



Ovarian Cancer Support Group

The following is part of a beautifully written piece by our Teal Sister, **Nancy Minkler**, who passed away in May of this year. She shared these profound lessons that cancer taught her.

Cancer has brought me the opportunity to finish learning lessons that I actually thought I had completed. I am much happier now than I was three years ago. If I were given the choice between no cancer, no lessons, or cancer and the profound lessons I have learned, I would choose cancer.



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.



Cancer's Life Lessons

Here are my cancer lessons:

1. I can live with uncertainty.
2. I am easily able to ask for help.
3. I am loved.
4. I belong.
5. I am strong enough to handle whatever life brings.
6. I use self-discipline to take good care of myself.
7. Self-care is more important than the care of others.
8. Old stuff is in the past. I can find it and release it without betraying those I love.
9. My negative thoughts and emotions are normal and need to be processed, not denied. This is what allows me to reach a positive state of mind.
10. I can live with my own imperfection.
11. I can say what I feel and think.
12. My body has priority.
13. I am responsible for everything that is mine.
14. I have nothing to fear.
15. I have power over my cancer journey.
16. I accept the healing power of divine energy

Now, all that's left to do...is love.

★ PROFILE in *Courage* ★

By Marcia Gurche

Desiree Swiney has been an active member of the *Survivors Teaching Students®* program for the last four years. In addition to speaking to future health care professionals regularly through the STS format, she never hesitates to use her vocation as a nurse in the field of ambulatory endoscopy, to speak out to patients who experience common ovarian cancer symptoms and who are undergoing testing in the gastroenterology department. Her antenna is always extended whenever she hears a patient with complaints associated with ovarian cancer, which are often overlooked and attributed to other less serious illnesses. Her first-hand knowledge as a seven-year ovarian cancer survivor, as well as a practicing nurse, makes her hyper-vigilant, yet sensitive and aware that patients should not be frightened. They need to be made aware that they should follow their own instincts if routine tests are not diagnosing the cause of their issues, and that they need to explore other possible causes rather than have their complaints be written off as some insignificant illness or disease.



Desi, who was born in Germany while her father was in the military, lived in Oklahoma until she was fourteen years old. She moved to Florida and lived there before relocating to Michigan in 2004. She was the baby of eight siblings who are from two different marriages and is very close with all of them. Interestingly, Desi comes by her love of nursing honestly as her mom, **Marsha**, is an oncology nurse, and her dad, **Bob**, went back to school and became a nurse after leaving the military and joining the active reserves. Having her mom and her sister come and help her during each of her chemotherapy infusions was wonderful and therapeutic, since her mom was uplifting in her response to Desi and reminded her from the get-go that “You can do it.”

From the young age of twenty-one when Desi first became a mom of twin baby girls, her life has revolved around her children. She has four beautiful kids, two great sons-in-law, and a gorgeous baby granddaughter, with two more little granddaughters on the way. There was never enough time and always something to do. It remains that way to this day, it seems, as three of Desi’s kids live out of state and her youngest is keeping her busy as a collegiate athlete. Desi’s daughter, **Alexis**, is a nurse anesthetist and is married to **Andrew**. They live in Missouri and are eagerly awaiting their first baby this coming October. **Victoria**, a board-certified behavior analyst for children, is married to **Brandon** and lives in Florida. They are the parents of **Ophelia**, who will be two years old in September, and will welcome their second daughter in January. Desi’s son, **Evan**, who is now twenty-seven, is also living in Florida. He is in his last semester of nursing school and will graduate in December. The apple does not fall far from the tree! **Connor**, Desi’s youngest son, is twenty years old and a junior at the University of Michigan, Dearborn. He is majoring in Environmental Sciences and is on the baseball team where he plays either pitcher or the outfield. Desi loves attending his games which are in spring and fall, with fall being much preferred due to our wet and cold Michigan weather.

(Cont. 'd on next page)



Desi has a bonus son, **Brendan**, who is the son of her long-time partner, **Todd**. Desi and Todd met online many years ago and their blended family has worked beautifully with Connor and Brendon becoming fast friends. Brendon just graduated from Churchill High School and will be attending Schoolcraft College in the Fall. Since he is an avid hockey player and played all through high school, Desi and Todd spent many hours in the hockey arenas cheering for him. Desi and Todd might regret that they never bought padded seats to carry with them and they might regret that they never kept a tally of how many hours they spent in the bleachers over the years; but they certainly never regret one minute they spent watching their kids participate, whether it was enjoying the girls' softball games, watching Evan play baseball or perform in the marching band, watching Connor shine on the mound, or cheering Brendon on while he played hockey.

Desi loves to read but has not done as much as she would like to since she has been so busy with her kids for years now. She also loves to travel and has recently taken a trip to Iceland with girlfriends from her neighborhood. Most of her travels lately are centered around trips to see her kids and she tries to get to Florida a couple of times a year to babysit for Ophelia and have some one-on-one time with her granddaughter. With wedding showers and baby showers and new babies being born, a lot of trips are being made these days.

Desi has worked for Henry Ford Health System since she came to Michigan. She has moved from different departments, starting in medical surgery and going to the ICU, and has also worked at the University of Michigan on their telemetry floors. She now works in the Ambulatory Endoscopy Dept. which allows her a more regular schedule. Last year she took off a few months and worked as a traveling nurse to go to Oklahoma. That worked well as she got to continue to work and get some quality time with her dad.

Desi spent close to two years making constant trips to doctors with complaints of weight gain, abdominal pain, bloating and fatigue. Being a nurse didn't help her when her primary care doctor and gynecologist each wrote off her symptoms as normal women's issues. Working for a major health care system did come in handy, though, when she finally got an ultrasound ordered. She was able to get an excellent gynecological oncologist to immediately guide her through her diagnosis and treatment of stage IIIc ovarian cancer. Fortunately, she has had no recurrences.

Desi is not only a great speaker for the *Survivor Teaching Students*® program, but she is an outstanding advocate for ovarian cancer in her workplace as well. We are very fortunate to have her in our program. 

A TISKET A TASKET, CAN YOU DONATE A BASKET?

Our second **Bunco FUNraiser** is scheduled for **Saturday, November 1st** and we are in need of people to donate themed gift baskets or raffle items for this fun-filled evening. The event will be held at the **Maple Lane Golf Course** in Sterling Heights, and more information will be forthcoming. If you would like to donate a gift basket, we can provide the basket and the colored shredding. Please contact **Marcia Gurche** (mgurche@gmail.com) or 586-506-0598.

Some items that we have if you wish to add to your basket include:

- ✓ Aromatherapy Body Lotion
- ✓ Sunshine & Lemons Hand Soap
- ✓ Snackeez Snack & Drink
- ✓ Live Green, Sip clean straws
- ✓ Superbee Wax wraps
- ✓ Hamburger Patty Maker
- ✓ Stitch 4 pack Disney reusable bags
- ✓ Ceream Ice Cream Cone Set



You are invited to attend the complimentary interactive, empowering, annual educational event hosted by students of **Oakland University's Doctor of Physical Therapy Program:**



Wednesday, November 5th
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
(registration begins at 3:30 pm)



Door prizes and goodie bags too for every participant!

Location: Oakland University Campus, Human Health Building, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester, MI 48309.

Oakland University Physical Therapy students and faculty will be offering education on various topics of interest regarding the benefits of physical therapy and cancer survivorship. These eager students work hard every year in organizing this event and we are honored that they wish to do this for us again this year. This event is limited to approximately 30 in attendance.

We will be joined by **Sharing & Caring** Breast Cancer Education and Support Group. More information to follow!

I DIDN'T REALIZE I WAS SUPPOSED
 TO KNOW HOW TO DO EVERYTHING
 BY MY SECOND RODEO.
 SEEMS LIKE A VERY LOW AMOUNT
 OF RODEOS.



September

Terrie Karebian	22 yrs!
Julie Fisk	20
Deanna Cosens	14
Jordan Tolmie	16
Sharon Witkowski	14
Cheryl DiChiera	13
Chrissy Zigulis	11
Laura Marmorstein	8

HAPPY SURVIVORSARY

October

Linh Cundiff	40 yrs!
Shirley O'Brien	33
Jill Price-Winters	30
Carol Holder	24
Carol Kay	24
Toni Tarczy	22
Carol Lingeman	20
Adele Megdall	9

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.)

September 11
October 9
November 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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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.*