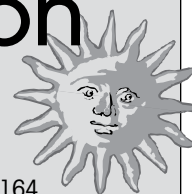




June 2013

# 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](http://www.ostomyhouston.org)

## Who We Are Series Never Looking Back—The Story of Carol Johnson

When you meet bubbly, petite-sized Carol Johnson, you would never suspect that she had an ileostomy, nor that she has had it for going on 48 years. Unlike most ostomates, Carol advises that she didn't have hurdles to overcome because for the most part, having an ileostomy is all that she has known.

She remembers the pain though before her surgery. "I was so happy not to be in pain! But it took me a long time to get on my feet. I was in the hospital for two months, and I had to learn how to walk all over again. The first six months I gained 40 pounds and grew four or five inches. When I was sick, I weighed 39 pounds, and was four feet tall at the age of eleven."

Children and teenagers can also be cruel. As a young ostomate Carol remembers, "I was treated so cruelly, they made fun of me because of the terrible odor of the bag. Back then, they were made from rubber, and boy did it smell. The kids would lock me in the closet and call me the skunk."

Growing up with an ileostomy gave Carol a front row seat dealing with social issues. "Dating was very hard for me and I was very guarded. How can you tell a 16-year-old boy about this? When I got older I was very hesitant to tell anyone."

She remembers, "A man I was dating told me that he couldn't take it anymore and that I repulsed him. Some men were able to handle this and some were not. But I learned a lot about myself, and that the right man would come along and accept me for me."

Carol believed that it was always better not to rush into anything, and get to know the person first, and let them get to know you. The hardest part was always, "I have something to tell you about me".

Relationships proved to be the greatest stumbling block for Carol. She mused that "I was not about to miss out on anything, I went away to camp, went to college with a roommate, and dated a lot of "frogs" before I found my prince."

Carol recalls that her previous husband was very supportive, just a jerk in many other ways. She married him because she didn't think anyone else would ever want her. They divorced after seven years. Carol left him, because he left her in the emergency room one too many times.

She recalls with a smile that her present husband said he knew there was something about her because she crinkled when he hugged her. Now her husband of 25 years, Carol acknowledges that he has been her best support system and he has been there for her every step of the way.

Afterwards all she knows is that she has been so blessed to have a wonderful life. "I never looked back, because I was just so grateful to be alive. The pain that I had to endure for 6 years before they discovered what was causing the weight loss, all the vomiting, stomach pain, and years of the doctors telling my parents that it was all in my head" was fixed with the ileostomy.

*(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

We had three visitors to our May meeting and over 20 people altogether. We had a lovely presentation by Anne Schrader of Dream Destinations on sea cruising versus river cruising. Besides the obvious location differences, the ship sizes and amenities were discussed. Both types of ships have obstacles for wheelchairs such as some decks only accessible by stairs or stairway gangways to the pier. However, most needs can be accommodated by the crew. Check ahead with the cruise line for specific concerns. Ostomates should not have any concerns about cruising. The seagoing cruisers are floating hotels with casinos, shopping, and too much to eat. Bathrooms in staterooms are large and public restrooms are usually on every deck. River cruisers are smaller as they must fit into locks and under bridges. The stateroom bathrooms are just fine. Depending on the ship, there may not be as many public restrooms and they are smaller, but usually there is one close to the gangway and the dining room. All the restrooms are bigger than those on an airplane. When going on excursions off the boat, plan ahead as buses in some countries don't have restrooms on board and some drives can be an hour or more. The concierge on board and the tour guides can be very helpful in scouting out restrooms in tourist areas. There is also a web site, [www.thebathroomdiaries.com](http://www.thebathroomdiaries.com), where you can enter a city or address and they will show restroom locations submitted and rated by others. When you start looking at some of the overseas tourist sites, many times a nice hotel nearby may be your best bet. Having an ostomy should not prevent you from cruising and seeing the world. There is a lot of world to see, so let's go.

A second Visitor Training session was held at NW and we have eight more Visitors. Thanks to Pat Thompson, Patti, Ron, and Suzanne for helping with the training, and to all who attended, I appreciate your time and effort.

The Board of Director elections were held and Suzanne Hill, Marian Newman, and I were reelected. The Board is responsible for keeping the organization functioning, fiscally sound, and assuring that there will always be an Ostomy Association of the Houston Area for as long as there are ostomates who need us. In an organization where everyone has some degree of health issue and many who have served for years are aging, we are always needing members who can help assure that meeting needs are taken care of, engaging speakers, providing refreshments, just getting the room setup and put away. At times, we could use help with newsletter articles, supply donations, and outreach activities. Please consider volunteering in some way.

At our next meeting, June 17, we will host a roundtable discussion. Please bring any ostomy concerns or questions.

Best regards,

**Denise Parsons**, President, OAHA  
713-824-8841

## Baytown Group News

Baytown's meeting for May had a familiar presenter and topic with Cindy Barefield, WOC Nurse covering "Ostomy Accessories: Considerations for Application & Removal." This topic seems timeless in that it applies to almost everyone in attendance. Who doesn't want to save money, save time and reduce your concern for leaks and odor?

The basic, "less is more" philosophy is a great guide to use. Know the reason for the use and discontinuation of each accessory chosen. Hollister has a great skin care educational tool Skin Care for Your Stoma: 3 Easy Steps to Maintaining Healthy Skin that covers this information very well. ([www.hollister.com](http://www.hollister.com))

Handouts guided the discussion regarding advantages and disadvantages with use of adhesive remover wipes, protective barrier wipes, stomahesive powder, stomahesive paste, barrier rings, strip paste and no sting barrier spray. We summarized our discussion with a consensus that ostomy care should be considered dynamic and not static. Accessories support your pouching system and peristomal skin—sometimes you need them and sometimes you don't!

In June, we welcome Faisal 'RJ' Poonawala from Spring Branch Medical Supply. RJ has been working diligently to forge positive relationships with many major third-party payers as well as to offer billing assistance for those who may qualify for necessary medical equipment and supplies. He has been able to arrange overnight shipping on supplies that were otherwise unavailable for patients in our community. Come and hear about the services Spring Branch Medical Supply could offer to you. We hope to see you on Monday, June 3 at 6 p.m.!

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

## Northwest Group News

Licensed therapist Traci Chiari spoke to a crowd of 12 people. Ms. Chiari discussed some of the issues involving coping with grief and loss related to health. She provided detailed handouts as she spoke about the types of loss, grieving differences, plus myths and facts surrounding the process. It was an educational and informative evening. After Ms. Chiari's presentation, the Northwest Group voted in all the board members on this month's ballot. Tony Romeo provided a wonderful banana pudding. We continue to miss Craig, Jane, Gay Nell and others.

Next month our program will feature Kathleen Duplessis, one of the few ostomate women to run in and complete the Boston Marathon.

**Craig Cooper**  
281-948-6883

**Tony Romeo**  
281-537-0681

## Northwest Group Certified Visitor Training

On May 11, the Northwest Group held their second ever Certified Visitor training course. Eleven people attended. Facilitated by Pat Thompson, CWON, Ron Cerreta OAHA Treasurer, Newsletter Editor Patti Suler and Northwest member Paul Batchelder, the course material was covered with signature Northwest style. Attendees all participated in detailed and intimate discussions as we explored the mandated topics. Everyone learned a great deal about our commonality and differences. One topic that unified all members in the sexuality discussion was a unanimous consensus that the OstomySecrets personal wrap was the best tool to restore intimacy and improve relationships. Ron and Paul led the highly creative role-playing. Everyone enjoyed this portion of the training the most. Suzanne Hill, OAHA Northwest Liaison, provided breakfast food and the Northwest Medical Center provided Subway sandwiches with all the fixings for lunch.



## Never Looking Back *(continued from page 1)*

Carol's greatest regret is that she always wanted to wear a two piece bathing suit, and have a pretty tummy and felt she could not do so with the ileostomy and scars.

She shares to all ostomates that they should be aware of their diet, and watch what they eat. Carol has had five major blockages over the years and she urges that everyone chew their food good!

The most important thing Carol wants to share with younger ostomates is that people may be cruel, but you wouldn't want them for your friends anyway. Romance will come, you may just have to kiss a lot of frogs to get your prince.

## Summer Hints...Get back into the swim of things!

*Edited by B. Brewer, UOAA Update May 2012*

- For extra security during swimming and water sports, use water-proof tape around the barrier. This is called picture framing.
- Select a bathing suit made of textured or dark-colored materials that will better hide the outlines of the pouch. Some women prefer bathing suits with skirts and some men prefer boxer-style trunks, but snug-fitting suits can be worn.
- A lightweight 2-way stretch garment can be worn under a swim suit for extra support and flatness. And gentlemen, a pair of jockey shorts should do the same for you.
- Take precautions against sunburn. Besides being bad for your skin, a very bad sunburn can result in diarrhea and sometimes vomiting, thus depleting electrolytes.
- Monilia is a common summer problem. This raised, itchy, red rash on the peristomal skin is uncomfortable and keeps the pouches from holding well. If you suspect a monilia rash, check with your doctor and/or to secure a prescription for anti-monilia powder. This may require an office visit for a consultation and visual examination.
- If plastic against your skin is uncomfortable or causes a heat rash, you should purchase your pouches with the cloth-like covering or consider a pouch cover.

## CCFA Take Steps

The Take Steps fundraiser for Crohn's and Colitis did not happen due to severe weather, rain, and flooding. We raised \$1,225 for the cause thanks to the generosity of our group, friends and family members. \$121,480.72 was raised overall during this campaign event.



This year's walk team roster was comprised of Patti Suler, Dorothy Andrews, Jenrose Foshee, Suzanne Hill, Paul Batchelder, Terry Hodgkins, Ian Keith, Shawn Keith, Terry Marriott, Tom Ryan and Patricia Thompson.

## Just A Drop—Innovative Odor Eliminator

Just A Drop is a new odor eliminator. It is different from all the others in that you don't put it in your pouch, nor spray it in the air, nor take it in pill form. What you do is place a few drops in the toilet before you empty. The drops spread and create a barrier that is supposed to trap odor. Empty your pouch as normal. It is a natural product made using a light eucalyptus oil. Central Group received several samples. You can check with those members about how it worked in real life. Dr. Oz has endorsed this product. Currently it can only be purchased via their website at JustADrop.net.

**Osto Group** [www.ostogroup.org](http://www.ostogroup.org)  
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### 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  
aprinzrn@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



The **United Ostomy Associations  
of America (UOAA)**  
can be contacted at:  
**www.uoaa.org** or **800-826-0826**

## Get Ostomy Answers!

*The Phoenix* is the leading national magazine for ostomates, their families and caregivers. Each issue contains 72 pages of inspiration, education and information including new products, medical advice, management techniques, personal stories and more.



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11/11 SG HLFAC

### 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:** **June 17, 2013**  
**Program:** **Roundtable Discussion**

### 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:** **June 3, 2013**  
**Program:** **Guest Speaker: Faisal 'RJ' Poonawala**, Spring Branch Medical Supply, will present "Exploring Options for Ostomy Supplies & Reimbursement."

### 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:** **June 18, 2013**  
**Program:** **Guest Speaker: Kathleen Duplessis**. Kathleen was featured in the newsletter last year after running in the Boston Marathon.

### 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:** **June 17, 2013**

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

## 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](mailto:texasronc@aol.com) or send your request to the provided address below.

### Donation of Supplies

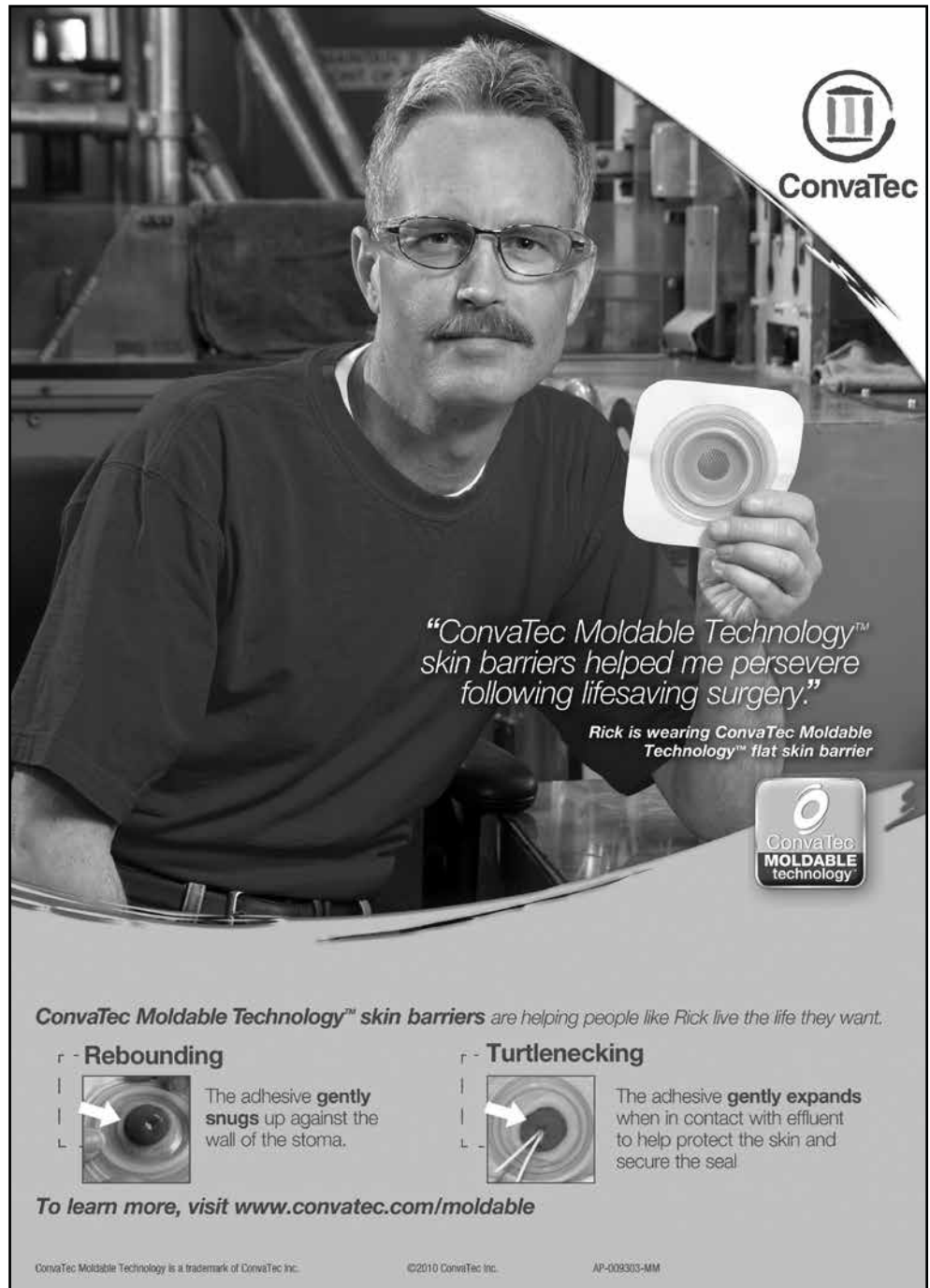
We are contacted on a regular basis by individuals who are in need of donated ostomy supplies. Consider donating ostomy supplies that you no longer use to assist your fellow ostomates in the Houston area. Please contact Elaine Anderson at 713-529-2724 or send email to [thomasj744@yahoo.com](mailto:thomasj744@yahoo.com) 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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### Use Those Shopping Cards

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/>

**Disclaimer:** The information contained within this newsletter is presented expressly for informational purposes only and may not be applicable to everyone. It should not be substituted for professional medical care or attention by a qualified practitioner. Always check with your doctor if you have any questions or concerns about your condition.

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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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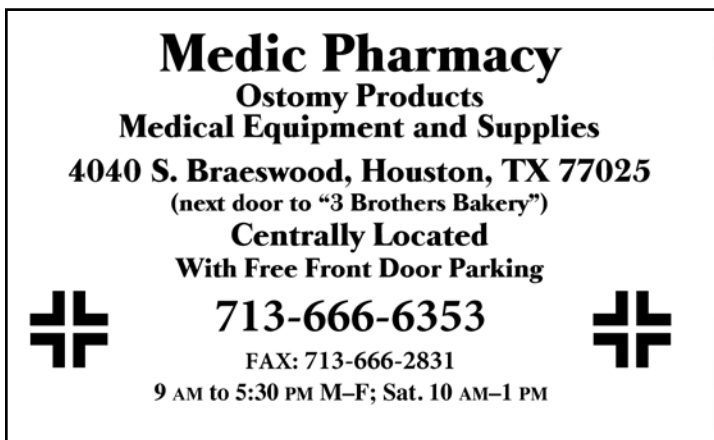


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