



# I AM A SURVIVOR!!!

The survivors' brunch is an event that began in 2007 with 17 survivors in attendance. It has grown over the years and there have been as many as 150 survivors joining us. With family and friends who join them, the event continues to grow reaching an average attendance of approximately 300 people. This event enables ladies who are traveling the same journey to get together, and in many cases bond. Newly diagnosed women are given a sense of hope when they meet and talk with attendees who have experienced years of survival. As you may know, there are very few if any support groups solely focused on women who are survivors of this devastating disease for which there is no test. This is one day dedicated just to them.



Pictured Above : A portion of the 120 Ovarian Cancer Survivors in attendance.

This year's brunch took place on Sunday April 30th at the Wisconsin Club in downtown Milwaukee. The morning started out with an expo where survivors and their guests could talk to different vendors and medical professionals about ovarian cancer and different ways to get involved within the ovarian cancer community.

Everyone then enjoyed a wonderful brunch that included an omelet station, fresh carved meats, cheeses and potatoes which was followed by our guest speaker for the event was Cindy Carlson from Cindy Carlson: Reiki and Energy Healing. Cindy spoke about Reiki and the benefits that cancer patients have found using Reiki as a supplement to the traditional cancer care.

Before the day ended we drew the winners for the National Ovarian Cancer Convention Scholarships. The winners were:

Shavon Winters, who is a 1 year and 11 month survivor from Milwaukee, WI  
Peggy Sandahl, who is a 1 year survivor from New Berlin, WI  
Kim Pufahl, who is a 2 year survivor from Lake Geneva, WI  
Rebecca Johnson, who is a 41 year survivor from Madison, WI

Thank you for all who attended this wonderful event. We could not do it without you and our generous sponsors. Teal level sponsors were Cancer Treatment Centers of America and The Marek Group. Our Platinum level sponsor was Aurora Health Care and our Gold level sponsors were Froedtert and The Medical College, The Medical College of Wisconsin, ProHealth Care, and UW- Madison Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Looking forward to seeing you all again next year. Make sure you check our website at [www.wisconsinovariancancer.org](http://www.wisconsinovariancancer.org) for the date and time.

# *A Toast to Teal*

A Toast to Teal is WOCA's annual Gala which was held on Friday March 10th at the Wisconsin Club. This year we had 120 attendees to share this great evening with. It was filled with food, laughs, great silent and loud auction items, a wine cork pull, gift card tree and a diamond dig.

Some of the highlights of the evening were our loud auction items. Our loud auction items this year included an "Organize Your Life" Package, which included 2 hours with an in-home personal organizer and over \$850.00 worth of gift certificates to The Container Store, Target, and many other stores! WOCA also featured a two night stay with air fare at the King and Prince Beach & Golf Resort. Lastly, WOCA was thrilled to receive a donation from Tobin Jewelers. This was a 14K Rose Gold Oval Morganite and Diamond Pendant on a 14K Rose Gold 18 inch chain! The value was over \$2,800.00! Thank you to all those that donated and bid on these amazing loud auction items!

Our honored guest for the evening was Ricki Thompson who spoke to us about his beloved wife, Kathy Thompson. Kathy was a dedicated member of WOCA and the ovarian cancer community. One of Kathy's many passions was to share her story through WOCA's Survivor's Teaching Students (STS): Saving Women's Lives® program. Kathy and the students had an indescribable connection and she left an incredible impact on all those that she touched. After a long and hard fought battle with ovarian cancer, Kathy Thompson passed away in December of 2014. Her husband, Rikki Thompson, continues to share her story through the STS® program in her memory.

A Toast to Teal was a huge success raising over \$15,000 to help WOCA be able to continue its mission to provide education, support and fund research for Ovarian Cancer throughout Wisconsin.

Mark your calendars for next year. A Toast to Teal will be on Saturday, March 3rd, 2018 at the Wisconsin Club in downtown Milwaukee. We hope to see all of you there!!

If you would like to make a donation for the silent or loud auction please contact the WOCA office at [friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org](mailto:friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org)



# Understanding Ovarian Cancer



## Dr. Erin Bishop

Assistant Professor  
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Medical College of Wisconsin

High-grade serous ovarian cancer spreads throughout the abdomen and pelvis early in the disease process leading to diagnosis at late stages in many women. Understanding the ability of ovarian cancer cells to spread, or metastasize, is critical in order to develop better therapies and improve survival for ovarian cancer patients.

One area of current research focuses on metabolic changes that occur within cancer cells and in their surrounding environment that allow them to spread to, and survive in, a new metastatic location. Ovarian cancer often spreads to the omentum, which is an apron of fat that originates from the stomach and colon. Recent studies show that when ovarian cancer cells spread to the omentum they are able to adapt to their new environment by increasing their ability to use fat as an energy source. The fat cells surrounding the cancer cells help with this alteration. We are studying the interactions between cancer cells and fat cells to understand how they communicate with each other to allow for this adaptation. We have found differences in metabolic regulators between early and late stage ovarian tumors and continue to explore how this exciting finding may play a role in ovarian cancer metastasis.

Therapies that alter tumor cell metabolism are an active area of research and may play a significant role in making ovarian cancer more responsive to treatment and ultimately improving patient survival.



## 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

# *Survivor Spotlight*

## Cheryl Figg



In September of 2012 at the age of 58, I was teaching 4th grade, teaching an after-school aerobic dance class, and directing a children's musical with 50 young performers when my world suddenly came to a screeching halt. From spring until fall, I had experienced some small twinges shooting up into my vaginal area, minor bloating, and a newly found indigestion, so I finally decided that these subtle bodily signals needed to be investigated; maybe something was wrong. After an ultrasound, my doctor discovered a cyst on each ovary, and very quickly I was set up with a GYN oncologist for surgery. Within 10 days I had a full hysterectomy and full optimal debulking surgery. I was diagnosed with Stage 3-C Ovarian Cancer. My first thought after being told this news was that at least I had lived a blessed life so far with a wonderful husband and two incredible daughters, and together we would fight this disease. My doctor was so kind and nurturing; he held my hand when he told me and showed me a lot of compassion. I knew I was in good hands.

I took a leave of absence from school as I began my treatment and also curtailed my two after-school activities of dance and musicals. My cancer journey started with Taxol but I was so allergic to it that I was switched to Taxotere and Carboplatin. After six months of treatment I was declared cancer free and returned to teaching. Much to my surprise and delight, during my time away from school teaching, my students and coworkers had raised over \$2000 for me to give to WOCA to fight Ovarian Cancer. I thought my journey was over, but that was not to be the case. My journey still continues today as I had a recurrence in September of 2014 and went through another six months of treatment with Doxyl and Carboplatin. After this round, there was no growth, but it had not kicked the cancer out as hoped. Further testing revealed that my cancer was estrogen based and I was put on Arimedex, which cut off my supply of Estrogen. At this time my navigating nurse had suggested I visit a different cancer clinic to receive Reiki. I had been receiving acupuncture treatments every week during my chemo treatment and the acupuncture had really helped me with side effects and keeping my blood counts elevated. I soon learned that Reiki, which is a Japanese healing art form, was being offered in many cancer care clinics in the Milwaukee area. More specifically, Reiki focuses on helping patients relax, decrease stress, lower blood pressure, all which will help the body fight disease. I now have officially had 115 Reiki sessions and can honestly say they have helped me immensely in dealing with cancer. Meeting the volunteers who give Reiki is half the fun; they are such givers of positive energy and love.

In November of 2015 my cancer began to grow once again, and I was put on Avastin and Cytosin to keep the growth in check. I am still currently on those two drugs and have had minor growth over the past one and half years. In addition to these drugs, I continue to receive acupuncture two to three times a week, Reiki at least once a week, and I see my chiropractor once a week, along with a massage therapist every two to three weeks. In other words, I have taken care of "me." Throughout this continuous cancer journey I have met some of the most wonderful caretakers. My team of doctors and nurses are always there for me; they give me hugs, return my calls, and listen to me ask a zillion questions. Cancer has opened my eyes to the world around me and made me realize that we human beings truly need to slow down, enjoy the daily gifts that are given to us, share our lives with those we love and know that together we can fight this terrible disease. There is always hope that as I journey forward there will be a cure for ovarian cancer, but in the meantime, I am still living life to the fullest by doing a few things on my bucket list like traveling on river cruises, hiking in the Alps and our local nature preserve, touring the USA, and not letting cancer take control of my life.



## 7 tips for healthy grilling + 2 spices that pack nutritional punch

As the weather warms up, you may be tempted to take the daily chore of cooking outdoors to the grill. Despite the delight of a grilled meal on the back deck, grilling isn't always the healthiest method of cooking. Research suggests that grilling meats at high temperatures over an open flame creates carcinogenic compounds called heterocyclic amines (HCAs), which can damage the DNA in genes and potentially contribute to the development of cancer. High intake of meat cooked to a high temperature has been associated with increased risk of colorectal, pancreatic and prostate cancers.

That doesn't mean you need to avoid the grill, though. Jessica Engelbrecht, RD, clinical oncology dietitian at Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA) in Tulsa, Oklahoma, suggests using grilling methods that safely cook meats: "How you cook meat can be the best method of preventing carcinogenic compound formation," says Engelbrecht. "Using simple methods that help prevent meat juices and fat from dripping down onto the flames or heat can help you avoid the charring that leads to the formation of HCAs."

### 7 simple tips for safer grilling:

1. **Opt for a gas grill over charcoal.** When grilling with charcoal, not only can carcinogens develop in the meat from cooking at very high temperatures, but also fat from the meat can drip on the coals, causing flares and smoke, which can spread carcinogens onto the food. With a gas grill, you have better control of the heat, reducing the chance of charring. Plus, you won't complain when your grill is ready in a fraction of the time it takes charcoal to heat properly.
2. **Properly thaw meat ahead of time.** This will ensure that excess juice will not splash on the coals causing flares.
3. **Flip often.** If you're grilling burgers, avoid flattening the patties while cooking them; instead, turn them more frequently to ensure even cooking.
4. **Try cooking all meats on top of foil, in a foil package, or on a raised cooking surface away from the main source of heat.** This will reduce the chance of charring from a flare.
5. **Grill at the lowest temperature possible to avoid charring.** But, if charring occurs, you can choose to trim off those parts.
6. **Marinate meats.** Using certain marinades and spices when cooking food on the grill can decrease HCA formation by up to 96 percent.
7. **Pre-cook inside** to minimize time on the grill.

Spice it up! Adding spices to your food is a great way to add flavor. Two spices to explore in your grilling adventures include:

1. **Try mixing turmeric** with a mustard marinade or to a relish to top on your meat. With its subtle nutty flavor, it's delicious on all poultry.
2. **Ginger.** Pairing particularly well with red meat, ginger can help with digestion. Add it to a marinade to give a big boost



Winning the fight against cancer, every day.®

# 2017 WOCA Run/Walks

The events are open to men, women, and children of all ages, and of all experience levels. Some participants run or walk in honor or memory of someone, some are survivors, and some just enjoy getting out and supporting an awesome cause!

## Nancy's Run, Rock & Stroll

Sept 9th, 2017

**Greenfield Park: Pavilion 3A**  
2028 S 124th St, West Allis,  
WI 53227

*Early Bird Registration  
Closes August 1st!*

## Whisper Walk

Sept 24th, 2017

**McKee Farms Park**  
2930 Chapel Valley Rd,  
Fitchburg, WI 53711

*Early Bird Registration  
Closes August 14th!*



**Ovarian  
Cancer  
Survivors  
FREE!!!**

**Runners,  
Walkers, & Bark  
in the Park**

*Full Price: \$35*

Early Bird:

**\$30**

**Rascal  
Romp**

*Full Price: \$10*

Early Bird:

**\$5**

**Team  
Participant**

*Full Price: \$35*

Early Bird:

**\$28**

Teams are a great way to gather your friends and family! Teams are made up of 10 or more people. To get your team name added to the drop down list, please email us at [friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org](mailto:friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org).

# Join us for our Circle of Courage:

When: August 26th, 2017  
Time: 9:30am-11:30am

Help us paint wine and martini glasses in collaboration with our TealTini campaign. (You'll even get to keep your favorite set!)



## Ovarian Cancer Survivors Only

Encouraging those diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer. We invite all women diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer to come learn more about WOCFA and our mission. You are welcome to come once, twice, or every time! Sessions will be held at the WOCFA office located at 13825 W. National Ave, Suite 103, New Berlin, WI 53151.

\*Registration Required, Please call the WOCFA office to reserve your spot today. (262-797-7804) or email us at [friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org](mailto:friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org)

When: October 21st, 2017  
Time: 10am-11am



## With Guest Speaker Amelia Coffaro:

Amelia Coffaro, RYT-200, is dedicated to teaching Adaptive Yoga and Mindfulness as ways to manage, prevent and heal from disease or illness. After experiencing a rare and aggressive form of breast cancer at age 27, she was inspired to create an offering that met the unique needs of people with cancer and chronic illness.

For more information visit her website at:  
[www.ameliacoffaroyoga.com](http://www.ameliacoffaroyoga.com)

# 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 treatment within the past 6 months. WOCA defines "treatment" as: chemotherapy, radiation, surgery, clinical trials, and/or therapy/program regimen.

## 3rd Quarter Application Period: September 1st- September 15th

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

Week of October 3rd: 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 22nd: Awarded recipients will be notified and money will be dispersed

# 2017 Calendar of Events

## Ovarian Cancer Month Kick Off Party

Thursday, August 31st, 2017  
Great Lakes Distillery, Milwaukee

## 12th Annual WOCA's Nancy's Run, Rock, and Stroll

Saturday, September 9th, 2017  
Greenfield Park - West Allis

## 4th Annual WOCA's Whisper Walk

Sunday, September 24th, 2017  
McKee Farms Park- Fitchburg

## Hot Cider Hustle

(Hosted by All Community Events, with a  
portion of the proceeds benefitting WOCA)

Sunday, October 29th, 2017  
Estabrook Park- Shorewood

Please continue to check our website for  
upcoming events and registration details!

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

## All Community Events- Hot Cider Hustle

Sunday, October 29th, 2017  
(6:30am - 11:30am)

Shorewood, WI - Estabrook Park



### 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  
NOW OPEN - Saturday - 9am -12pm

### WEBSITE:

[www.wisconsinovariancancer.org](http://www.wisconsinovariancancer.org)

### EMAIL:

[friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org](mailto:friends@wisconsinovariancancer.org)

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For Board Member Information,  
please visit our website.