



WOCA

Whisperer

Quarter 4, 2017

Looking ahead to 2018,
A note from WOCA's Board President:

As an active member of the Ovarian Cancer Community, WOCA embraces each day with vigor and passion. We strive to make a difference daily, in the lives of those we touch. While we were able to make many great strides in 2017, we are looking for your support as we begin 2018. Will you join us in making a definite impact?!?!?

Consider supporting WOCA as one of your 2018 goals. Listed below are ways to get involved with our organization. Check a box below as a reminder of your commitment, and help us change someone's life!!!

- Put a team together for one of our September Run/Walks
- Attend a WOCA support group session
- Volunteer at one of our events
- Become a "WOCA Star" by hosting your own fundraiser
- Share your story (STS, written or recorded)
- Attend a "Meet WOCA" session near you
- Promote Teal in your neighborhood throughout September- (Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month)

Sincerely,

Natalie N. Nowak

Natalie Nowak
Board President

*"Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much."
-Helen Keller*



A different approach to starting the New Year: Be kinder to yourself



By : Katherine Puckett , PhD, MS, MSW, LCSW
Director, Department of Mind-Body Medicine
Midwestern Regional Medical Center

The party's over, the guests have gone home, and the decorations are back in storage. The new year has arrived, and for many of us, 2018 offers a new chance to make good on that perennial list of resolutions that fell by the wayside last year. If you're resolving to lose weight, exercise more, save money or organize your day better, you're not alone. Health, financial management and self-improvement consistently make the top of most Americans' first-of-the-year to-do list. However, an annual study by the University of Scranton finds that less than 10 percent of Americans achieve their New Year's goals.

Katherine Puckett, PhD, MS, MSW, LCSW, Director of the Department of Mind-Body Medicine at our Chicago-area hospital, suggests that we try a different approach to starting the new year. One idea is to take a page from the Japanese, who consider New Year the most important holiday of the year. They traditionally view each year as a distinct time period, with each new year offering a fresh start. Many Japanese families even hold bonenkai parties— or “year forgetting parties”—to celebrate leaving the old year's worries and troubles behind.

To help you welcome 2018 with a positive outlook and a fresh start, Dr. Puckett offers these tips:

Pick a word or theme for the year. “Think about your overall goals for your life, how you want to live your best life,” Dr. Puckett says. “Focus on what's really important to you as a human being, and make that your theme for the year.” Your goal can be as simple as a single word—kindness, freedom, generosity— or it can be theme, like: a healthier you.

Be kind to yourself. “Don't be rigid in setting goals,” Dr. Puckett says, “and don't ‘should’ on yourself. Leave room for flexibility, and don't beat yourself up if you don't get to everything on your list.” Dr. Puckett suggests treating yourself as kindly as you would treat your best friend.

Make yourself a priority. “Take some down time, indulging in things you love to do,” Dr. Puckett says. “Think of this as the gift you give yourself.”

Despite the challenge of meeting goals we set for ourselves, many Americans seem determined to try and try again. That can be a good thing, Dr. Puckett says, if you don't let the past get you down. “If we approach New Year—every day, really—as a new day, a new chance to live up to our ideals, we are much more likely to be successful, and happier, too,” she says.



Winning the fight against cancer, every day.®

Survivor Spotlight

By: Karen Wawrzonkowski



As with many ovarian cancer women, I was taken by surprise by my diagnosis in August of 2016 at age 66. As a Registered Nurse who worked on a Gyn-Oncology unit and cared for many patients with female cancers, you would think I would be attuned to the symptoms. However, true to its hallmark, this insidious cancer invaded my body without any fanfare until I experienced a bit of post-menopausal vaginal bleeding one Sunday. I contacted my OB-GYN first thing Monday morning, she ordered an ultrasound for Tuesday morning and had me make an appointment for Thursday to get the results. During those 3 days I contemplated what might be wrong. Best case scenario I would need a D & C and be good to go; worse case maybe uterine cancer and I would have a 'quick hysterectomy' and go on with my life. Just in case it was the latter, I came to my appointment on Thursday with the Gynecologist/Oncologist I wanted to be referred to for my 'quick hysterectomy' if needed.

No one could have prepared me for the results. While she said there was some endometrial thickening in my uterus, what she was really concerned about was the grapefruit size mass on my ovary, which according to the vaginal ultrasound was "highly suspicious for malignancy". Wow - didn't see that coming. My husband was teary eyed, but I was only thinking about how I could miss something that big. In retrospect, I do think my abdominal girth was enlarging the past month or so, but no sensation of bloating or any other symptoms often associated with ovarian cancer. I just thought I was gaining weight!

My OB-GYN agreed with the referral I requested and had her office make it happen. By the next afternoon I had an appointment with a Gyn/Onc for the following Tuesday. I had my exam and consultation with her, accompanied by my 3 daughters and my husband. She reiterated the likelihood of malignancy and a general plan for post surgical treatment, but of course she needed to wait for the pathology report and staging for confirmation of the diagnosis. I spent the next week getting blood work, pre-op examinations and a CT scan and had my surgery the following Tuesday. I met the other members of "my team" and felt confident about the plan. The one thing I feared more than the cancer was having to give up one of the joys in my life. I am a volunteer puppy raiser and trainer of service dogs. I love doing this - it is so rewarding to prepare a dog for service to someone who really needs them. My doctor and team assured me we would work together to ensure I could continue this work. This was a great relief to me and an excellent motivator for this journey.

I was diagnosed with stage 3C high grade epithelial ovarian cancer. After surgery and recovery, I started chemotherapy of carboplatin and taxol. During my first infusion, I had a reaction to the taxol but the nurses responded quickly and with confidence and within several minutes I was able to resume the treatment. I think I tolerated the 18 weeks of chemo pretty well with the support and advice of my health care team. I do suffer from some neuropathy, but with time, exercise, acupuncture and reflexology it is slowly improving.

My doctor told me there is a high likelihood of recurrence with ovarian cancer, but it could come in 6 months, 5 years or 20 years. So while I could fret about recurrence and my inability to control it, I decided to focus on everything I could control and to be ready if/when cancer came again. I am losing weight, exercising, and eating healthy (but enjoying indulgences). Most important, I am able to continue with my work training service dogs.

I have been blessed with the most awesome support network - my husband who is the best caregiver, children, grandchildren, siblings, close friends and relatives and my health care team. I am grateful for each day and I thank everyone who offered love, support and prayers!

WE ARE... The Real Teal!!!



Denise Uyar, MD

Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Division Chief of Gynecology Oncology
Medical College of Wisconsin

I have been practicing gynecology oncology for many years but seems like yesterday that I found out I had “matched” to a gynecologic oncology fellowship program. Matching is the nationwide process of finding out if you have applied and successfully secured a place to train as a gynecologic oncologist. I still remember how I felt when I found out during my Obstetrics and Gynecology residency that I was accepted to the Gynecology Oncology Fellowship program in Cleveland Clinic. It is tense time awaiting to find out whether you have been granted a spot to continue training in a subspecialty. I remember that time and thinking that if I did not obtain a position I would have to decide whether or not to try again the next year or to start practicing general obstetrics and gynecology and adjust my career goals.

During this process as you essentially go on a series of job interviews to training programs and meet so many aspiring and practicing gynecologic oncologists you can't help but wonder a little (or a lot) if you really can be a part of this group: Do I have what it takes to do this job? Did I choose this career for the right reasons? Will I have regrets? It is not uncommon to consider that one could be happy practicing in many different situations instead of placing all your hopes on just this one path. I reassured myself often during that time that I could be happy doing a lot of different things. But secretly I kind of knew that wasn't true. The day I found out I had secured a place for fellowship and that I earned a place on that path to becoming a gynecologic oncologist was a great day. Who didn't I call that day?

Fellowship was an amazing experience and once completed after three years, I found my first job (outside of training) here in Milwaukee. I have been here ever since. I have roots here now. Time has passed and although it may be for my peers to answer a lot of those questions that swirled around me during the fellowship application process, I do know this: I have no regrets.

Lesser Known Symptoms

If any of these symptoms persist daily for more than a few weeks, please see your doctor, preferably a gynecologist.

⌘ Fatigue

⌘ Back Pain

⌘ Constipation

⌘ Menstrual
Irregularities

⌘ Indigestion

⌘ Pain with
Intercourse

A Toast to Teal

Join WOCA in an evening to celebrate friends, family, and loved ones!

The evening will be filled with fabulous live and silent auction items, diamond dig, cork pull, raffles, dinner, drinks, and inspirational stories of survivorship.

*\$75.00 Per Person · Cocktail Attire · Show us your best **TEAL***

Saturday, March 3rd, 2018 • 5:30pm

Presented By: The Marek Group

The Wisconsin Club

900 W. Wisconsin Ave

Milwaukee, WI, 53233



MEET WOCA

As part of WOCA's initiative to cover the entire state, we will be traveling to a city near you. "Meet WOCA" is a time to connect with WOCA staff and learn how the organization can help you.

2018 Dates

- January 20th-** Madison, Located at:
The Alicia Ashman Library, 10am-Noon
- March 21st-** Milwaukee, Located at:
Milwaukee Public Library-EAST, 4pm-6pm
- *May-** Eau Claire
- *June-** Green Bay
- *August-** Marshfield
- *October-** La Crosse

(*Dates and Locations TBD, subject to change based on availability)

Join us for our Circle of Courage

Ovarian Cancer Survivors Only

Encouraging those diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer. We invite all women diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer to come learn more about WOCA and our mission. You are welcome to come once, twice, or every time!

**Registration Required, Please call the WOCA office to reserve your spot today. (262-797-7804) or email us at friends@wisconsinovariancancer.com*

Saturday, February 3rd, 2018
10:00-11:00am

"Galentines Day"

Celebrate Valentines Day early with your favorite Gals! We're decorating Holiday Cookies. Supplies will be provided. You'll even get to take your favorite cookies home! (If you can resist eating them!)



Tuesday, April 24th, 2018
5:30-6:30pm

Featuring Maria Voermans & Kristin Lavann

Maria & Kristin will be sharing information on how Small Stones Wellness Center supports cancer patients during and after treatment. She will be discussing the benefits of complementary services, like massage and yoga, to help promote and support peace and healing.

For more information visit:

<https://www.froedtert.com/cancer/small-stones>

Saturday, June 23rd, 2018
10:00-11:00am

Featuring Dr. David Gustitus from "The Wellness Champions"

Dr. David Gustitus is a highly skilled and trained chiropractor serving patients in Franklin, WI and the surrounding areas.

Dr. Gustitus, and his qualified staff of experts, offer patients treatment from musculoskeletal conditions such as Headache, Back Pain, Shoulder and Neck Pain. He also provides nutritional counseling and chiropractic care.

For more information visit:

<http://www.wellnesschampions.org/>

Teal in Need

In honor of the Cathy Mislinski Legacy Gift.

While we realize the financial burden that can come about due to ovarian cancer, WOCA's "Teal In Need" campaign focuses on financially assisting ovarian cancer patients while they are currently undergoing treatment or finished with treatment within the past 6 months. WOCA defines "treatment" as: chemotherapy, radiation, surgery, clinical trials, and/or therapy/program regimen.



1st Quarter application Period: March 1st-March 15th

(Applications received before or after this period will not be considered)

Week of April 2nd- Awarded recipients will be notified and money will be dispersed.

2nd Quarter application Period: June 1st-June 15th

(Applications received before or after this period will not be considered)

Week of July 2nd- Awarded recipients will be notified and money will be dispersed.

3rd Quarter application Period: September 1st-September 15th

(Applications received before or after this period will not be considered)

Week of October 1st- Awarded recipients will be notified and money will be dispersed.

4th Quarter application Period: December 1st-December 15th

(Applications received before or after this period will not be considered)

Week of December 18th- Awarded recipients will be notified and money will be dispersed.

WOCA's Mentorship Program

Our mentorship program pairs women who may just be starting their journey with Ovarian Cancer, with someone who may be a bit further along. Please contact the WOCA office if you would like additional information 262-797-7804, or fill out an application and send it to friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org.

Survivors Teaching Students®: Saving Women's Lives

Survivors Teaching Students®: Saving Women's Lives brings ovarian cancer survivors into medical school classrooms to share their stories and key information about the disease. The program is now in more than 250 medical schools around the country as well as in a number of nurse practitioner, nursing and physician assistant training programs. In Wisconsin the program can be found at University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, The Medical College of Wisconsin, Meriter, and UW Madison.

2018 Calendar of Events

“A Toast to Teal”

Saturday, March 3rd , 2018
The Wisconsin Club - Milwaukee, WI

Crafts and Drafts - Spring Beer Fest

Sunday, April 15th, 2018
Serb Hall - Milwaukee, WI

Wine for Rose
Saturday, April 28th, 2018
UnCorkt - Racine, WI

Survivor’s Brunch
Sunday, April 29th , 2018
The Wisconsin Club - Milwaukee, WI

**WOCA’s
Nancy’s Run, Rock, and Stroll**
Saturday, September 8th, 2018
Greenfield Park - West Allis

WOCA’s Whisper Walk
Sunday, September 23th, 2018
McKee Farms Park- Fitchburg, WI

Interested in getting involved?

We have some upcoming
volunteer opportunities listed below!
Please find more information about
the event and how to register as a
volunteer on our website @
www.wisconsinovariancancer.org.

Crafts and Drafts - Spring Beer Fest

Sunday, April 15th , 2018
(10am-2pm OR 2pm-6pm)
Serb Hall - Milwaukee, WI

All Community Events - Mother’s Day 5K

Sunday, May 13th 2018
(6:30am - 11:30am)
Veterans Park - Milwaukee, WI



WOCA OFFICE:

13825 W. National Ave. Suite 103
New Berlin, WI, 53151
PHONE- 262-797-7804

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday- Thursday-8am-4pm
Friday- 8am-12pm
Additional hours available upon request!

WEBSITE:

www.wisconsinovariancancer.org

EMAIL:

friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org

Connect with us on Social Media!

Facebook -

Wisconsin Ovarian Cancer Alliance

Twitter -

@WIOvarianCancer

Instagram -

WI_OVARIAN_CANCER_ALLIANCE

LinkedIn -

Wisconsin Ovarian Cancer Alliance

For Board Member Information,
please visit our website.