
You are the entire ocean in one drop."
- Rumi*

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.*