



**FRIENDS OF  
OSTOMATES  
WORLDWIDE - USA**

Newsletter  
Spring 2023



Last spring I wrote about perennials and annuals in the garden. As Spring 2023 arrives, the hardworking volunteers of FOW-USA are much like perennials, continuing to give our “garden” structure and foundation year after year. FOW-USA achieved a milestone by shipping supplies to its 100th country. Looking back on the fiscal year, 175 shipments, 36 pallets and 139 individual orders were distributed. These outstanding numbers represent the greatest volume of product shipped over the past 4 years. To support these shipments, financial donations and donations of supplies are urgently sought. The Speaker’s Bureau has helped to answer this need. Find out more about this fantastic program in the article on page 5 of this newsletter. Flat rate shipping is another method that FOW-USA has created to increase donations of supplies and this has been enthusiastically received. This program has allowed new donors as well as current supporters to donate supplies at increased levels. Several volunteers, working together at FOW-USA, help support the flat rate shipping program but credit for the idea and the unwavering resolve to make the program successful go to Mickey Heideman, FOW-USA Treasurer and Warehouse Volunteer. He spent countless hours establishing the program. I hope you have had a chance to see the ad for this new program in the Spring Edition of the Phoenix. It is colorful and informative! You can access the flat rate shipping from the home screen on our website [www.fowusa.org](http://www.fowusa.org). Click on Donate Supplies.

Public outreach is an essential part of our mission. FOW-USA volunteers will have a presence at two national meetings in the coming months. WOCNext ® 2023 on June 4th– 7th in Las Vegas, Nevada and UOAA 8th National Conference, August 10th -12th in Houston, Texas. Please stop by our booth!

FOW-USA is staffed by a dedicated group of volunteers and we enjoy meeting others who support our mission. The FOW-USA Board works together to communicate with donors and recipients and to leverage the unique skills of Board members in helping to run the organization (e.g.,warehouse logistics, marketing, public relations, social media, fundraising, database management and education). We meet every other month (meeting virtually) and historically we have had one face-to-face meeting annually. For those who live near Louisville, Kentucky, consider volunteering in our warehouse! Volunteering just a few hours, or a day or two in the warehouse, can create a huge momentum that allows us to meet the challenges of providing supplies to ostomates who need our help. Please go to our website ([www.fowusa.org](http://www.fowusa.org)) and click on Contact Us to express your interest in being a warehouse volunteer or working with our Board. We would love to have a conversation with you.

Sincerely,

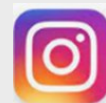
*Cindy Barefield*

FOW-USA President

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## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT-CAROL PENDLETON

Meet Carol Pendleton, our FOW-USA Spotlight Volunteer! Carol has been volunteering at the FOW-USA warehouse in Louisville KY for seven years. She is a 1991 survivor of rectal cancer and began attending an ostomy support group with her good friend, the late Cheryl Sparks, to learn about living with a colostomy. Cheryl was very active in the ostomy support community and the FOW-USA warehouse work. When Carol's husband passed away, she decided to join Cheryl volunteering at the warehouse one day a week.



After Cheryl Sparks passed away, Carol started volunteering three days a week to help fill the huge void left by Cheryl's passing. She thought, "Why not?" Although Carol volunteers extensively for her church, FOW-USA is her ministry for ostomates. Having a colostomy herself, she feels she understands the needs of those we serve. Carol finds volunteering a truly rewarding experience to help others in need. The flexibility of the hours available for volunteering is helpful, as volunteers can come in the days that work for them and work as many hours as they choose. Carol also enjoys spending time with the other volunteers. She highly recommends this volunteer opportunity and emphasized that additional help is always welcome!

*If you live in the Louisville area please contact us to explore volunteer opportunities.*

## WE GET EMAILS

February 2023  
Ecuador

Very grateful to have received your shipment of the colostomy bags. They help me a lot. Thank you for your help and through you to all those who make the organization.

Eternally grateful,  
Fausto



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## *Ostomy Pearls*

### OSTOMY LEAKAGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

JAN COLWELL, MS, RN, CWOCN, FAAN

Leakage as perceived by a person with an ostomy can mean different things to different people. What do you think about when you hear ostomy pouch leakage? Stool or urine coming out from under the pouch seal? Odor? Skin issues? What is the definition of leakage? Some experts have looked at issue of leakage and have tried to define leakage as it relates to living with a stoma. Let's discuss leakage.

We know from studies that people living with a stoma worry about leakage and at times that worry can lead to reduced participation in activities and/or a decrease in social outings. We also know that leakage is a common problem for people with a stoma and almost 80% of people with a stoma report experiencing leakage. In addition to the reduced social contact and activity impact, leakage can cause damage to the skin around a stoma. So, what is the definition of leakage?

Leakage can be defined as undermining of the pouch seal when fecal matter or urine contacts the peristomal skin. Undermining means that the stool or urine gets under the pouch seal. Another two-part definition is leakage under the skin barrier of the pouching system and leakage outside of the skin barrier. We know that leakage is never a good thing because if the skin around the stoma is exposed to urine or stool the skin it becomes injured, turning red and moist. Once the peristomal skin (skin around the stoma) becomes injured the pouch adhesive seal (can't stick to red moist skin) can be compromised preventing a secure pouching system seal potentially causing more leakage and more injured peristomal skin.

Any undermining of the pouch seal is leakage because the stool or urine is in contact with the skin. That means that even a small amount of stoma output under the seal is leakage. Certainly, if the stool or urine makes it to the outer edge of the pouch seal this is leakage, which can be a major problem. Stool or urine around the stoma on the skin (not going any further) is also leakage and can damage skin and in some instances travel to the outer edge of the pouch adhesive. So how can someone with a stoma examine their pouch seal for leakage? An examination of the pouch seal upon removal should be done at every pouching system change. After the pouch adhesive is removed, examine the back of the adhesive or skin barrier. Is there stool or urine under the seal? If yes, this is leakage. Is there stool or urine on the skin around the stoma? If yes, this is leakage. If the pouch seal is broken and the stool or urine makes to the edge of the pouch adhesive this of course is leakage.

If leakage is found, start by thinking about wear time, how many days was the pouching system in place, was the wear time so long that the pouch adhesive eroded away and allowed the stoma output to touch the skin (even if the stoma output did not get all the way to the edge)? You may need to decrease the number of days you wear a pouching system. Have you examined the size of the stoma and are you sure the opening in the skin barrier adhesive matches the size or shape of your stoma? Remember that weight gain or loss can change the stoma size. When you examine the skin around your stoma in a sitting position do you notice creases and folds there were not there when you were fitted with your pouching system? You might need a different shape to your skin barrier adhesive.

Leakage is a serious concern and should be evaluated at each pouching system change. A secure seal worn the appropriate number of days is one of the key principles in managing a stoma. Leakage is any stoma output that makes it the skin around the stoma and a key to preventing leakage is a stoma and peristomal skin evaluation.

## LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!

It's been a long three years of virtual meetings. We are excited to announce that FOW-USA will be attending two national conferences this summer and we hope to meet you in person there. Please stop by our booth at WOCNext® June 4-7 in Las Vegas, and at the UOAA Conference August 8-12 in Houston to say hello, and attend our meeting presentation on Saturday.

We can also schedule a speaker from FOW-USA to visit UOAA Affiliated Support Group meetings. To reach our speaker's bureau, just send an Email to [info@fowusa.org](mailto:info@fowusa.org) with the details about your meeting.



*For more information about flat rate shipping with UPS, visit [www.fowusa.org](http://www.fowusa.org)*

## WE GET EMAILS

Uganda

January, 2023

Dear Ruth,

As always am very grateful for the supplies you send me...they sustain my life.

As always, thank you!

Eva



## Coloplast® Care | Coloplast® Care Live!

Join our support group webinar series to hear inspiring stories and learn product and lifestyle tips from other ostomates and the Coloplast® Care advising team.

On-demand recordings are available!

**Be inspired** by others with similar situations

**Feel empowered** in your journey to learn more about your condition

**Help others** by sharing within the ostomy community

**Gain confidence** by hearing from others with similar experiences

**Stay connected!**

Scan the QR code to view upcoming webinars and register in advance for **Coloplast Care Live!** or log on to [Ostomy.ColoplastCare.us](http://Ostomy.ColoplastCare.us) and search "Live!"



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## UOAA AFFILIATED SUPPORT GROUPS

### RESUME IN-PERSON MEETINGS!

Shelly Miller, Secretary

Our Speaker's Bureau has been busy making guest appearances and for the past several years most all have been virtual meetings. With the pandemic now in our sideview mirror and heading closer to the rearview mirror, some groups are beginning to be held in person or hybrid with a combination of virtual and live meetings. Board member Mackenzie Rauch-Pucher, Education Committee member, is spearheading these efforts.

On February 20th, our President, Cindy Barefield presented in Texas to the UOAA Central Houston Affiliated Support Group where attendees gathered and donated an entire table of supplies with funds to cover the shipping expense. On March 2nd, The Ostomy Support Group at Eisenhower Hospital in Rancho Mirage, CA welcomed Shelly Miller, Secretary and PR Chair, to present to their group. Meeting organizer Kathy Marsh attended virtually from Seattle and the meeting organizer Barbara Fulmer attended in person. There was even a support puppy there! Lots of great questions were asked and answered.

If you would like to have an FOW-USA team member make a guest appearance at one of your future meetings, please email the details to [info@fowusa.org](mailto:info@fowusa.org). Include your contact information so we can easily get back to you. Please include the dates and times of meetings, and the platform you use. In some cases, we may be able to attend in person!



Pictured here, FOW-USA Secretary Shelly Miller (green shirt), Barbara Fulmer (in white) and the Ostomy Support Group at Eisenhower Hospital

WE GET EMAILS

Dominican Republic

January 2023

Dear Ruth,

One month after the donation arrived at customs and overcoming obstacles, thank God we already received the materials, which we will proceed to deliver to the patients. We take the opportunity to thank the FOW and yourself and your team of volunteers for such a huge gesture of love with the ostomized of the Dominican Republic.

Thank you!

Lic. Leocadia and Luis Pérez



### Ostomy Support Group of North Virginia

We thank the Ostomy Support Group of Northern Virginia for collecting and packaging two large shipments (75 and 140 pounds) of excess ostomy supplies and sending them to our warehouse in March. They reported in their newsletter that "All these precious supplies will end up making management of an ostomy easier for people all over the world."

*Are you in a support group? Consider organizing a product collection as a regular part of your meeting time. You may save money by using our flat rate UPS shipping process. See Donate Supplies link on our website.*

THANK YOU TO OUR PALLET SPONSORS!  
WOCN Society North Central Region  
WOCN Society Mideast Region  
WOCN Society Tucson Affiliate



WE GET EMAILS

Paraguay ASOSDELPA (Ostomy Association of Paraguay)

January 2023



GOOD AFTERNOON WE ARE REALLY PLEASED to report that it was a wonderful year for our beloved ASOCIACION DE OSTIMIZODOS DEL PARAGUAY, with more than 300 satisfied patients monthly. with the sincere desire to continue counting on your help and support with the supplies. We only have to constantly thank. As president representing all. and reiterate that we are happier with each bag we receive.

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT—LAURA VADMAN



Laura Vadman lives in the Seattle area, where she donates her time to run a supply closet on behalf of two local UOAA affiliated support groups; the Greater Eastside Ostomy Support Group (GEOSG) and the Seattle Area Ostomy Support Group. These groups contribute to the cost of a storage unit rental, where the donated ostomy supplies are stored. The ostomy products are distributed free of charge to local individuals in need. We asked Laura to describe her partnership with FOW-USA.

“I worked for many years as an ostomy nurse and I know how hard it is when individuals don’t have access to contemporary supplies, and how it can contribute to skin problems, social isolation, and despair. It’s important to us to get products to people who need them. Space is limited, however, and an expense to maintain. We often receive more products than we can use locally, and we don’t want to waste them. By collaborating with FOW-USA, I can keep this closet functional and clean. It’s a win-win for both organizations!”

*\$27 Million worth of supplies have been sent to people in need since 1986.  
We couldn’t do it without your help!*

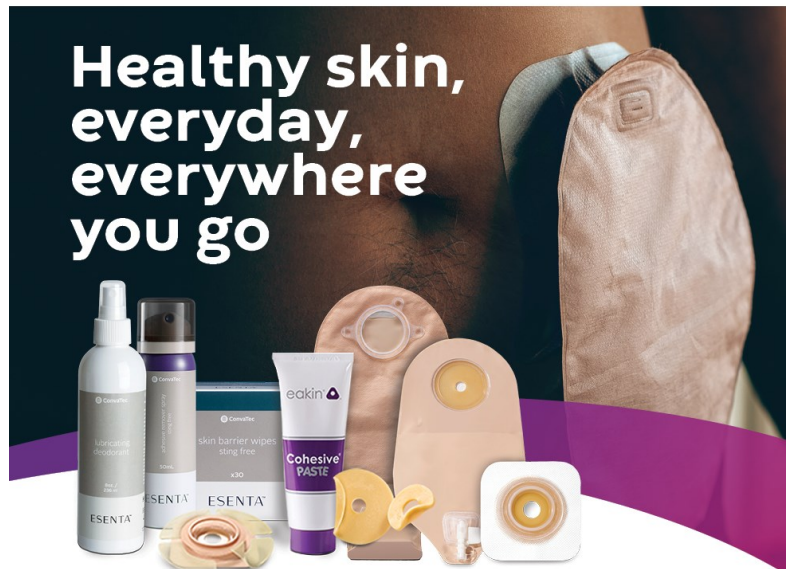
### WE GET EMAILS

Chile CORAOS Region V

January 2023

We have already begun to make the monthly donation delivery to our partners starting on January 25 at the Corporation Assembly.

Eternally grateful ... Gloria



Convatec offers a complete portfolio of ostomy products designed to help keep the skin around your stoma healthy.



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*If your employer has a matching contributions program, please ask them to match your gift.*

### FOW-USA CONTRIBUTION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City State Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send Newsletter by Email? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

#### ***Giving Level***

Partner-\$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Corporate-\$300 \_\_\_\_\_

Sustaining-\$75 \_\_\_\_\_ Benefactor-\$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_

Contributing-\$150 \_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime/Memorial-\$5000 \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting-\$300 \_\_\_\_\_ Other-\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter/Group/Association \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Enclosed** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to FOW-USA and mail with form to:  
FOW-USA, Attn: Treasurer, 4018 Bishop Lane, Louisville KY 40218-4539  
Or donate online at: [www.fowusa.org](http://www.fowusa.org)