



The Belinda Sue Fund®

for Ovarian Cancer Awareness & Research

YEAR-END NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 3

December 2012

A Letter from the Chairman...

Dear Friends,

It has been an amazing year for The Belinda Sue Fund. Thanks to your overwhelming generosity, we have taken in over \$120,000 in donations to further our mission of providing public awareness of Ovarian Cancer and to help develop a more accurate screening tool to identify the disease at its earliest stage. Our three fundraising events: The First Annual Belinda Sue Fund Gala, The Zoo Walk, and our recent Breakfast with Santa were successful beyond our wildest dreams, particularly the Zoo Walk which brought in over 850 walkers! Among the walkers, there were over 20 teams walking in "memory of" or "support of" loved ones afflicted by this horrible disease. I cannot tell you how touching it was to speak with family members and hear their courageous stories. That makes me even more passionate about our cause!

A large part of our mission is promoting awareness of Ovarian Cancer, which we have done through the use of billboards this year. Hopefully, you have seen some of them around town, with one running right now on westbound I-96 (Jeffries Fwy), just east of Telegraph Rd. I have had so many comments about our boards, particularly the beautiful picture of Bindy. We plan to have a billboard up all year round, moving next to I-75 and 9 Mile. Keep an eye out for them in your travels!

We are also in the process of forming a medical advisory committee of our Board. This Blue Ribbon panel of physicians and researchers will aid us in identifying non-profit research organizations currently doing work in the field of developing a screening tool that all women can routinely be given when they have their annual physicals. Earlier this year, a \$5,000 donation was provided to the Henry Ford Health System Ovarian Cancer Research Fund to advance our cause.

As we approach the Holiday Season, I would again like to thank you for your generous support of our compelling mission. If you would like to make a year-end contribution to The Belinda Sue Fund, please log on to our website: www.belindasuefund.org and click on the DONATE tab. As always, I cannot tell you how much we appreciate it.

I wish you and yours a joyous and wonderful Holiday Season.

Sincerely,

Tom

Our First Annual Zoo Walk...What a Turnout!!

On Sunday, September 30th, we hosted our First Annual Zoo Walk. It was a beautiful, crisp Autumn day with over 850 people joining us for an absolutely AMAZING event! Before the walk began, the crowd was able to visit vendor booths, enjoy a relaxing chair massage, and snack on breakfast food all while listening to the music provided by our volunteer deejays on the Detroit Zoo's grassy knoll. The children were entertained by face painters, crafts activities, and plenty of games. And to get the crowd fired up, Dena Raptis, an enthusiastic fitness trainer, led everyone with some great warm-up exercises. Tom Nantais and his daughter, Caroline, cut the ribbon to officially start the mile-long non-competitive Walk where participants enjoyed the Zoo sights while listening to very talented Cranbrook Schools student musicians. The event concluded with three great raffle prizes being given away. It was so heartwarming to see the outpouring of support from survivors, their families & friends, and the families and friends of those who had lost their lives to Ovarian Cancer. We are so very appreciative of your support! We'd also like to extend a very special thank-you to our volunteers, donors, sponsors, vendors, and the Detroit Zoo staff who all helped to make the event so successful!! We are looking forward to doing this again next year! **Be sure to save the date for our next Walk taking place on Sunday, September 8, 2013.**

Go to page 3 to see a few pictures of the Zoo Walk.

Check out all the pictures by visiting our website:

www.belindasuefund.org

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Enjoying Breakfast with Santa

Ho! Ho! Ho! Santa Claus paid a visit to the San Marino Club in Troy at a breakfast hosted by The Belinda Sue Fund. On Saturday, December 1, 2012 many families enjoyed a special morning with the Jolly Ole' Elf and his helpers. The children were able to have their picture taken with Santa Claus and also enjoyed coloring and crafts activities all morning long. It was a nice gathering of families and friends where special memories were made during the kickoff of the Holiday Season. The San Marino Club provided a delicious family-style breakfast and each child had a nice goodie bag to take home. We hope that "Breakfast with Santa" becomes a traditional event for The Belinda Sue Fund. Santa enjoyed visiting with the children and indicated that he would love to make a return visit from the North Pole next year!!



A Personal Message

Every issue we feature a special message or personal story of someone who is affected by Ovarian Cancer either directly or indirectly. In this issue we highlight the story of Maureen Bieber, an Ovarian Cancer Survivor.

Maureen Bieber was diagnosed with stage 3a Ovarian Cancer in October 2005, just five months after donating a kidney to her husband, Bob, whose kidneys had failed as a result of polycystic kidney disease. However, Maureen feels her story really began following a partial hysterectomy in 1993 as a result of enlarged fibroid tumors. Her ovaries were not removed at the time of surgery. The physician indicated the ovaries were still producing estrogen and decided to not remove them as Maureen, at age 47, was still "young." A few years following her partial hysterectomy, it was recommended that Maureen begin taking Premarin (hormone replacement therapy), which she did for 3 years, until stopping on her own in 2000.

A month or so following her husband's kidney transplant in 2005, Maureen began telling the doctors that "something was not right," that she was not recovering well following her kidney removal. She was bloated and felt very fatigued. The medical staff discounted her symptoms stating, "You'll get over it, give it time." By the end of October 2005, Maureen visited the emergency room as she was having severe back pain and thought it was possibly a kidney stone. At that time the doctors found an ovarian tumor so large it was pushing other organs against her back. She underwent surgery to remove the tumor the following week; and three weeks later chemotherapy began. It was a grueling treatment regimen for her, but she survived with the help of her wonderful husband, even with his recently having undergone a kidney transplant.

See "A Personal Message" (next column)

"A Personal Message" (con't)

Things went along very well for four years. Her doctor had told her that just one more six-month interval exam and Maureen would officially be in full remission. Unfortunately, she did not make that milestone as her CA 125 levels began climbing. By May 2010, Maureen was back in surgery followed by chemotherapy. Her remission lasted only nine months and the cancer returned again in 2011. She underwent a different chemotherapy drug regimen this time. However, remission lasted only six months and Maureen was back in treatment again. Maureen recently underwent her final treatment of this latest chemotherapy regimen. It is both her and Bob's hope that the subsequent PET scan, following this last treatment, will show no signs of cancer. Maureen has been her own advocate, seeking out several different opinions, all of which led to the procedures used at the University of Michigan.

In Maureen's experience, she strongly feels that one thing lacking at many cancer treatment centers is treating the whole person and offering other treatment options to the patient. She has found it very beneficial to attend a support group and learn from others who are in similar circumstances.

This has been a very long and difficult journey for Maureen - "a real learning experience" for Bob and her as well as her family. She and her husband do their very best to continue traveling and visiting friends when they are able. She says she keeps on pushing herself, but does have to give into the treatments when needed. Maureen and Bob have made some amazing new friends along her journey, who are there to support her in whatever way possible. We would like to congratulate Maureen and Bob on recently celebrating their 47th wedding anniversary. Their goal is to make it to their 50th and they are going to work at this as hard as they possibly can.

In the Spotlight

- **Hour Magazine** featured The Belinda Sue Fund in its September issue. Bindy's husband, Tom, and their daughter, Caroline, were interviewed. Refer to the following link to read this most informative and touching article:
www.houredit.com/Hour-Detroit/September-2012/The-Stealthy-Specter/
- Dr. Partha Nandi, host of the "Ask Dr. Nandi" show, interviewed Tom and Dr. Thomas Buekers, Division Head, Gynecological Oncology, Henry Ford Medical Group, for a very informative episode on Ovarian Cancer which aired in August. Refer to the following link to view the episode:
<http://vimeo.com/48991368>
- Our billboard campaign is in full swing. We currently have a billboard up in the following location:
 - I-96 east of Lamphere (between Southfield and Telegraph) on the north side facing east for westbound traffic to see (running from 10/29/12 – 12/23/12)
 - The next location will be on I-75 south of Nine Mile Rd. on the west side facing southeast for northbound traffic to see (running from 12/24/12 – 3/24/13)

Did You Know?

- Approximately 90% of women who get Ovarian Cancer do not have any known risk factors
- While all women are at average risk of getting Ovarian Cancer at any age, the following are some of the risk factors that increase a women's chance of getting Ovarian Cancer:
 - a personal history of breast cancer
 - never having had children
 - a family history of breast, colon, or ovarian cancer
- There is no reliable easy-to-administer screening test for detecting Ovarian Cancer in its early stages
- **AWARENESS IS KEY TO SAVING LIVES!!!**

"Making a Difference" Award

As you may recall in our last issue, we mentioned our annual "Making a Difference" Award with the first one being presented at our 1st Annual Gala to Dr. Adnan Munkarah in June 2012. Early next year we will be taking nominations for the next "Making a Difference" Award which will be presented at our 2nd Annual Gala taking place on Friday, May 10, 2013 at the Henry in Dearborn, MI.

We have determined the following criteria to be eligible for the Award:

- *The individual has made or is making a significant contribution(s) in the area(s) of Ovarian Cancer Research, Patient/Family Advocacy, Education/Outreach, or Patient Care*
- *The individual demonstrates passion and commitment in the fight against Ovarian Cancer*
- *The individual is dedicated to volunteering his/her services for Ovarian Cancer causes*

Keep checking back on our website early next year when we will call for nominations. The nominees will be voted on by The Belinda Sue Fund Board of Directors.

Save-the-Date!!

Event: **The Belinda Sue Fund 2nd Annual Gala**

When: Friday evening, May 10, 2013

Where: The Henry, Dearborn, MI

This is an Invitation Only "Black-tie optional" event with silent and live auction

Our website and Facebook page will have more details early next year as to how to request an invitation

Event: **The Belinda Sue Fund 2nd Annual Zoo Walk**

When: Sunday, September 8, 2013

Where: The Detroit Zoo

Online registration will open July 2013



The Belinda Sue Fund's 1st Annual Zoo Walk held on September 30, 2012

For more photos visit our website: www.belindasuefund.org