

# Teal Talk



May 2021

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It's happening.... we are finally able to start scheduling events. It has been too long since we have seen the members of our teal community and we have so missed all of you. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of this month we will be hosting the annual Survivor Celebration Brunch in person. It is THE event of the year that everyone looks forward to attending. It is a chance to catch up with old friends and to make new friends. There will be plenty of delicious food, entertainment and maybe a prize giveaway or two. If you have not received an invitation by mail, please let us know and we will get one out to you. We look forward to seeing you there!

In April OCAO had a few opportunities to spread awareness and educate about the symptoms of ovarian cancer. See the "Happenings" page for pictures. If you are interested in volunteering now that we can move forward with events, you can email [info@ocao.org](mailto:info@ocao.org). We would love to have your help.

As always, let us know if there is anything that OCAO can do for you. We are here to help, and you are never alone.

*One day you will tell your story of how you overcame what you went through and it will be someone else's survival guide.*

*---Brene Brown*

# Happenings



Kelli and Lisa at Sunny95 Easter Eggstravaganza Drive through event. They (along with Kim) passed out candy and coloring pages.



OCAO participated in Sunny95 Girl Scout Cookie Buyout again this year. In exchange for participation, OCAO spotlights, which helped to spread awareness were broadcasted by Columbus Radio Group. OCAO was also the recipient of 576 boxes of Girl Scout cookies that will be distributed to local cancer treatment centers.



Did someone say BINGO? On April 10<sup>th</sup> OCAO hosted another designer bag bingo fundraiser at Makoy Center in Hilliard. There were about 150 men and women in attendance. A pizza buffet started the night followed by 10 rounds of bingo and 2 special rounds. There were door prizes, a ticket auction, dice game, 50/50 and other raffles offered. A special thank you to Audrey Hasson from NBC4 for calling the games, Toni Sacco for "MCing" and all the amazing volunteers who helped to make the night a success. Can't wait for the next one.

# IN THE NEWS

## **Cytoreduction in Advanced Ovarian Cancer: 'Keep the Status Quo'** ---medscape.com

Cytoreductive surgery should be considered for advanced ovarian cancer even if patients do not respond to chemotherapy, according to researchers. A retrospective, case-control study showed that optimal cytoreductive surgery is an independent predictor of overall survival, even when controlling for response to chemotherapy. The findings were presented at the Society of Gynecologic Oncology's Virtual Annual Meeting on Women's Cancer (Abstract 10243). Response to platinum-based chemotherapy is the strongest predictor of overall survival in advanced ovarian cancer, noted Nicholas Cardillo, MD, a gynecologic oncology fellow at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, who presented the findings. In recent years, a poor response to chemotherapy has sometimes been used as justification to forgo cytoreduction, Cardillo added. He and his colleagues looked into this issue because evidence to support the practice is lacking. With their study, the researchers found optimal cytoreduction improved survival regardless of the response to chemotherapy. "My advice right now is that debulking surgery should still be attempted in all patients with ovarian cancer because, as far as we know right now, optimal cytoreduction will improve survival. "Basically, this study argues to keep the status quo, which is to perform surgery." The status quo might change with future research, Cardillo acknowledged, "but as of right now, we have no evidence to support not pursuing cytoreduction in these patients." The researchers analyzed data on 234 patients who responded to platinum-based chemotherapy and 98 patients who did not respond. Subjects had stage III or IV high-grade serous ovarian cancer. About 3/4 of responders and 57% of nonresponders had optimal surgery. Only seven patient patients in each group had fewer than six cycles of chemotherapy. The mean age was 59 years in the responder group and 62 years among nonresponders. Stage IV disease, including upper-abdominal and chest involvement, was more common in the nonresponder group. The median overall survival was 44.8 months in the responder group and 18.1 months among nonresponders ( $P < .001$ ). The median overall survival was 34.2 months among patients who underwent optimal surgery and 24.8 months among those who did not ( $P < .001$ ). Based on these results, "surgical debulking should still be considered a component of the treatment algorithm in ovarian cancer patients who have a poor response to chemotherapy, if an optimal surgery is deemed feasible,"



# Survivor Spotlight

*Meet Adrienne Mendez, 10-Year Survivor*

Hello, my name is Adrienne. I am 39 years old; a Wife, and Mother of three Boys. This is my Ovarian Cancer journey. In 2011- I started to experience lower abdominal pain similar to the pain level of childbirth contractions. They would "come and go" like "bursts of lightning" (as I describe them). After weeks of these episodes, I wanted to get checked out. I scheduled an appointment with my OBGYN. She completed her exam and wanted an ultrasound. After her exam and pelvic ultrasound; she determined that I had ovarian cysts that occur naturally with the monthly cycle and they can burst at times, which explained where the "bursts of lightning" pain was coming from. She said she felt this was worth "waiting" for and to "follow up", as I saw her annually for routine visits. As the years progressed, so did my symptoms. I was experiencing abdominal bloating, lower back pain, pain with intercourse, pain in lower abdomen, and feeling full after small meals along with those pesky "bursts of lightning". The "feeling full" was so bad; I was forced to stand while I ate, because something just felt "off". I always reported these symptoms to my OBGYN who just felt ultrasounds and "watching/waiting" were enough. I became very concerned as my symptoms seemed to be getting worse. During an annual exam I suggested more testing, even if it meant we were just "ruling out the worst possibilities". She agreed and put the orders in for the CA-125 blood work and more ultrasound imaging. She also said, "There is another blood test we can do called "inhibin's" but that kind of Cancer is so rare there is NO WAY you have it." I recall she emphasized on "NO WAY". My CA-125 came back as normal. The ultrasound still showed cystic ovaries. With concern, she diagnosed me with PCOS. I was 33 at the time and felt I never had the symptoms of PCOS which include infertility, loss of periods, and facial hair. I had none of these, ever. She put me on a medication for PCOS and I took it for a year. With pain increasing and my episodes getting worse- I felt so defeated. In October 2016, my OBGYN suggested we take my right ovary out since it was measuring larger than before, and the pain was much worse. I agreed and had outpatient surgery on a Friday. I was home by 5pm. Afterwards, my OBGYN said everything looked great and the surgery went well. On Monday night, I received a call from my OBGYN. She said my ovary was sent to a lab where it tested positive for a rare form of ovarian Cancer called "Granulosa Cell Tumor" (GCT).



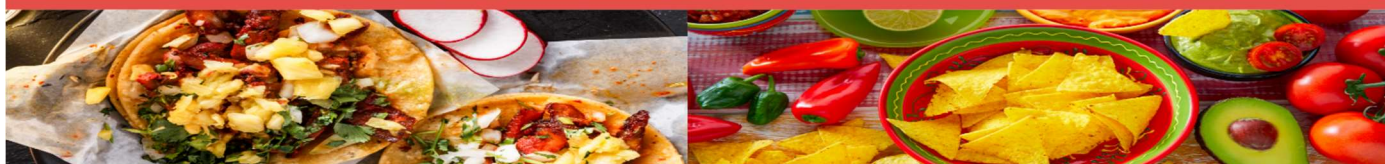
She further explained the CA-125 test is not the test to detect this type of cancer, but the *inhibin* test was. She said I needed to see an Oncologist, as soon as possible, but needed me to come in early Tuesday to give blood for the inhibin levels to use as a base line marker. I went in on Tuesday, but no sign of my OBGYN. I have never seen or heard from her since that phone call. As painful as it was, I was adamant about getting into Oncology since this had been going on for a long time. I researched many Oncologists in Columbus and decided to see Dr. Fowler with OSU Gynecologic Oncology. After he read my medical records, he explained to me that during my first surgery, with my OBGYN, my ovary actually ruptured spilling cells into my abdomen (I was never told this previously). He felt concerned because Cancer cells may have been floating around in my pelvic region. He suggested I have a full hysterectomy, with many biopsies, as well as lymph node removal just to make sure all bases were covered- followed by chemotherapy. I had just turned 35 and my life was turned upside down by all the news. I was still healing from my first surgery, then whisked into another surgery, followed by months of chemotherapy. I survived! Going forward- I still get my inhibins checked every six months and so far, things have been "all clear". With GCT, there is a chance of reoccurrence. I have decided to cross that bridge when I get there -if it ever comes. Every day, I choose to enjoy life and live it to the fullest. I made it through that part of my journey, and I am happy to share my story with everyone. My biggest take away was to be my own health advocate (it is okay to ask for tests even if they seem unnecessary or for a rare disease) and to trust my intuition (Doctors are human too and they make mistakes).



**If you would like to be featured in an upcoming edition of Teal Talk, email your story to [Lisa Mitchell lmitchell@ocao.org](mailto:Lisa.Mitchell@ocao.org)**



It's a food fiesta!  
**COOKING FOR CINCO DE MAYO**



*Cheesy Chipotle Chicken Enchiladas*

- |                           |                                      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 pkg soft Tortillas      | 2 Chicken breasts, cooked & shredded |
| 1 can diced Green Chiles  | 8 oz Cream Cheese                    |
| 1 ½ cup Quesadilla Cheese | 2 cups green Enchilada Sauce         |
| 1 cup Cheddar Cheese      | 2 Chipotle Peppers, diced            |

Put chicken, chilies, cream cheese, quesadilla cheese, & chipotle peppers in bowl. Combine. Divide mixture between soft tortillas. Roll tight & place in baking dish. Top with enchilada sauce & cheese. Place in 400° oven & cook until cheese melted, about 10-12 minutes. Enjoy!



*Queso Fundido*

- |                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Tortilla Chips                    | 1 Large avocado, pitted & diced    |
| 1 Large Tomato, diced             | 2 Green onions, thinly sliced      |
| 1 Jalapeno, seeded & minced       | 2 Tbsp Lime Juice                  |
| ½ tsp Salt                        | 2 Tbsp unsalted Butter             |
| 2 Tbsp Flour                      | 1 cup Whole Milk                   |
| 1 cup Mozzarella Cheese, shredded | 1 cup Pepper Jack Cheese, shredded |

In medium bowl stir together avocado, tomato, green onion, jalapeño, lime juice, & salt. Taste & add more lime juice & salt if needed. Preheat broiler & position rack in upper third of oven. In large broiler-proof skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Whisk in flour until smooth, whisk in milk. Cook until bubbly. Take off heat & stir in mozzarella & pepper jack. Stir until completely melted. Place skillet under broiler until bubbling & browned.



### *Churro Cheesecake Taquitos*

1 Street Taco White Corn Tortillas  
1½ in. Canola Oil

#### CINNAMON SUGAR:

¼ cup Sugar  
2 tsp ground Cinnamon

#### FILLING:

1 cup Powdered Sugar  
1 cup Heavy Whipping Cream  
2 tsp Vanilla Extract  
8 oz Cream Cheese, softened

Heat 1 ½ inches to 2 inches canola oil in large saucepan over medium-high heat until 350°. In small bowl, combine sugar & cinnamon, set aside. Warm tortillas in microwave 15 seconds. Roll each tortilla up & secure in place with toothpick. Fry tortillas in batches in hot oil until brown & crisp. Remove to plate lined with paper towels. Sprinkle sugar mixture on fried tortillas. Set aside to cool. In medium bowl, whisk filling ingredients together until well combined. Set aside. Place cream cheese in bowl & beat with mixer until light & fluffy, about 4 minutes. Pour in filling mixture and beat until combined. Add this mixture to pastry bag & pipe into fried tortillas. Garnish with dollop of whipped cream & sprinkle with remaining cinnamon sugar.



### *Mocktail: Strawberry Margarita*

¾ cup Strawberries, frozen  
1 oz Lime Juice  
¼ oz Orange Blossom Water  
1 ½ oz Orange Juice  
1 oz Agave Nectar

In the base of blender, measure out strawberries, orange juice, agave nectar & orange blossom water. Blend until smooth. Enjoy!









## May

6 - 6pm Karen Mills-Cancer is a Laughing Matter (via zoom) For registration email Gina Crooks at [gina.crooks@mchs.com](mailto:gina.crooks@mchs.com) or call 614.234.1550

22- 11am Survivor Celebration Brunch. For registration email [kelli@ocao.org](mailto:kelli@ocao.org) or call 614-546-9498.

## June

5 – 12pm or 4:30pm Survivor Only Event: Candle Lab, Make Your Own Scented Candle and enjoy lunch or dinner while waiting for it to cure. For registration email [lisa@ocao.org](mailto:lisa@ocao.org) or call 614-546-9498

12- 6pm OCAO 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala. Enjoy a night out while supporting the mission of OCAO. Dinner, dancing, photo booth, silent auction and much more. For tickets go to our website [ocao.org](http://ocao.org)

## July

17 – TBD Ice Cream Social & Loose Change Challenge. Collect loose change that you have and meet us in our office parking lot for some ice cream. The Sunny95 Treat Truck will be there giving out sweet treats.

24 – TBD Dog Walk: Gahanna. Just like Strides for Hope, but with your fur babies.

## August

7- Let's Bowl: Star Lanes at Polaris. Bring your team or come and we will find you a team. Enjoy some friendly competition and win prizes. Food & drinks are included. Cash bar available. No cost for Survivors \$10 for guests.

## September

19- TBD Stides for Hope 5k & Walk




Stay tuned for more information and additional events.



2021

# MAY



SU	M	TU	W	TH	F	SA
						1
2	3	4	5 	6 Karen Mills Comedy Night 6pm	7	8 World Ovarian Cancer Day
9 	10	11 CSC Support Group Mtg 6:30pm	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 *Survivor Celebration Brunch 11am
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 					

\*See website [OCAO.org](http://OCAO.org) for information and registration

\*RED indicates volunteer opportunity

2021

# JUNE



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**\*Survivor  
Candle Lab  
Event  
12pm or  
4:30pm**

6

**National  
Cancer  
Survivor Day**

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8

**CSC Support  
Group Mtg  
6:30pm**

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**\*OCAO  
Anniversary  
Gala  
6:00pm**

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\*See website [OCAO.org](http://OCAO.org) for information and registration

RED indicates volunteer opportunity

# Cancer is a Laughing Matter

**May 6, 2021**

**6:00 - 7:15 p.m.**



Karen Mills

*Cancer is a Laughing Matter* will feature clean comedian, radio host & ovarian cancer survivor, Karen Mills.

As a Tennessee resident, Karen has performed at The Grand Ole Opry, is a regular on Sirius XM radio, and was a featured TEDx speaker. This program will highlight her TEDx experience. Join us for *Cancer is a Laughing Matter*, Karen's humorous take on her cancer journey. This program will be provided virtually and is open to all cancer survivors.

*This program will be provided virtually and is open to survivors, guests and community members.*

**Registration is Required (program access provided after registration)**

[gina.crooks@mchs.com](mailto:gina.crooks@mchs.com)

614.234.1550

**Provided in partnership with:**

American Cancer Society  
Cancer Support Community  
The Crawford Crew

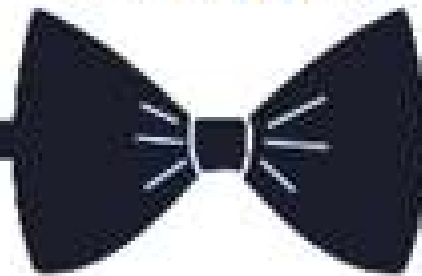


The Mount Carmel Foundation  
Ovarian Cancer Alliance of Ohio  
Young Survival Coalition

**SAVE THE DATE**

**THE OVARIAN CANCER ALLIANCE OF OHIO  
INVITES YOU TO**

**The 10<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary  
Gala**



**June 13 • 6 o'clock pm  
Makoy Center-Hilliard**

**Invitation to follow  
Attire: Black Tie Optional**

## Board of Directors - Directory



**Kim Britt**

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Director, Strides for Hope

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