

# The MailBag

Jacksonville group meets the 3rd Sunday of each month 3 p.m. 4836 Victor Street.  
Ocala support group meets the 2nd Sunday of each month (except July & Aug) at 2 p.m. at the Sheriff's Station 3260 SE 80th Street (between Ocala and Belleview).  
Amelia Island Area Ostomy Support Group meets last Monday of each month at 6:30pm - Bapt Medical Center Nassau board room.  
Gainesville Support Group meets the 1st Sunday of each month (except Holidays) Hope Lodge 2121 SW 16th St Gainesville

**Kathy Johnson, WOCN will be at the Jacksonville July 19th meeting.**

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Contact MCP (800) 741-0110 For More Info

Jacksonville Contact Information:  
Patti Langenbach  
(800) 741-0110  
(904) 733-8500  
[patti@ostonymcp.com](mailto:patti@ostonymcp.com)

The Jacksonville UOAA chapter meets the 3rd Sunday of each except when otherwise posted.

To help offset the mailing cost you may now receive the MailBag Newsletter via email. Please contact:  
Patti: [patti@ostonymcp.com](mailto:patti@ostonymcp.com)  
(Newsletter will be in PDF format)

Support group meets the 3rd Sunday of each month 3 p.m. 4836 Victor Street  
**Next Meeting June 21st**

**Gainesville Support Group** meets the 1st Sunday of each month (except Holidays)  
Next meeting: **June 7th at 2pm** at Hope Lodge 2121 SW 16th St Gainesville, FL 32608  
**Contact info:**  
Brinda Watson (352) 373-1266  
Nelson Griffiths (352) 376-8703

Ocala support group meets the 2nd Sunday of each month (except July & Aug) at 2 p.m. at the Sheriff's Station 3260 SE 80th Street (between Ocala and Belleview).  
**Next Meeting June 14th**  
**Contact info:**  
Lynn Parsons (352) 245-3114  
[www.ostomyocala.com](http://www.ostomyocala.com)

**Amelia Island Area Ostomy Support Group** meets last Monday of each month at 6:30pm (except May, June, July & Aug) Bapt Medical Center Nassau board room.  
Free parking (904) 310-9054  
**Next Meeting Sept. 28th**



## “Gutsy’s Gab:” “Speak Out and Be Heard!”

By Linda Blumberg AKA “Mrs. Lips”

**May 2015:** Memorable: honored Mom, our stoma’s birth, dear departed...at our May 17 Jax ASG meeting, ostomates/family gathered...caring/sharing ostomy concerns/experiences, e.g., searchin’ for a surgeon...all with nurturing maternal instincts. Coloplast speaker for ostomy manufacturers seekers, munched on Kimberly’s Konfections...”Gutsy,” Linda’s ileostomy stoma, encouraged everyone to check out ConvaTec’s a-MAY-zing 24/7 inspirational/informational social media Inspire.com...for issues/answers...for prebies poised to have ostomy surgery, recovering newbies’ needs, or well-wishers vested in virtual hugs/humor...it’s almost June...Time to CELEBRATE BEING ALIVE...but, will you graduate to living well with an ostomy?...

**SPOTLIGHT ON:** June 2015: Hurricane season begins (!) (1<sup>st</sup>), Last day school (5<sup>th</sup>), Linda’s last work day (9<sup>th</sup>-YAY!), Flag Day (14<sup>th</sup>), Summer begins (20<sup>th</sup>), Father’s Day (21<sup>st</sup>)...AAA (Awareness/Acceptance/Advocacy)...

Awareness involves: “bugging” yourself/loved ones to: 1) check for blood in stools/urine, 2) have life-saving colonoscopy, with follow up life-affirming ileostomy, colostomy, or urostomy surgery, if needed, and “Flagging” your responsibilities could lead to premature death from blatant disregard/ignorance.

Postsurgical Ostomy Acceptance occurs when we realize that even with a stoma; WE are still normal, beautiful, loveable people who can feel EMPOWERED to live well with an ostomy! STOMA ARRIVAL=YOUR SURVIVAL to CELEBRATE BEING ALIVE...allowing you to spend more time with YOUR DAD...maybe giving him grandchildren. A more practical, LOVING gift than the proverbial tie! Accept YOUR stoma, and nonostomates likely will, too! True ostomy acceptance is non-judgmental! (See Linda’s 1<sup>st</sup> Phoenix article/photo, June 2011, p.30)

School’s out for summer...but, you can still “educate” yourself/others by Advocating for Ostomy(!): Gutsy saved Linda’s life; but, humor and a (com)passion for writing/others continue as her salvation!... 1) Share YOUR ostomy journey: a) at support group meetings, b) on Inspire.com, c) by submitting your unique experiences/perceptive perspectives/humor, in writing, to this (or YOUR local) newsletter, or publications, e.g., Phoenix Ostomy mag, and d) by educating general public to dispel their negative preconceived notions; 2) drive loved ones to/from colonoscopy, remaining loving/loyal if he (Dad?)/she has ostomy surgery; 3) Advocate for YOUR stoma: hot temps in June...but, YOU can be COOL, man...to your stoma: a) Wick away moisture (humidity!) with a beautiful pouch cover from Koolostomy.com, b) Make your stoma a STAR!...email his/her name: [Patti@ostomymcp.com](mailto:Patti@ostomymcp.com) or Linda: [blumbergl@duvalschools.org](mailto:blumbergl@duvalschools.org) for inclusion in future Gutsy’s Gab column...in June, Gutsy is “bustin’ out all over” proudly for: “PITA” (Jax), “Smart Ass,” “Lil Lillie,” and “Stomalina” (Inspire.com)...cathartic and fun! (See Linda’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Phoenix article/photo, December 2013, p. 78)

**BOTTOMLINE/MARK YOUR CALENDAR:**...our next Jax ASG meeting is Sunday, June 21, 2015 (Father’s Day!)...Come “cool off” with our “hot” ostomy topics at Patti’s MCP store...to CELEBRATE BEING ALIVE!...for contagious camaraderie... prebies/newbies needing nurturing, maybe “fatherly” ostomy advice... enjoy Kimberly’s Konfections...and each other...Nothing “je-JUNE” (dull)!...See YOU there!!

**ENGAGING! ..... LEARNING! ..... CARING!**  
**INSIGHT!.....SHARING! RELAXING!.....**  
**FUN!...CELEBRATIONS!**

**•When?**

...September 1-6, 2015

**•What?**

...UOAA's 5<sup>th</sup> National Conference  
Celebrating UOAA's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

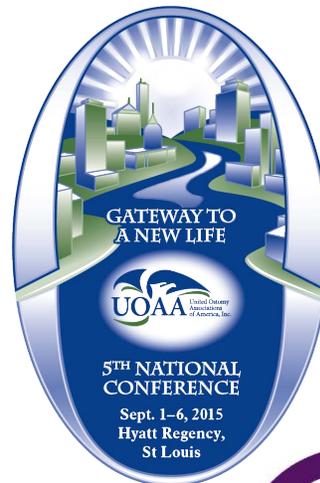
**•Where?**

...St. Louis, Missouri  
Hyatt Regency at the Arch

*Inside the Hotel Amenities =*  
"Red Kitchen Restaurant"  
"Ruth's Chris Steakhouse"  
"Brewhouse Sports Bar"  
"Starbuck's"

May 15<sup>th</sup> ≈ 105 days to go

[Reserve your Hotel room and Register NOW!](http://www.ostomy.org/2015_National_Conference_page.html)  
[www.ostomy.org/2015\\_National\\_Conference\\_page.html](http://www.ostomy.org/2015_National_Conference_page.html)



**World Ostomy Day**  
Saturday October the 3rd 2015.  
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**"Many stories, one voice."**

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## Celebrating Ostomy Awareness Day

Ann Favreau, Past President UOAA

On October 4, 2014, UOAA encouraged people with an ostomy or continent diversion, as well as Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses, to celebrate Ostomy Awareness Day. Affiliated support groups planned activities to bring attention to the fact that people with a stoma or continent diversion can lead a productive life. Although one day a year is set aside for these events, *The Phoenix* magazine has been carrying on this mission since 1963, first as the *Ostomy Quarterly*, or OQ, and now with its present title. It is interesting that when the United Ostomy Association (UOA), the forerunner of UOAA, had its constituting convention in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1962, the organizers identified the need for a national publication. Remember, these were the days before the Internet, email, and instant communication. UOA dues, which included a subscription to the *Ostomy Quarterly*, were 75 cents.

I first became acquainted with the magazine as a new ostomate in 1988. The Ostomy Association of Greater Springfield, MA, had copies to borrow, and I soon had my own subscription. I had confidence in the information that I read because it was written by credible sources. Over the years, I have submitted articles. In leadership roles, I worked with others to proofread the content; wrote about our strategic plans, fund raising, and advocacy issues; and from 2000-2002, delivered the President's Messages.

*Live, Learn, Share* was the theme of this year's Ostomy Awareness Day. Think about the stories we have read in *The Phoenix* written by ordinary people, some of whom have done extraordinary things after surgery. They chronicled their road from pain, disease, and compromised days through decision making and acceptance of an altered and much better life. We have read about building self-esteem, new relationships, challenges overcome, and joy. New readers and those of us who have had long-term subscriptions are always inspired by these shared stories. They bolster our lives by knowing that others who have walked in our shoes are thriving.

The magazine has helped us learn and cope with problems that may arise. The articles written by doctors educate us about surgical techniques in a language that we can understand. Physicians and Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses answer questions posed by concerned readers. Nutritionists provide dietary information. Books are reviewed that give us additional resources to peruse. New products are featured in ads and articles. Yes, the publication has facilitated learning.

We live in a world in which we have to be advocates for our own well-being and understand global issues. *The Phoenix* relates the work of UOAA in addressing bias, stigma, and advocacy for ostomates in terms of supply reimbursement, travel, and access to bathroom facilities. The magazine focuses on the UOAA national convention and regional meetings, where ostomates can interact with one another and hear outstanding speakers. Articles explain the work of the Friends of Ostomates Worldwide-USA, which collects unused ostomy supplies and sends them to individuals and facilities that distribute them to those in need. *The Phoenix* communicates the establishment of ostomy groups around the globe by the International Ostomy Association. Readers from small towns and big cities in the United States and online subscribers from around the world benefit from the diverse content. Yes, *The Phoenix* illustrates how those who have had bowel or bladder diversions can Live, Learn, and Share. It celebrates ostomy awareness in every issue and has carried out this mission for over 50 years.

## Ostomy Procedures that Can Backfire

There are times when we think we're doing the right thing, but get ourselves into trouble. Here are some instances to think about:

- **Alcohol:** Alcohol is a powerful drying agent. Prolonged contact with the skin can have serious consequences.
- **Clamp Usage:** Wrapping the drainable pouch tail around and around the clamp before closing it. This will not make the clamp work any better. All it will do is spring the clamp out of shape, which will ensure that the clamp won't work for future application and it will make releasing excess gas more difficult.
- **Releasing Gas:** Snapping the pouch off the face plate to expel gas. This doesn't do much for odor control! It's much better to hold the tail of the pouch beyond the clamp with a tissue, open the clamp and allow the gas out through the tissue with deodorant. Then use the tissue to clean out the end of the pouch and replace the clamp.
- **Normal Wear Time:** You shouldn't wear the appliance until it leaks. The object is to change the appliance before leakage occurs. This way, the skin gets the best protection and care. Three to five days is normal wear time. Some people report seven days, but manufacturers feel that this may be pushing their products to their limits.
- **Washing Pouches:** Washing pouches and using the same pouch for months will eventually saturate the plastic of the pouch with odor of the chemicals and no amount of washing will get rid of it. It is recommended that you throw the pouches away when you throw the face plate away.
- **Experimenting With Appliances:** Although it's fine to experiment with new appliances, especially if you're unhappy with your usual equipment, you'll generally get the best service from the equipment you have the most experience with.
- **Ignoring Skin Problems:** All skin problems are easier to manage if they are treated early.
- **A Full Pouch:** Letting your pouch get full before emptying it can separate a two-piece system. Try to empty your pouch when it's one-third to one-half full.
- **Seat Belts:** A well-placed and adjusted seat belt shouldn't interfere with stoma function or damage your stoma. True, in an accident your stoma may be damaged, but it's a lot easier to repair a stoma than a crushed skull.
- **Wound Ostomy Nurse:** It's not a good idea to try to live with a condition you can't correct yourself. When in doubt, see your friendly wound ostomy continence nurse (WOCN) or your doctor.

**Celebrate!**

*UOAA's 10th Anniversary at  
Our National Conference  
September 1-6, 2015  
in St. Louis, Missouri*

[http://www.ostomy.org/2015\\_National\\_Conference\\_Page.html](http://www.ostomy.org/2015_National_Conference_Page.html)

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To: