



May 2013

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area

"We help ourselves by helping others to help themselves."

We are a volunteer-based organization dedicated to providing education, information, support and advocacy for people who have had or will have intestinal or urinary diversions.

P.O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164
www.ostomyhouston.org

Life as an Ostomate in 1938 (Mabel's Story)

Submitted by Ruth Home

Reprinted with permission from the Greater Seattle Ostomy Association and special acknowledgement to Paul Riome

Paul Riome is a Canadian Ostomate who recently posted this article on his blog. It has been published in the American Ostomy magazine but given the reaction for the fold at CASA [Colostomy Association of South Australia], I thought our ostomates might like to read it as well.

My Grandma Mabel had ostomy surgery in 1938, and was sent home with no ostomy equipment. How did she cope? How did she live with her ostomy? I have tried to recreate her experience.

Let us imagine 1938, and imagine living with an ostomy in 1938. This was before the internet, before cell-phones, before microwaves, before TV, before plastics. The stock market had crashed in 1929, followed by a decade named the Great Depression. In parallel, there was a decade of drought and crop-failure in the entire Mid-West of North America, aptly named the Dirty '30s. This was before the second World War! It was a challenging time to live. This was also before Flanges and Pouches and any other Ostomy gear was invented. Ostomy patients were sent home after surgery, with no collection device. No collection device?!

How did Mabel live with an ostomy without ostomy equipment? Mabel lived on the prairies in Western Canada, where summer

temperatures rose to +40 degrees Celsius [104 Fahrenheit] and winter temperatures dropped to -40 degrees Celsius. The only heat in the house was the stove, which burned coal when they had money, wood when they could scrounge, and buffalo-chips (dried cow manure) when there was nothing else. There was no cold running water. Water was pumped from a well—winter and summer. There was no hot running water. They heated water in a large pot on the stove. There was no shower. There was no bath-tub. There was no bathroom in the house. There was just an outhouse—a seat perched over a pit in a small building fifty yards from the house. This outhouse experience, in the winter when it was minus 40 degrees, was the origination of the expression "so cold it would freeze your backside off!"

With no collection device supplied, available, or even invented yet, Mabel made do with rags and towels (try to imagine her angst). Mabel's husband Walter was a practical and inventive man, and soon devised a tin-can with a belt-strap, to contain the stool. This was leaky and stinky, but a big improvement over the very messy rags.

Personal ostomy clean-up was in the outhouse, probably with a pail of cold water—summer and winter.

The tin-can had to be strapped tightly around her waist to reduce the leakage (not prevent leakage—just reduce leakage). The edge of the tin-can bit harshly into Mabel's skin and left a nasty red compression ring on her skin. Walter was a horseman who made his own horse-harnesses, so he built a leather collar to cover the



(Continued on page 3)

We are a health support group, a non-profit, tax-exempt, organization of volunteers whose purpose is to provide mutual aid and education to persons who have ostomies and to their families. We are a Texas non-profit corporation. Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

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Patient Visiting and Support Services

Doctors and ET Nurses, please note:

Upon request from a doctor or nurse, a specially trained visitor will be sent to visit an ostomy patient before and/or after surgery. The visitor will be matched as nearly as possible according to sex, age, and type of ostomy. There is no charge for this service. The visitor does not give medical advice. Please contact our Visitor Coordinator, Dorothy Andrews at 713-789-4049.

Central Group News

One of the functions that the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area performs is as an intermediary for supplies. Supplies are donated to the group from ostomates who have had their surgery reversed and by families of ostomates who have died. These very expensive supplies are then given to ostomates who don't have access to supplies. Sometimes, there may be a gap between insurances or a delay in getting coverage for the supplies. Other times, there is no insurance and no money to purchase the supplies. As we all know, going without supplies is not possible. Periodically, our supply inventory far exceeds the demand. At that time, we donate the supplies to Project Cure and Friends of Ostomates Worldwide. For the past five years, Mary Harle has been our supply coordinator. With help from Clarice Kennedy, ET., Mary was able to take in the donated supplies and to provide these critical supplies to those in need. Mary and Clarice, you have our sincere gratitude for doing a very necessary job. Now, we welcome Elaine Anderson as our new coordinator. Elaine will be working with Mary to learn how to manage the donated supplies and how to help those needing supplies. Further, Anita Prinz, WOCN,ET, has volunteered to assist matching patients to the supplies in our inventory. Thank you, Elaine and Anita, for your help with the supplies.

From the inception of our organization, one of the key services of the UOAA is the Certified Visitor Program. For many years, Dorothy Andrews has been the Visitor Coordinator for the Houston group. We are allowing her to retire. Marian Newman will be working with Dorothy to learn this job. Dorothy, thank you for your service to the organization, for all visits you have done over the years, and for all the Visitors you have trained.

We had 19 attendees including three guests at our April program meeting. Our speaker was Dr. David Engler of the Houston Allergy and Asthma Clinic. Living in Houston, many of us suffer seasonal or year round allergies. With our reduced intestinal tract, much of the medication on the market is time-released and thus is not very effective in a short tract. Dr. Engler suggested some alternatives such as Zyrtec gel tabs or liquid which dissolve quickly, but have extended release. Zyrtec was also recommended if you need relief right away rather than waiting a few days for the drug to build in your system. Allegra seems to cause less drowsiness than others. Benedryl is good to take at bedtime as it does cause drowsiness. Another source of antihistamine is nasal spray which avoids the digestive track altogether. Some nasal sprays prevent the histamine reaction by using a mild steroid. For some of us, allergy shots may be the best way to improve our immunity to the problem allergens. Allergy drops are now being used which work much faster than shots as the allergen can be stronger. However, not all insurances cover drops yet. The best defense against allergies is avoiding the offending pollen, pet dander, dust mites, etc. Air filter systems, keeping windows closed, even washing your hair after being outside, keeping pets out of the bedroom, all can help. Dr. Engler recommended that everyone

get the annual flu shot, and those over 65 or with compromised immune systems, get the HD (high dosage) version of the shot. Be sure to insist on it. On another note, Dr. Engler said that there is a difference between a reaction to a drug or food and an allergy to it. Many times, there is an impurity or another ingredient in the delivery method that is causing the reaction. Allergists have methods to test for a specific allergy such as to iodine or penicillin or Novocain. If you have concerns about a drug allergy, please consult your doctor. Dr. Engler's web site has much more information, www.allergyclinic.com.

Our meeting next month will be Anne Schrader of Dream Destinations talking about vacation cruises, including concerns that people with ostomies, limited mobility, or other health issues may have.

I am excited to announce that Caleb Alford has been accepted as a Counselor at the Youth Rally this summer. We are pleased that we can help with his registration and airfare.

Shopping note: The UOAA web site has added a store that has all kinds of things with the UOAA logo.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those in treatment and recovering from surgery.

Best regards,

Denise Parsons, President, OAHA
713-824-8841

Northwest Group News

We had a packed house of 18 in attendance to hear Paul Batchelder's presentation "Positive Thinking...It's Good For You!" Paul was joined by his two sons Scott, Jacob and friend Sabrina. Paul is both a cancer and ulcerative colitis survivor. He refuses to indulge in self-defeating behavior and instead challenges himself to learn more, do more and experience more. He is an accomplished writer and speaker and has shared his personal story with many. It was a masterful blend of humility, personal stories, antidotes and uplifting quotations. Everyone left with much to think about and how they too could apply the simple principles of Positive Thinking in their lives.

Missing from our group and hearts were Gen and husband Carl, Jane, GayNell, Tony and Craig. Next month the Northwest Group will be holding two events. May 11, 2013, we will be hosting Visitor Training in our regular meeting place. If interested, you still have time to contact Patti Suler at 281-352-2566.

Next month's program will feature licensed therapist Traci Chiari. Ms. Chiari will be available to discuss some of the emotional issues surrounding ostomy surgery. As we all know, these issues can pop up at any time regardless of your surgery date.

Craig Cooper
281-948-6883

Tony Romeo
281-537-0681

Baytown Group News

In April, Laura Weldon, Exercise Physiologist at San Jacinto Methodist Hospital shared “Exercise that’s Smarter, Not Harder” with the group. Laura spoke of “resistance training” where you can use dumb bells, rubber exercise tubing, bottles of water or even your own body weight to cause the muscles to contract. Partnering this type of exercise with aerobic exercise a couple of times a week is recommended for men and women of all ages even those with health concerns.

Laura shared with the group that research studies have shown that people with osteoarthritis have had decreased pain, an increase in muscle strength and general improvement in physical performance with participation in resistance training.

Good news for those of us who have to watch our weight—resistance training will increase muscle mass and increase the metabolic rate. As we know FAT uses very little energy. Strength training can increase metabolic rate up to 15%.

Strength training has shown to have benefits similar to antidepressant medication. It also helps you fall asleep more quickly, sleep more deeply, awaken less often and sleep longer! In fact, results are comparable to treatment with medication and yet, there are no side effects and NO COST!

Laura brought some dumb bells and rubber exercise tubing and led us in some introductory stretching and lifting exercises. We thanked Laura for being such a great motivator for each of us. Best wishes for health and happiness to each of you!

Hope to see you on May 6 at 6 p.m. for this presentation—Ostomy Accessories: Considerations for Application & Removal.

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN, 281-428-3033



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www.uoaa.org or **800-826-0826**

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CCFA Take Steps

Thank you to everyone who participated in or donated to the CCFA walk. We are so grateful for your support! Photos for the walk will appear in the June Newsletter.



Life as an Ostomate in 1938 *(continued from page 1)*

tin-can edging. This was certainly more comfortable and leaked less. But it was difficult to clean the leather collar and the device was still stinky.

Mabel considered a glass container which would be easier to clean than the tin-can. But adding a leather collar and attaching a belt would be difficult and the risk of glass breakage and serious cuts to her stoma would be a big concern. The tin-can with leather-collar, strapped around her waist, Mabel's best and only ostomy equipment.

The four-inch circle around her stoma was constantly covered with stool, and I expect she had many rashes, breakdowns, infections and damages to her skin. The salves used for harness-burns on horses would have been Mabel's only relief from these skin problems.

There was no real ostomy equipment for Mabel. There was no 'support group' for Mabel.

Mabel never talked about her ostomy. My father, who lived at home for the first six years of Mabel's ostomy, was never told about her ostomy, never saw anything that would indicate an ostomy never saw a bulge on her dress. While her husband designed and built her ostomy-gear, that would be the last time he participated and the last time they would talk about it. It just wasn't ever discussed.

For 15 years, Mabel lived silently with the inconveniences of an ostomy without ostomy-gear and with no one to talk to.

Mabel was the sole steward of a one-acre vegetable garden. She dug the entire garden with a shovel, planted seeds and hoed weeds. In the fall, she dug out the potatoes and carrots, harvested and preserved corn, peas and beans for each cold winter ahead. For 15 years, from age 52 to age 67, she worked that garden, and lived with an ostomy. And she lived without ostomy equipment as we know it.

How did Mabel keep herself physically clean, mentally content, and spiritually thankful, with such crude ostomy equipment and under such harsh conditions?

Mabel was British, Victorian, stoic, and content...never complained. She was so thankful that her ostomy gifted her 15 years of good living.

There have been days I have complained about my colostomy. Imagining reliving Mabel's ostomy experience, I will not complain again. Ever.

See more of Paul Riome's experiences as he recently embarked on a climbing venture in Nepal—check out www.livingbiggerwithcolostomy.com

WOC Nurse Directory

Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN (281) 428-3033
San Jacinto Methodist Hospital
cbarefield@tmhs.org

Clarice E. Kennedy, CET (713) 647-8029
claricekennedy1@comcast.net

Anita Prinz, RN, MSN, CWOCN (281) 824-2382
aprinzn@yahoo.com

Charlene Randall, RN, CWOCN (713) 465-8497
Specialty Wound & Ostomy Nursing, Inc.
charlene@swoni.com

Pat Thompson RN, BSN, CWON (281) 397-2799
Pat.thompson@tenethealth.com

Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: American Cancer Society Building
6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston
Contact: Denise Parsons 713-824-8841
rockynme2@aol.com
Meeting: **May 20, 2013**
Program: **Guest Speaker: Anne Schrader** of Dream
Destinations will talk about vacation cruises, including
concerns that people with ostomies, limited mobility,
or other health issues may have.

Baytown Group

Monthly: First Monday
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Community Room in Lobby of San Jacinto
Methodist Hospital
4401 Garth Road, Baytown
Contact: Cindy Barefield 281-428-3033
Meeting: **May 6, 2013**
Program: **Ostomy Accessories: Considerations for
Application & Removal**

Northwest Group

Monthly: Third Tuesday of the month
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: NW Medical Professional Bldg., (The Cali Bldg.)
17117 Cali Drive, Houston (This location is just off of
1960 and west of I-45. Turn north on Cali Drive from
1960. At the stop sign turn left on Judiwood and left
again to park behind the Cali Building.)
Contact: Tony Romeo 281-537-0681
sa1tmr@sbcglobal.net
Meeting: **May 21, 2013**
Program: **Guest Speaker: Traci Chiari**, Licensed Therapist,
will discuss some of the emotional issues surrounding
ostomy surgery.

J-Pouch Group

Monthly: Third Monday
Time: 7:00 p.m. or by Appointment
Place: American Cancer Society Building
6301 Richmond Avenue, Houston
Contact: Ron Cerreta 832-439-1311
Ron Meisinger 281-491-8220
Meeting: **May 20, 2013**

*Monthly support and information meetings are held in three locations
for member convenience.*

Local OAHA Upcoming Elections Held This Month



Denise Parsons, Marian Newman, and
Suzanne Hill have been nominated to serve
on the Board of Directors. Nominee(s) will be
voted on at the May OAHA meetings.

Get Ostomy Answers!

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Opportunities and Announcements

Anniversary Gift

As you celebrate the anniversary of your ostomy surgery each year, consider making a monetary gift to the Ostomy Association. Checks should be made payable to the ***Ostomy Association of the Houston Area*** and sent to the Treasurer at the address shown below.

Memorial Fund

Donations can be made to our Memorial Fund to memorialize or honor individuals. Checks should be made payable to the ***Ostomy Association of the Houston Area*** and sent to the address below. When sending a donation, be sure to include the name of the person being honored so that acknowledgement can be sent.

Moving?

Our newsletter is sent by bulk mail, which the Post Office will not forward even if you fill out a forwarding request. To continue receiving the newsletter after a move, contact Ron Cerreta, Treasurer, at 832-439-1311 or texasronc@aol.com or send your request to the provided address below.

Donation of Supplies

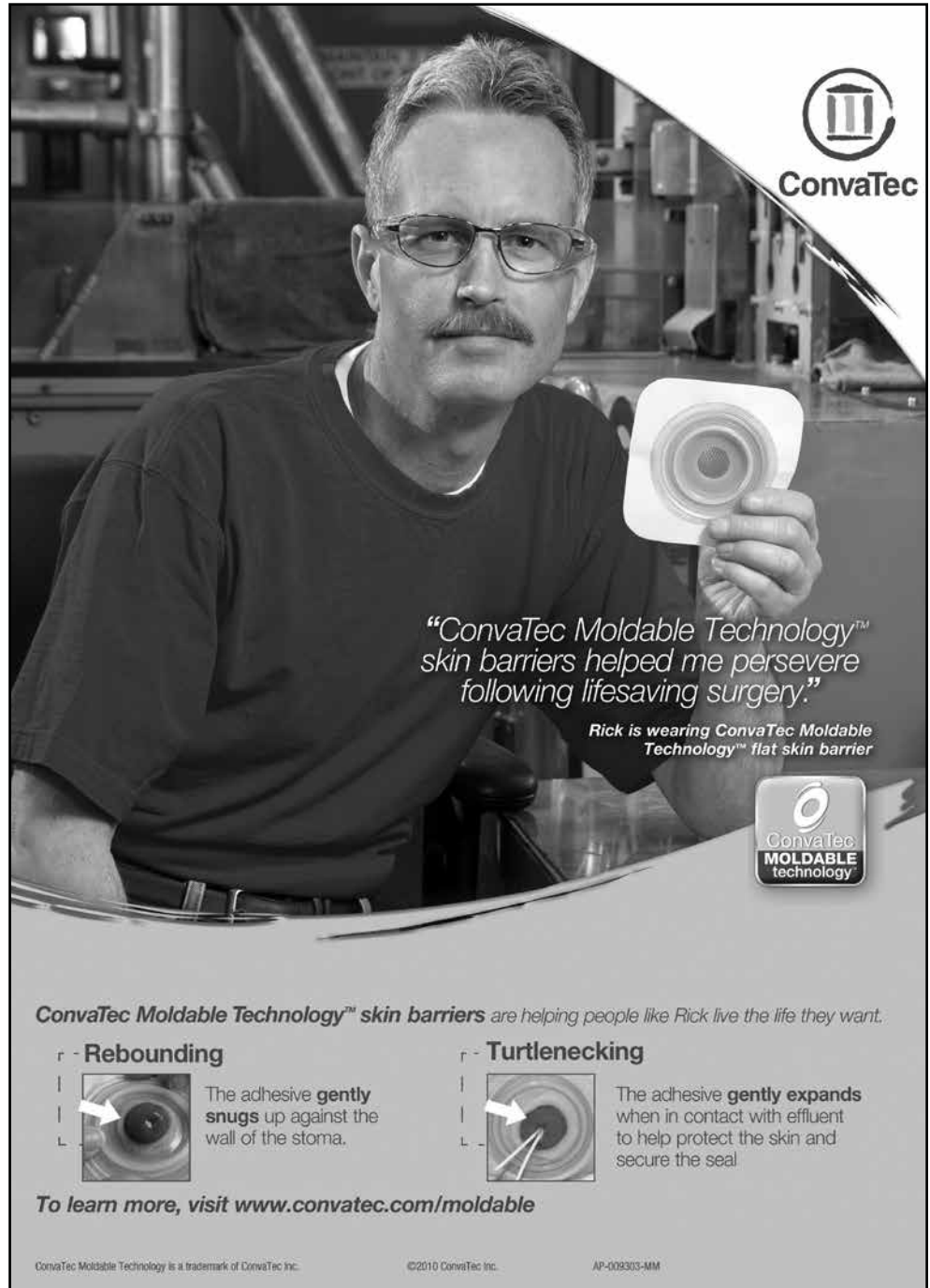
We are contacted on a regular basis by individuals who are in need of donated ostomy supplies. Consider donating ostomy supplies that you no longer use to assist your fellow ostomates in the Houston area. Please contact Mary Harle at 713-782-7864 with any questions.

For Anniversary Gifts, Memorial Donations, Mailing Changes, or Sponsorships, please send all correspondence to:

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area
Attn: Ron Cerreta, Treasurer
P. O. Box 25164
Houston, TX 77265-5164

(When sending a donation, please include the name of the person being honored so that appropriate acknowledgement can be sent.)

We encourage you to bring your spouse or significant other and members of your immediate family to our meetings.



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Kroger and Randalls return a percentage of your purchases to the Ostomy Association on a quarterly basis. For information about shopping cards, please visit the website:

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

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Membership Application

Membership in the Ostomy Association of the Houston Area requires one easy payment. Please complete the following form and mail as directed with payment as shown. Dues of **\$25.00 per year** are payable to:

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area, Attention: Treasurer
P. O. Box 25164, Houston, TX 77265-5164

Date: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ E-mail: _____

Surgery Date: _____ Birth Date: _____

Reason for surgery: ☐ Crohn's ☐ Ulcerative Colitis ☐ Cancer ☐ Birth Defects ☐ Other _____

Do you speak a foreign language? ☐ Yes ☐ No Foreign language spoken: _____

Procedure or Relationship:

To help us complete our records, please answer the following. **Check all that apply.**

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colostomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Continent Ileostomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent of Child with procedure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ileostomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Continent Urostomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/Family Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urinary Diversion | <input type="checkbox"/> Pull-Through | <input type="checkbox"/> Physician |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Nurse |

☐ I would like to attend meetings with the **(please circle one)**:

Central Group

Baytown Group

Northwest Group

J-Pouch Group

☐ I would like to become a member but cannot pay dues at this time. *(This will be kept confidential.)*

I learned about the Ostomy Association from

☐ WOC nurse ☐ Physician ☐ Newsletter ☐ Surgical Shop ☐ Website ☐ Other: _____

I am interested in volunteering. ☐ Yes ☐ No

I have enclosed an additional \$_____ as a donation to support the association's mission of helping ostomates.

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Monthly Support/Information
Meetings, Social Events,
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