



The Advocate

Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group

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Fall Schedule Upcoming Meetings

Date	Time	Topic/Speaker	Room
9/2/20	Wed 6:30-8:00 pm	Virtual meeting; Executive Committee Report; Speaker: Laura Vadman "Know your stoma...Things you need to know to advocate for yourself"	N/A
10/7/20	Wed 6:30-8:00 pm	Virtual Meeting; speaker TBD	N/A
11/4/20	Wed 6:30-8:00 pm	Virtual Meeting; speaker TBD	N/A
12/2/20	Wed 6:30-8:00 pm	Holiday Social? How about a virtual cocktail hour?	N/A

Fall is around the corner
(It's Registration Time!)

See page 2 for details

Registration/Donation Form is at the back of this newsletter



GEOSG REGISTRATION

Formal membership is not required to attend the Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group, however we encourage and are very grateful to everyone who registers each year and donates funds to the group.

We seek donations for several reasons, but the primary need for assistance is to help us fund the Ostomy Supply Closet which serves many individuals on a monthly basis who have no other access to supplies for their ostomies. The Ostomy Supply Closet is located at a Public Storage facility and is quite costly to maintain. In addition, other funds are required to maintain our UOAA Affiliated Support Group membership, brochures, website fees and speaker honorariums.

September & October are designated as Registration Drive months but registration is open all year. Please consider registering and donating what you can to the group for this year. The funds will be put to very good use. We wouldn't be able to maintain the Ostomy Supply Closet without your assistance.

Registrations are valid from September – August. There is a form at the back of this newsletter. Please fill out the form and mail your form to the address provided on the form. Registration forms for the 2020/2021 September – August year will continue to be available upon request or on the website at www.geosg.org.

On the Lighter Side

With permission from Brenda Elzagher, excerpts from, "I'd like to Buy a Bowel, Please!"

Matches

A friend's brother told me that he controlled his odor by lighting a match in the bathroom. I did this once shortly after having my colostomy surgery. Thinking I would be smart and get it all before it smelled up the room, I let the air out of the bag and lit the match right next to it and WHOOSH!, my bag had a melted area and my stoma lit up with flame. It scared the heck out of me. What was I thinking? I knew that gas was explosive. I've heard of guys lighting their farts before, so I should have known. Is a woman's gas any less combustible than a man's? No! Moral of the story: Be careful if you use matches.

Promise

Promise me you'll learn from my mistake. Never release gas from your pouch in an elevator just because you're alone. People get in on the next floor, and they make embarrassing comments like, "It smells like a dead animal in here." It's hard to hide that kind of guilt.

Rear Admiral

An affectionate term for gastroenterologist or ostomy surgeon.

Vesuvius

The classic name for a stoma because of its eruption of bowel contents.



Wonderful

What could be wonderful about having your rectum removed? My brother would be able to tell you; he has an answer for almost everything. *"No skid marks on your underwear."*

Navigating Public Restrooms



Changing or emptying your ostomy pouch in public can be a daunting task.

Here are some tips to help that process be easy and discreet.

- ⇒ **Use a Moldable skin barrier** so you can avoid prepping your supplies in a public restroom.
- ⇒ **Always carry extra supplies** in case you are stranded where supplies may not be available.
- ⇒ **Create a buffer** with a layer of toilet paper in the toilet bowl to avoid splashing when emptying your pouch.
- ⇒ **Download the Traveler's Communication Card** to help communicate when you urgently need access to a restroom.
- ⇒ Use the handicap stall if you feel that you need more space to maneuver
- ⇒ Fill a small bottle of water for cleaning prior to entering the stall.
- ⇒ Use Colo-majic liners in pouch; remove liner, flush and put in another liner.

Coronavirus One-Liners (Groaners)

- ◆ **Finland has just closed their borders, so nobody will be crossing the Finnish line**
- ◆ **Due to the quarantine, I'll only be telling inside jokes.**
- ◆ **World Health Organization has determined that dogs cannot contract Covid-19. Dogs previously being held in quarantine will be released. To be clear, WHO let the dogs out.**
- ◆ **I'll tell you a coronavirus joke, but you'll have to wait for two weeks to see if you got it.**
- ◆ **I ran out of toilet paper, so I had to start using old newspapers. Times are rough.**
- ◆ **What do you call panic buying of sausage and cheese in Germany? A Wurst Kase Scenario.**
- ◆ **In my day, you would cough to cover up a fart. Now you fart to cover up a cough.**

(Continued on page 10)

New Resource for Ostomates

Ostomy101.com offers online classes at no charge

Ostomy101.com is a non-profit organization launched in 2020 to help improve patient adjustment and self care, while helping reduce the workload for our hardworking WOCNs. Check them out!



**Tools, Resources & Information
for LIVING Successfully
with an Ostomy**

Ostomy 101 Lifestyle Classes

Virtual ostomy lifestyle classes facilitated by a person living with an ostomy & an ostomy nurse.

Learn more & Register at

Ostomy101.com

Free

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Available for iOS & Android devices. Educational videos, resources, connect with a WOCN, Patient Coach & more!

Free App

Ostomy 101

Helping Patients & Supporting Clinicians



Ostomy 101 Inc.
is a 501c3
Vendor Neutral
Nonprofit

Ostomy101.com



UOAA Emergency Supply Resources

UOAA recognizes that you may have a need for emergency supplies. Below are resources that may be of assistance to you on a temporary basis.

Manufacturers Assistance Programs

Please **call directly** to ask for information and to apply for these programs.

ConvaTec 800-422-8811

Hollister 800-323-4060

Coloplast – Coloplast Patient Assistance 877-781-2656

Alternative Local Resources

- GEOSG Supply Closet - See page 4

Contact the following types of agencies in your area, and ask if they maintain a "Donation Closet".

- Local hospitals
- Local Visiting Nurse associations
- Local clinics
- Local Goodwill Industries
- Call your state's 2-1-1 number. Just dial 211 as you would 911

Kindred Box is a Facebook Group for Ostomy Supplies

Supplies Available not including Shipping and Handling

Osto Group: 877-678-6690

Offers supplies for the cost of shipping and handling. They have a small all-volunteer staff, but if you call and leave a message, they will respond. Please be patient in awaiting a response.

Ostomy 211: ostomysupplies.ostomy211.org

Emergency supply pantry. Donation requested to help cover expenses.

Lower Cost Supply Options

There are several distributors that do not accept insurance, therefore, their supplies may be available at a lower price.

Best Buy Ostomy Supplies: 866-940-4555

Mercy Surgical Dressing Group: 888-637-2912

Ostomy4less: 877-678-6694; contact Patti or Tom at patti@ostomymcp.com

Parthenon Ostomy Supplies: 800-453-8898

Stomabags: 855-828-1444

Get Ostomy Answers!

The Phoenix magazine provides answers to the many challenges of living with an ostomy. From skin care to nutrition to intimacy, in-depth articles are written by medical professionals, ostomy experts and experienced ostomates. Subscriptions directly fund the services of the United Ostomy Associations of America.

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ASG052016

#ostomysupplyclosetcares

The Ostomy Supply Closet

Maintained by local ostomy support groups associated with



The Ostomy Supply Closet provides supplies free of charge to anyone with an ostomy that has a need due to lack of insurance coverage, financial hardship or is in need of emergency supplies. The program is totally dependent on donations for the supplies and the cost of the storage. If you have extra, unneeded supplies, please consider donating them to the Ostomy Supply Closet. Those who benefit from this program greatly appreciate the much needed help.

The supply closet is located at a Public Storage in Kirkland. If you would like to donate, have a need, or know someone who is in need, please email Laura Vadman to arrange a time to meet and pick up needed supplies. (lovadman@hotmail.com)

Tax deductible cash donations to GEOSG for the support of the supply closet are accepted and are greatly appreciated.
501(c)(3)

Happy Stoma "Birthday"

May	Ostomy Type	Years	July Cont'd	Ostomy Type	Years
Ralph Boccamazzo	Urostomy	1	Donald Moerer	Colostomy	5
Virginia Marabetta	Colostomy	2			
June	Ostomy Type	Years	August	Ostomy Type	Years
Mike Freeman	Ileostomy	5	Alan Kruse	Ileostomy	25
Ann Burnet	Colostomy	5	Martha Thiry	Urostomy	11
July	Ostomy Type	Years	Laurie Cameron	Colostomy	10
Sandra Gouras	Ileostomy	3	Stefanie Derick	Ileostomy	5
Pat Roley	Ileostomy	5	September	Ostomy Type	Years
Arlene Cornwall	Colostomy	7	Rebecca Haines	Colostomy	2
Dave Fernandez	Ileostomy	9	October	Ostomy Type	Years
Dave Maltos	Ileostomy/ colostomy	5	Tom Davis	Urostomy	6
			Ted Jamieson	Colostomy	5

If you're not seeing your stoma birthday recognized, be sure that you have completed a registration form and included your type of ostomy and surgery date.

Having An Ostomy Helped Me Find A New Sense Of Purpose

[Jo Phillips](#) Posted On March 26, 2017

What does it mean to have a stoma?

You might get a hundred different answers to that question. What it means to me is being part of something that is bigger and more important, rather than I am alone.

Being diagnosed with rectal cancer at age 38 is a bit of a mind-bender. The first equation I had to figure out was: Mental health + cancer = ?

As if that wasn't hard enough to reconcile in my mind, the news that I would have to have a colostomy bag was unthinkable! At first it was a coin flip as to whether I'd need a temporary or permanent stoma. But after intense radiation failed to shrink the tumor as much as was hoped, I was told there was no

chance of a reversal if I wanted the best chance of survival.

There are so many emotions in the run up to ostomy surgery.

The main one being Terror, with a **capital T**.

My mum said she'd get a colostomy bag with me. Suffice to say that has yet to happen!

My fiancé Jay told me he'd be right there with me every step of the way and we were gonna make it through, together.

The most memorable moment was when my sister-in-law Lesley told me I'd own it, that I would face it head on like I have every other challenge in my life, and that I was going to be more than OK. Through the tears I nodded in

agreement and murmured she was probably right. I was a really good liar it seemed! Inside I laughed and thought no way was that going to happen. How did she know that? It was me facing this life changing surgery, not her.

I seriously considered not having the surgery. Sure, I'd take my chances with the cancer, anything was better than pooing out of my belly!

And that was the stark reality. As much as I hated innards and liked everything inside where it was supposed to be, the fact was that my intestine (what?!) was going to poke out of me (What?!) and I was going to poo from my belly

(Continued on page 10)

GEOSG Executive Committee Meeting Summary

Treasurer's Report:

•Current Balance.....	\$1052.87
•Projected Expenses	
◇Ostomy Supply Closet Storage.....	(\$2964.00)
◇Group Admin expenses.....	(\$ 325.00)
•Projected Income 9/1/20—8/31/21	
◇Seattle ASG \$110/mo for Ostomy Supply Closet.....	\$1320.00
◇ <u>Estimated</u> donations from members.....	\$1000.00
•Projected balance at end of year 9/1/20—8/31/21	\$ 83.87

Group Meetings—Virtual meetings will continue for the foreseeable future. Dates and times will remain the same.

Volunteers for the Registrar position will be requested at the next general meeting.

Advertisers will be sought to be included in our Newsletter to generate some additional income.

Agenda/Speaker ideas were discussed for the Fall & Winter. Topics of discussion and speaker ideas are always welcomed from the membership.

Next Executive Committee Meeting—January 2021. Date to be determined.

What Makes You Different Makes You Beautiful

By [Suzanne Doré](#) Posted On July 31, 2017



At age 36 I was diagnosed with advanced stage colon cancer. The words “bowel cancer” hit me in the face like a shovel, however it didn’t really come out of the blue because in hindsight I had been symptomatic for a long time with what many doctors thought was irritable bowel syndrome. Because I’d been feeling so ill for so long, I was afraid that I didn’t stand a chance of surviving. My priorities revolved around treatment and survival. I underwent chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and finally a permanent colostomy. I absolutely thought I’d never leave home, and at that moment I wanted to hide away forever.

Let’s fast forward to when I woke up after the operation. I looked down at the clear colostomy bag that the surgeon attached to me. When I saw my stoma, I felt a sudden surge of emotion, of affection if you will, for this little pink blob that was going to enable me to live a long and happy life. It was absolutely opposite to the reaction I had expected.

I’m one of the lucky ones... so here I am 7 years on.

Since becoming an ostomate I’ve attempted (albeit in a small way) to help other people in similar situations come to terms with the look of their new body. Obviously there’s very little I can actually do, as self-confidence comes from within, but there’s a chance that someone reading my blog (<http://www.gladragsandbags.org/blog/>) or seeing my pictures might take heart and possibly look at themselves through different eyes.

I’ve never been a self-confident person. Since my teens I’ve been emotionally plagued with thoughts of worthlessness and low self-esteem, so it’s a puzzling turnabout that I am confident in myself now. I truly believe some of that confidence comes through the struggle to stay alive, and to still be here, and the deep appreciation I feel for that gift—I truly feel blessed. The traumatic experience through my blip of ill health taught me that I’m stronger than I ever gave myself credit for, which has given me a sense of internal calm.

I’d never spoken to anyone with an ostomy until I started [Gladrags & Bags](#). This past May I was in the mind set that I had written my last blog post, until one morning I received an email from what I can only describe as an earth angel who gave me the encouragement and support I needed – just at the right time. That message kicked up the bum in the nicest possible way because a shared experience can make all the difference.

How do you feel about your body since ostomy surgery?

My photos celebrate being alive. I’ve never claimed that my body is anything special to look at, but it’s mine and it’s special to me for fighting off colon cancer and for recovering, even with the added extras that recovery brought with it. If a boudoir photo shoot is what you need to understand and appreciate how amazing your body is, then my advice is to go for it! Start looking at yourself with new eyes.

Most of us wouldn’t put up with a best mate who says the awful things that we so readily say about ourselves, why on earth would you? Therefore, if it’s not acceptable that others view ostomates as unattractive, then it’s certainly not acceptable to think that way about ourselves. Even if you can’t bring yourself to love your new body, then at least take pride in what it has been able to achieve. Recovery from ostomy surgery (or any form of body altering surgery for that matter) is very tough, but you still being here means you’re far

What is the Ostomy Supply Closet and Why do we Need it?

Laura Vadman

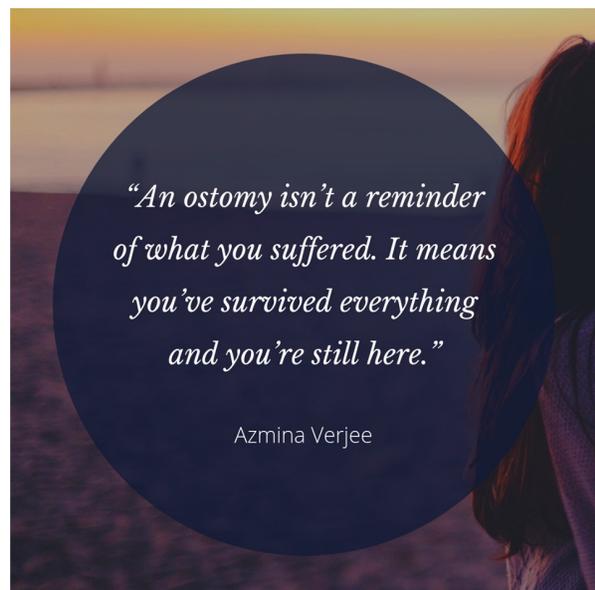
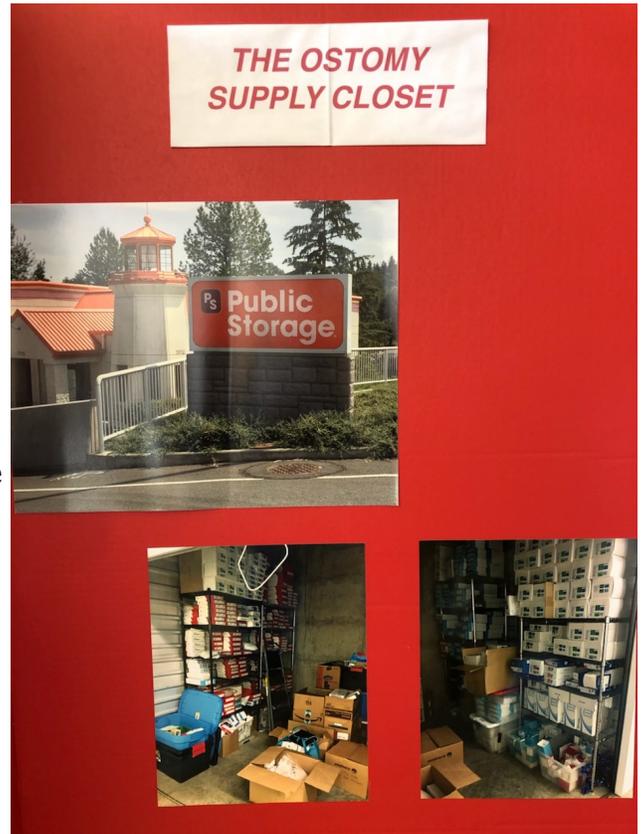
The Ostomy Supply Closet provides supplies free of charge to anyone with an ostomy that lacks insurance coverage or is in need of emergency supplies. This program is totally dependent on donations for the supplies and the monthly cost of the storage unit.

The Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group and the Seattle Ostomy Support Group have provided financial support over the past 5 years, which is possible due to donations from our members. Laura Vadman is the manager of the supply closet, and coordinates the pick up of ostomy donations from around the Puget Sound.

Ostomy nurses, health clinics and surgeon offices have referred patients in need of these supplies. Many individuals with permanent ostomies have relied solely on the Closet for their supplies since we have been providing this service. Ostomates make arrangements to meet Laura at the Closet, and are given at minimum one month of supplies. Without our assistance, these individuals would have no where to turn.

We want to thank the members of our support groups and members of the community for their generous support of the Closet and the ostomy community over the years.

Please consider donating this year to help us fund another year of supplies for those in need.



UOAA 2021 National Conference Update We are pleased to Announce:

UOAA'S 8th National Conference
will be held on Thursday, August 5 through Saturday, August 7, 2021 in Houston, Texas.

Get ready to put on your cowboy hat and boots and join us for this 3-day educational and social event
Taking place at the Royal Sonesta Hotel Galleria. Mark your calendar and look for additional
information in the coming months.

(Continued from page 7)

(WHAT?!?!). This was not going to go well, no way, nuh uh...

So here I am, 9 months later, a pro at my own stoma care, loving the amazing sense of community and camaraderie I get from being an ostomate. I bloomin' love it! I also love little ButtFace, as I unaffectionately called my stoma. That name was meant as an insult, now it's a term of endearment and a seemingly infinite source of giggling-pleasure for me and my young niece and nephew. Lesley was spot-on (once again – ain't those kind of people annoying?!) I do "Own It."

Lately I've found myself feeling more and more grateful for my new little extra appendage.

Without it I wouldn't be writing this now, I wouldn't have created a [vlog on YouTube](#) to offer advice and support to other ostomates who are in the situation I was nine months ago.

I think I may have reconciled that original equation.

Yes, there's an incurable cancer diagnosis, but with the new sense of purpose having a stoma (and a loud voice) has afforded me, so I think I'm going to cope okay. If I have helped even just one person on their ostomy journey, I'm satisfied. I've made something of my life and at last, there's meaning.



Me and my mom 9 months after surgery

If you fancy having a laugh at mine and ButtFace's expense, pop on over to my [vlogostomy](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGG9J0wN9141mKalSHU4DMg) at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGG9J0wN9141mKalSHU4DMg>



(Continued from page 3) Coronavirus One-Liners, Cont'd.

- ◆ **The grocery stores in France look like a tornado hit them. All that's left is de brie.**
- ◆ **There will be a minor baby boom in 9 months. Then around the year 2033, we shall witness the rise of the "quaranteens."**
- ◆ **Every few days try your jeans on just to make sure they fit. Rumors will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.**
- ◆ **So many coronavirus jokes out there. It's a pandemic.**

HOPE YOU ARE ALL SURVIVING!

Laughter — An Essential Ingredient of Good Health

For years, Readers' Digest has featured the column "Laughter, the Best Medicine." It contains jokes, riddles and humorous musings designed to tickle the funny bone. But just how important is laughter to our everyday health?

It turns out when we laugh we produce natural killer cells which destroy tumors and viruses. Plus, there's an increase in the production of Gamma-interferon (disease-fighting protein), T-cells (important for our immune system) and B-cells (which make disease-fighting antibodies). Besides lowering blood pressure, laughter increases oxygen in the blood, which also facilitates healing.

Laughter helps us to deal with stress, cope with loss, work through tragedy, hide our embarrassment and calm our fears. Laughter helps the body relax. It lowers blood pressure, increases immune system functioning and assists in warding off disease.

In terms of mental health, laughter:

- Helps us connect with others. Humor is often used as a means to help us collectively cope with grief, fear or loss.
- Makes us more productive. Happy people have more energy.
- Releases negative emotions such as anger, fear, sadness, resentment and depression. Increases the likelihood that we will feel happy.
- Releases endorphins in the brain that help you feel good.

Did you also know that laughter is a form of aerobic exercise? You may even feel fatigued if you laugh continuously for any length of time. Just remind yourself to laugh well and often in order to experience the aerobic benefits of laughter.

What steps can you take to increase the amount of laughter in your life?

- Surround yourself with positive, upbeat people who laugh a lot. Laughter is contagious!!
- Find out what makes you laugh. Is it funny movies, watching the comedy channel, reading runny material? Whatever it is, do it more often.
- Don't take yourself, anyone else or even life for that matter, so seriously.
- Always remember, happiness is your birthright...so laugh and when you do laugh, laugh loud and often.

Thanks to UOAA Update, 10/2013

Bacteria and Your Pouch

Many patients having ostomy surgery worry about bacteria. Those with colostomies and ileostomies ask if their stomas will become infected with the discharge of stool. This is a myth! The stoma is accustomed to the normal bacteria in the intestine. Keep the skin around the area clean and be careful of adjacent wounds. You may want to keep fecal drainage away from the incision. Do not worry about the ostomy becoming infected from normal discharge. Nature has provided well. Our bodies are accustomed to certain bacteria.

The urinary ostomy patient is more likely to be susceptible to infection than the other types of ostomies.

Urine is usually sterile. It is important to keep the urinary pouch very clean. On days that it is not changed, it should be rinsed with a solution of 1/3 white vinegar to 2/3 tap water. This can be allowed to run up over the stoma and will also help prevent crystals. The vinegar produces an acid environment in the pouch. Bacteria cannot multiply as readily in an acid condition. Your night drainage pouch should be cleansed daily. White vinegar and water can be used for this too. Perhaps some of you use a special disinfectant or diluted Lysol solution. When the drainage bag has sediment that cannot be removed by cleaning, it should be discarded. Drinking plenty

of liquids is important for all ostomies, but especially for the urostomy patient.

Many urologists also prescribe vitamin C to help keep the urine acid and less susceptible to infection. (Check with your doctor first, as some persons have reasons that would be exceptions to this). Cranberry juice helps to keep the urine acidic. Ostomy patients should strive to live a normal life, keep fit nutritionally (this helps prevent infection), and drink sufficient fluids. Do not live in fear of infection.

Thanks to MetroMaryland, Thrive, March/April 2020 and Ottawa Ostomy, 2017

Contacts

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Laurie Cameron, Ostomate, Board Secretary, Registrar, Newsletter Editor, Webmaster	lauriecmrn@aol.com



Manufacturers	Phone	Website
Coloplast	888-726-7872	www.us.coloplast.com
ConvaTec	800-422-8811	www.convatec.com
CyMed	800-582-0707	www.cymed-ostomy.com
B. Braun Medical	800-227-2862	www.bbraunusa.com
Hollister	800-323-4060	www.hollister.com
Marlen	800-321-0591	www.marlenmfg.com
Nu Hope	800-899-5017	www.nu-hope.com
Organizations	Phone	Website
United Ostomy Associations of America	800-826-0826	www.ostomy.org
American Cancer Society	800-227-2345	www.cancer.org
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation	800-343-3637	www.cffa.org
Friends of Ostomates Worldwide	N/A	www.fowusa.org



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We're on the web!
www.geosg.org

Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group
Annual Membership Form
2020-2021

GEOSG Membership is open to anyone interested in learning about ostomies, sharing and learning on how to care for yourself or a loved one after surgery and what to expect before surgery. Be sure to visit our website for more information: www.geosg.org

[] New Member (Please mark if this is the first time you have registered and fill in the info below)

[] Returning Member (Please mark if there are no changes to your address/email/phone info)

Ostomate Name: _____ Spouse/Support Name: _____

Fill in this section if this is the first time you have registered

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email Address 1: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email Address 2: _____

Ostomy Information

Type of Ostomy: [] Ileostomy [] Colostomy [] Urostomy [] Other _____

Stoma Surgery Date: _____

There are no dues required for membership, however the group does have need of funds for expenses; i.e. UOAA ASG dues, Support for the Ostomy Supply Closet, speakers, brochures and website. If able, GEOSG asks that you make a tax deductible (501(c)3) donation in lieu of membership dues. (Suggested donation \$25.00) Donation receipt available upon request

Donation \$ _____

- Make checks payable to: GEOSG
• Return completed form to the next meeting or send to:

Laurie Cameron
GEOSG Registrar
728 218th Pl. NE
Sammamish, WA 98074

For any questions or to receive a tax receipt, email: lauriecmrn@aol.com

GEOSG members often participate in activities together, but that participation is the choice and responsibility of the individual. GEOSG is neither responsible for, nor does it exercise any control over, these activities.

For treasurer's use only:

Paid Amount \$ _____ [] cash [] check ck # _____ Date: _____