



Ostomy Association of the Houston Area

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

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

A Thank You from Puerto Rico Ostomy Supply Donations from the Mainland a Huge Help to those affected by Hurricane

By *Martha Velez De Nieves, President*
Asociacion de Ostomizados de Puerto Rico, Inc.

On September 20th the island of Puerto Rico was hit by Hurricane Maria. It was the worst hurricane to hit Puerto Rico and the U.S. in recorded history.

Ruth Salinger of FOW-USA was the first person to contact me. Ken Aukett, whom I consider a mentor, also called. They were rightly concerned about Puerto Rico's need for ostomy supplies.

Ostomates in Puerto Rico would indeed need supplies, but the infrastructure was so damaged there was no way we could receive them. We all know ostomy supplies need to be treated with care. Yet, we had no power, communications that were sporadic, and a complete breakdown in postal service. We were in a bad way. I told them I would inform them when conditions improved enough for supplies to get through.

In discussions with the VP and Secretary of our association, we agreed it was best to postpone the shipments until we could



receive assurance they would not be held up in transit. At the time, stories were circulating of packages being opened, of batteries and other vital supplies being pilfered. Even if we received the donations, we worried about how to store them and how they would be distributed. So much had been damaged it was like starting over.

We decided the safest place to send those supplies was my home address. I live in a condominium, and thank God we had a generator that supplied electricity and water, if only for limited hours. For security purposes, the elevators had been shut down. We kept looking for options, contacting other places for storage, but none had power. Every option we considered held another roadblock.

As a last resort we called an old school where we conducted meetings. This old school was given by the government for restoration to Casa Dominicana. They agreed to give us a room, but they had no water or power either!

(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 WOC Nurses, please note:
Upon request from a doctor, nurse, or social worker, a specially trained visitor will be asked to contact an ostomy patient by phone or visit them in person before and/or after surgery. The visitor will be matched as nearly as possible according to sex, age, and type of ostomy. The visitor does not give medical advice, and there is no charge for this service. Please contact our Visitation Coordinator, Marian Newman at 713-392-5768, or newmarian@gmail.com.

Central Group News

At our January meeting, we had a very informative round table discussion. We covered a broad range of topics, including how to handle mysterious leaking problems, products that different ostomates use for various situations, and problems that different foods cause for different people. I love these types of meetings because we truly get to share our knowledge and experiences with others. Whether we are new ostomates or “old-hands”, we can always learn something new.

Our next meeting is February 19. Our speaker will be Charlene Randall, RN, CWOCN, who has a presentation about the different types of ostomies and ostomy issues. I really hope to see you there.

Regards,

Lorette Bauarschi, President, OAHA, 713-582-0718

Baytown Group News

Baytown Ostomy Support Group kicked off 2018 with a re-scheduled meeting date and a different location. This did not deter attendance as there were 12 ostomates, spouses, friends and/or family members who joined the meeting at the Cancer Center on January 15 to discuss “Blueprint for Success: Ostomy Resource Assessment” facilitated by Cindy Barefield, RN, CWOCN.

The group discussion began with everyone sharing their thoughts on “success” for an ostomate. Responses included no leakage, a feeling of confidence to go out of the house, independence with ostomy care, return to work and not worrying about your pouch all the time!

A handout prompted the discussion of Ostomy Resources, their validity, reliability as a source of information; availability when needed and other comments. Participants shared their experiences of neighbors, well-meaning family members and popular magazines as poor sources of information for a new ostomate. Those sources that tended to be more reliable included fellow ostomates, WOC Nurses, Phoenix magazine and ostomy websites and/or patient education websites. There is much information “out there” but the responsibility is our own to validate the source.

The group brainstormed potential topics for the year. As the facilitator for the group, Cindy will work to schedule these. If you have suggestions or ideas that will help educate or inform the group, please contact Cindy. We are looking forward to our 14th year as an Ostomy Support Group in Baytown. We hope to see you on the second Monday of each month at 6pm.

Best regards,

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

Northwest Group News

Our normal meeting on January 17 was rescheduled to Wednesday, January 24 due to weather. We had over a baker's dozen in attendance as StomaSpan inventors Danielle and Greg Pickens joined us for their first live presentation of their product StomaSpan. StomaSpan as the name suggests was designed to protect the stoma from seatbelts. It is a reusable, small metal device that folds out and clips to most any seatbelt to provide protection. It fits easily inside purses, vehicle pockets and other small areas.

Danielle shared her story as new ostomate and the issues she faced while traveling with seatbelts. Greg presented a humorous history on StomaSpan's development along with showing some earlier models. Together they presented a wonderful, open program and then provided everyone at the meeting with their own StomaSpan device to try out and provide feedback on about the product. More information about their product can be found at StomaSpan.com.

Our attendees then shared their individual stories with Danielle and Greg making this meeting a wonderful opportunity for ostomy discussion full of diversity and understanding. Danielle and Greg advised they plan to join OAHA and attend future meetings as members.

Door prizes and goodies were handed out. We truly missed Suzanne, Jay, GayNell, Beverly, Silver, Tony and all the others who were not able to make it. Our next meeting will be at the regular date/time on Wednesday, February 21, 2018, at 7pm. Our program currently is “To Be Determined!” Watch your personal email and our Facebook site for more program details.

Billy Locke

337-515-6354

Tips and Tricks

Courtesy of The Pouch, Ostomy Support Group of Northern Virginia, LLC

- People often empty their pouch whenever they pee—after all, you're in there anyway, right? But peeing when you don't have to because you're in there to empty can be a bad idea. Your bladder gets accustomed to being emptied before it really needs to, which can lead to urgency issues.
- If you're blending veggies to break down the fiber and drinking your vitamins, add a few springs of mint to make things tastier.
- Too much powder on the skin? If you use powder, take it easy with how much you're putting on. Just a very light dusting is enough.

A Thank You from Puerto Rico

(Continued from page 1)

My apartment would have to do. Time was running out. Ostomates were in desperate need.

As days passed, more communication towers came on-line. Power was returning to limited areas. My apartment got electricity! The time was ripe to request supplies. The first supplies we received were from FOW-USA. Since then we have been receiving supplies. My apartment looked like a warehouse, but I was grateful to have received so much. Just over a month later, I received a call from Casa Dominicana. They had electricity! It took us two days to transport the boxes.

Even today, we are receiving donations. We are truly grateful to have so many friends in the ostomy community in the USA.

To my surprise, Harikesh Buch, the past president of the IOA informed me that the Korean Ostomy Association would send a donation. Mr. Bonggyu Jeon, president of the Korean Ostomy Association said he would also send a monetary donation from funds they would collect in registrations. For their philanthropic support, we are truly humbled and appreciative.

To distribute supplies to those in need, we held two different activities, and are currently planning another for the end of January. It will be in the city of Hatillo, located in the island's northwest about an hour and a half drive from the metropolitan area.

I would also like to point out that I receive many calls on a daily basis requesting help. Calls so desperate that I sometimes inform them to come directly to my apartment to pick up supplies.

It is unfortunate that some medical insurance plans don't cover ostomy supplies. These supplies are needed to have a good quality of life, to be able to work, to have social contact—to have a normal life. Ostomates are not handicapped, but if we don't have access to supplies then life gets quickly miserable.

It has been four months since we were hit by the hurricane and there is so much to do. People in many towns still don't have electricity and water. The island has been devastated. Bridges and roads are broken. But our people have faith that our beautiful island will recuperate and shine again.

I want to give special thanks to our local volunteers, Estela Rodriguez, Lydia Alayón, Iris Reyes, Luis Pérez, Marta Guzmán and the staff of Casa Dominicana who have gone the extra mile in helping AOPR in the organization and distribution of these supplies for those in need. A very special thanks to my dear husband Carlos Nieves for supporting me in this event for those in need. I'm very blessed to be able to help my fellow ostomates.

FYI: Extension of Special Medicare Enrollment Period for Individuals Affected by Hurricanes in Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands and California Wildfires. Visit the link provided here for more info: <https://tinyurl.com/y8urabkd>

FOW Update

Make a resolution you can keep

You are encouraged to send any unused ostomy supplies to Friends of Ostomates Worldwide-USA at FOW-USA, 4018 Bishop Lane, Louisville, KY 40218-4539. These supplies will help needy ostomates have a happier and healthier New Year. You can read their inspiring stories on our website www.fowusa.org. Thank you for your continued financial and product support. We appreciate it.

Ann Favreau, President

Friends of Ostomates Worldwide-USA

“My ostomy gave me life. I learned to appreciate that life. Sure, I was different. I still am. But I have grown to love myself for that.” – Shawntel Bethea

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



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

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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Houston, TX 77055

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Fax (713) 461-5806

WOC Nurse Directory

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

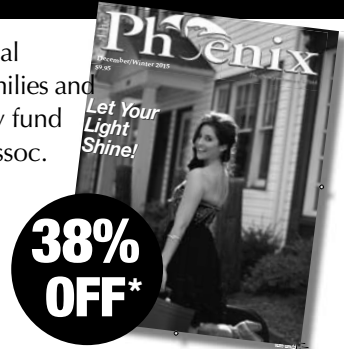
Charlene Randall, RN, CWOCN (713) 465-8497
Specialty Wound & Ostomy Nursing, Inc.
charlene@swoni.com

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

Get Ostomy Answers!

The Phoenix is the leading national magazine for ostomates, their families and caregivers. Subscriptions directly fund the nonprofit United Ostomy Assoc. of America – the only national organization providing vital information, resources, support and advocacy for ostomates.

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Central Group

Monthly: Third Monday of the month
Date: **February 19, 2018**
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, Texas 77042, (713) 266-8193
Contact: Denise Parsons 713-824-8841
 rockynme2@aol.com
Program: **Guest Speaker: Charlene Randall, RN, CWOCN, who will provide a presentation about the different types of ostomies and ostomy issues.**

Baytown Group

Monthly: Second Monday of the month
Date: **February 12, 2018**
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Community Room in Lobby of Houston Methodist San Jacinto Hospital
 4401 Garth Road, Baytown
Contact: Cindy Barefield 281-428-3033
Program: **Guest Speaker: T. J. McLaughlin from Byram presents “Maximum Reimbursement for Belts, Binders and Accessories—making sense of the order process”**

Northwest Group

Monthly: Third Wednesday of the month
Date: **February 21, 2018**
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: Billy Locke 337-515-6354
Program: **Roundtable**

J-Pouch Group

Monthly: Third Monday of the Month
Date: **February 19, 2018**
Time: 7:00 p.m. or by Appointment
Place: Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, Texas 77042, (713) 266-8193
Contact: Ron Cerreta 832-439-1311
 Ron Meisinger 281-491-8220

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

Opportunities and Announcements

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/>

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.

AmazonSmile

On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you are prompted to select a charitable organization from the list of organizations. You can change your selection at any time. To change your charitable organization: Sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile phone browser. From your desktop, go to Your Account from the navigation at the top of any page, and then select the option to Change your Charity. Or, from your mobile browser, select Change your Charity from the options at the bottom of the page. Select Ostomy Association of the Houston Area as your charity.

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 Tony Romeo, Treasurer, at 936-588-4031 or sal1mr@sbcglobal.net or send your request to the provided address below.

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

Ostomy Association of the Houston Area
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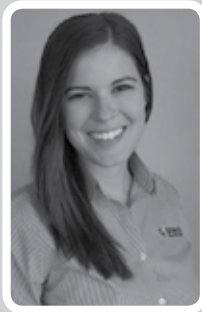
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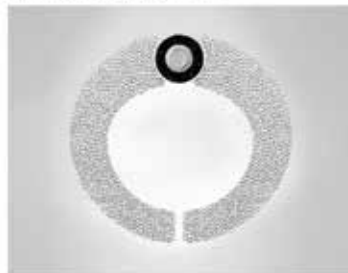
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Membership Application

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:
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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.**

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<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.

*Membership benefits include:
 Monthly Support/Information
 Meetings, Social Events,
 Monthly Newsletter*