



Ostomy Outlook



LETTER OF THE OSTOMY ASSOCIATION OF THE MINNEAPOLIS AREA	
Volume IV, Issue IX	
November, December 2019	
Date:	Monday, November 18, 2019
Time:	6:30 PM-8:00 PM
Place:	United Methodist Church of Peace 6345 Xerxes Avenue South Richfield, MN 55423 612-866-0069
Program:	David Dalum will be speaking to us about his life and his experiences of having an ostomy. (See "Getting to Know You" article.) Pages 5-6
	
Date:	Monday, December 16, 2019
Time:	6:30 PM-8:00 PM
Program:	Holiday Party- Please see President's corner about the event. Page 2 Happy Holidays Everyone!
	

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55438-5453 The Ostomy Outlook is printed and circulated for people with Colostomies, Ileostomies, Urostomies, and alternative procedures, their families and other interested persons

. ****If you have weather questions, please call 952-882-0154

Our new website address is: ostomyminneapolis.org

Ostomy Association of the Minneapolis Area Membership Creed

As members of this group, it is important to be ever mindful of our many blessings: our understanding families and friends, our homes, and our way of life. Most of all, as ostomates we need to be ever mindful of the life which has been given back to us and to find the courage to face our daily challenges. Let us continue to be concerned for people who need our help, our support, and the knowledge that we have gained. Let it be our task to reach out to others and to ourselves. May we do this in a spirit of fellowship and fond regard..

New Business



Last month, Josh Nelson gave a talk on his life and overcoming the difficulties of his ostomy. We learned so much from him and were inspired by what he had to say. Thank you, Josh.

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Every December we have a “Holiday Party” just for fun. Please bring a small dessert, or appetizer to share with other members. We ask you to wrap a “white elephant” from your house. This is something that is useful or fun, but that you no longer need around your house. Then we have a dice game and see who gets your gift and whose gift you get.

**\*\*If you would like to suggest a future program, please contact: Carole Barron [barronski@aol.com](mailto:barronski@aol.com)**

**Brenda Elsagher Treasurer and Membership Report**

Brenda has had knee surgery lately—not fun. However her report last month bears repeating. “I want to thank all of our sponsors for their continued support and a special thanks to all our members as well. Currently we have 110 members with about 20% lapsed in membership. I usually send out the membership letters in April and then remove anyone from the list that has not responded in two years. We also send out our electronic newsletter to 118 nurses every other month. We have inquiries over the phone about eight times a month and on our website at least six times a month with new memberships or information requested.

When our beloved member, Anne Marie Kronick recently died, her family requested that donations be sent to our chapter. Through friends and family of Anne Marie, we received \$1220.00. Thank you all for your generosity in such a time of sadness. Anne Marie was our membership chair for many years along with being a patient advocate with Dar Hafner. Thanks Dar, in keeping in good contact with the family to aid in this process.

I thank the members who acknowledge their stoma anniversaries with extra donations. Some celebrate birthdays and others are more than generous at member renewal time. We are self-sustaining as a non-profit which aids in continuing to reach out to the new person adjusting to life with an ostomy. An important part of that is our face –to-face meetings where newly diagnosed recent new ostomates can get questions answered by the people who know what it's like. This was a gift to me 24 years ago when I came in and it still is today. Thank you for your part in keeping us engaged for others.” Written by Brenda Elsagher.

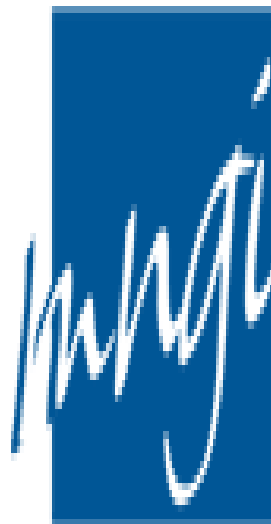
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**OAMA BEGINNINGS written by Mike Carlson**

“Going back in time is a bit of a challenge because as good as we remember, often times it isn't reality. Marilyn and I are brother and sister and we both have ostomies. I received mine in 1981 and Marilyn a few years later. I was living in Babbitt, Minnesota at the time, but when we moved to Bloomington in 1986 I became aware of the Ostomy association through Marilyn. She started attending before I did, but if memory serves me correctly I started attending in about 1988. The group was chartered under the Cancer Society and we met in their building on 66th street between France and Xerxes. Our President at the time was a man by the name of Cowboy, but I don't think that was his real name. In fact, in the early years we even gave a stipend to both the President and the Treasurer. Karen Tourdot, didn't think that was quite right, so we stopped giving stipends and lost both our President and Treasurer. At the time, we had a very active Visitation program and members needed to be trained by the Cancer

Society to officially visit patients. Training was on Saturday mornings once a year. About ten years later, the Cancer Society decided to not have charter groups anymore, so we needed to find a new place to meet. It was then we moved just south to the Library. Carol Larson had just become president and worked for the Hennepin County Library so it became our home for a few years. We needed more of a permanent place to hold our meetings, so Carol and I eventually found a place for our present meeting location at Peace United Methodist church. The rest is history. Let me add, to the best of my knowledge Marilyn and I are the only active members left from the early days at the Cancer Society. Austin Hummel became the chief editor. Some of the people from a 2003 mailing list still active in our Mpls. group are David Dalum, Brenda Elsagher, Don Heinrich, Cy Hennek, John Kolkind, Carol Larson, Julie Powell

Mike Carlson



Remembering Anne Marie Kronick at a conference with Mike and Tami Carlson, and Mike's sister, Marilyn Carlson.

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## GETTING TO KNOW DAVID DALUM



I grew up as a “town kid” in a small town of 630 people in west-central Minnesota but a little more than one month after graduating from high school, I left for New York to attend the US Military Academy at West Point. . In June of 1969, I graduated from the Academy as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the US Army and began some additional training at Fort Benning, Georgia (Infantry Officer Basic Course, Airborne School, to learn how to jump out of perfectly good airplanes and helicopters [with a parachute], and Ranger School) to prepare me for future military assignments.

After a month leave, I reported to my first assignment at a small Army base north of Frankfurt, Germany. A little more than a year later, I became the commander of the Military Police Company for 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Division in Frankfurt, Germany, and a year after that I was assigned as the Operations Officer in the 5th Corps Provost Marshal’s Office, also in Frankfurt. During that time, I met and married a Portuguese woman, and we had a beautiful daughter, Melanie. In August of 1974, we returned to the US and I attended another training course at Fort Gordon, Georgia.

In September of 1975, I left active duty with the Army and returned to Minnesota where I began an information systems career in the electric and gas utility known then as Northern States Power Company. While working for NSP, I continued in the Army Reserves, eventually retiring in 1991. Through a couple of mergers and acquisitions, NSP became Xcel Energy, and I continued working there until I retired in 2017 after 41 years, but more about that later.

This is no secret to many of you, but unexpected life events have a way of changing plans and life trajectories. In early 1993, my wife died unexpectedly from breast cancer. By 1995, I had been seeing Karla Wagner, now my sweetheart, who I had met several years earlier in the Army Reserves. In 1996, I moved in with her in south Minneapolis.

By 2002, I had been living what I thought was a relatively normal life, good health, plenty of varied indoor and outdoor activities, typical workdays, etc. That changed

dramatically early one morning in late October. I woke up to rectal bleeding, but had no other symptoms such as rectal pain or blood in the stool, etc. I immediately went to the Emergency Room at Abbott-Northwestern Hospital and was diagnosed with colorectal cancer by Dr. Robert Madoff. After a regimen of radiation treatments to try to shrink the tumor, I was scheduled for surgery in late January 2003.

My rectum and a portion of my large intestine were removed successfully, and I was endowed with the permanent colostomy which I now have. Surgery was followed by several weekly chemotherapy sessions, CT scans and Dr. appointments to review track my recovery. While in the hospital recovering from the colon surgery, I was also diagnosed with Type II diabetes, so treatments with metformin and glipizide became part of my daily life as well as the frequent maintenance of my colostomy (pouch changes, etc.).

Since then, my life has pretty much returned to what might be called “normal”, except for the diabetes medications, changing of colostomy pouches and the occasional colonoscopy. I am back to a pretty full schedule of indoor and outdoor activities, including one strenuous hobby, which is sailing -- I have my own 36-foot sailboat which I often sail by myself. Now that I am retired from NSP/Xcel, Karla and I have been doing some international traveling. This requires some careful planning to make sure I have the necessary ostomy supplies always available but until now I have not encountered any serious limitations.

I like to attend OAMA meetings whenever I can and almost always come away with some new insight in dealing with certain situations or better understanding of other peoples' experiences. The open and candid discussion of what otherwise might be embarrassing or unpleasant topics and the ability to ask ANY question are especially valuable characteristics of this group.

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## Patient Power –

If you have any ideas or issues you'd like us to address, please send them in to the newsletter editor or directly to me, Darlene Hafner. You can reach us by emailing [dmhafner@yahoo.com](mailto:dmhafner@yahoo.com).



### FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON

Well, dear friends, it's that time of year. It's upon us whether we want to accept it or not or whether we like it or not. We know what season we're leaving behind and we know what season is coming. Some of us will enjoy the gorgeous color of the leaves and that bright blue sky, but others might look at Fall as the next step to a cold, harsh winter. It's all in the attitude. We all have heard the saying "for everything there is a season" and for those of us who remember Pete Seeger, we probably all knew the lyrics to his song "Turn, Turn Turn".

Fall is here and most of us reflect on the summer. Perhaps your memories are good times at the cabin, babysitting grandkids, going to the beach, having neighbors over for a BBQ, fishing on your favorite lake, or the joy of watching your garden grow. Perhaps your memories aren't that happy. Maybe a friend or family member got sick or passed away, horrible storms ripped through your home or cabin, the

vacation you looked so forward to didn't happen or the kids didn't visit as much as you had hoped.

When Fall arrives in Minnesota we begin to plan for the long winter months. We make sure the snowblower works, the furnace has a tune up, the winter coats get pulled out of the closet, and some people might be packing up to go South. Some of us might be already thinking of the upcoming Holidays.

As you read this, you might be wondering, "what does the weather have anything to do with having an ostomy?!" Nothing really, except that I find it an interesting analogy as we go through our lives as ostomates. Similar to reflecting on the summer that has passed, We might look back and reflect on our lives or health before we had our surgery. Did we miss work or time with our friends or family because we were so sick? Did we have trips to the ER because we were in so much pain? Was the bathroom the first thing we ever looked for in a store or restaurant? Or for some people, were you fairly healthy before you had surgery? Perhaps something unforeseen happened, such as radiation damage to your intestines, getting an infection such as C-Diff, a ruptured bowel or a sudden diagnosis of rectal or colon cancer?

Similar to the season of fall and preparing for winter, we are all pretty good planners. We pack up extra supplies and bring pouches, wafers, creams, tape, meds and whatever we need for that "just in case" scenario. Some people might be in the planning stages, both physically and mentally, of preparing for their ostomy surgery or any other type of bowel related surgery. It's takes physical planning but also a lot of "emotional" planning too.

I remember years ago my dear sweet Grandma said to me, "I don't like Fall at all, it's my worst season." When I asked her why, she replied, "Because everything dies in the fall". That was her thought process and her attitude about that particular season. She couldn't take in the beautiful changing of the leaves, the late blooming flowers or the crisp fall breeze.

Our attitude plays an important part in the changes in our lives as we go through our "seasons of life". We are an awesome group of people. We are positive. We attempt to stay healthy. And we provide support for each other. We meet our challenges (which can be many) head on and have learned to take them in stride, (which can be tough at times). The only things we can change in our life is our attitude and our latitude. We, as ostomates have a pretty darn good attitude... and to those of you who are "changing your latitude" enjoy your Winter season in the south!

Dar





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**To:**

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If you haven't enrolled, 2019 Annual dues are \$25 and are due in March following your submittal of this form. Membership in the Ostomy Association of the Minneapolis Area includes informative meetings, subscription to the "Ostomy Outlook" newsletter and an "Antless picnic" in June.

OAMA  
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