OurHealthCoop.com presents

OurHealthNews

Making Health Affordable *Together*

NOTES FROM THE KAT

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Meow,

Kat's Interview: Teri's Mom, Bea O'Toole

Every now and then, Teri sends this kat an email about some new adventure her mother, Bea O'Toole, is undertaking. She attaches pictures of Bea doing something like riding around on a motorcycle or roped to a climbing wall *(Yes, that's Bea in the picture! ->)*.

What is mind-blowing is that Bea just turned 80 this past week, survived breast cancer, and has lived with multiple sclerosis for over 22 years.

Since Bea is practically a poster child for our active Co-op membership, I decided to do an interview.

Last summer, I called Bea one morning only to find that she was just finishing watching one of the final stages of the Tour de France. She is very much up on the sport of cycling and considers Lance Armstrong one of today's real heroes.

Bea, short for Bernice, is no slouch herself. She was recently was awarded the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's *MS Achievement Award* (for Area III which includes 10 states in the Mid-Atlantic and the Southeast).

Bea continues to overcome the many debilitating effects of MS and focuses her efforts on helping others. She is tireless in raising awareness about and funds for the national and local chapters of the MS Society.

I asked her how she felt about being nominated.

"I am in this little town of 2,400 people called Federalsburg, on the eastern shore of Maryland. The State of Maryland actually nominated me. I am just so honored!"

Bea grew up in New Jersey. Her mother was the oldest of eight children and as Bea was growing up, her parents would always take in her aunts and uncles. She learned early in life about charity and lives a life of service today.

Bea was married to a minor league baseball player, Leonard Baker. They lived in various towns while her husband played the baseball circuit. His last team was the Federalsburg Athletics in Maryland - and that is where they stayed.

They had two children: our Teri and her brother, Jim (who Teri absolutely adores). Bea shared:

"When I arrived in Federalsburg, I was the wife of the baseball player. When my husband retired from baseball, he would say that he "became the husband of a nurse'. Isn't it funny how things change!"

I asked Bea how she recognized the first symptoms of her MS.

"I was lying on the floor doing my exercises. I tried to lift up my leg and couldn't lift it up more than a few inches off the floor. No other symptoms at all. I tried so hard to lift that leg and just couldn't. I called my doctor and he saw me right away."

"Within two weeks, I was diagnosed with MS. Better to know what you have right away, don't you think? Many people that have MS are

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10. Eye Protection

Member Spotlight

CO-OP CORNER

Dear Guido,

Thank you so much for posting Harry's picture in Favorite Pets ! Your web site is not only the best for healthy supplements, it's a purr-fect place to visit for critter lovers like me !

I truly appreciate your web site and your company. Affordable health care is almost a thing of the past. Your efforts to keep costs low is much needed by so many. I know that my husband and I are both much better since finding Our Health Co-op. Plus you bring our wonderful pets along too ! Purrrs to that !

Thank you again for everything. I'm looking forward to being a faithful customer for many, many years to come...at least 9 lives worth !

Liandra (Member and Magnet Design Contest Winner)

Tell-A-Friend Please "Tell a Friend"! If your friends and family care about supplement quality *and love* a good deal, they will certainly thank you! ^..^

More on the Kat!

Contact Us

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not diagnosed for years. That's a shame."

"I was diagnosed in 1983 - in my late fifties. It mostly affects people in their twenties and thirties, so I was an older MS patient."

"One of the best things I did was join an MS support group. We discuss things we would not discuss anywhere else. Our group wants to be educated about this disease so we invite guest speakers or watch films the MS Society supplies."

Bea also participates in a week-long camp retreat every year for those with MS in Chestertown, Maryland.

"Camp Farlee is a lovely place. There are about 35 people with MS who attend. And I am probably one of the healthier campers. Most camp attendees are young, severely handicapped and in wheelchairs. That's why I work so hard to raise money for MS. These people are so young. They have very few memories of a healthy life. MS at that age hits them very hard. And most are women."

Fast Fact: According to the **National Multiple Sclerosis Society**, an estimated 400,000 Americans have MS. Most are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, and about two thirds are women. The disease is more frequently found among people who grew up in colder climates. Studies indicate that genetic factors make certain individuals susceptible to the disease, but there is no evidence that MS is directly inherited.

Bea continued her stories with a few giggles.

"Being at Camp Farley is like being a kid again. There is canoeing, climbing, stick hockey -- and stick hockey with people in wheelchairs is a sight to see. Everyone has such a good time. And everyone, no matter their medical state, plays hard and is determined to have fun."

"One of my friends, Kathy, had her leg amputated, but that didn't stop her when she got to camp. When she saw the canoe, she wanted to go for ride! And sure enough, she did it. As the camp counselor rowed across the lake, Kathy beamed with joy, as if she was the Queen of the Nile."

Getting back to fundraising, I asked Bea how she goes about raising money for MS.

"At a local bikers rally, I raised money for the MS Society. I was surrounded by 1,000 bikers and I kindly asked all those burly bikers in leather for a donation. They couldn't resist me and I raised a healthy amount!"

"Also, I coordinate a 'mini' MS Walk with the children from Lockerman Middle School. Through their SHOUT program - Students Helping Others Understand Themselves. We have nearly 50 students walk each year, and they have raised thousands of dollars."

Over $11,500 to be exact according to Bea's local paper! And through all her fundraising efforts, she has raised more than $35,000!

Way to go, Bea!

We turned to what Bea thinks about Teri working for the Co-op.

"Teri loves it! And she is very involved in the business! Plus it's good for me! I get to learn all about vitamins and supplements. In fact, I told my doctor that I was on so many vitamins that my body thinks it is so young, I am having hot flashes again!"

Bea takes a variety of Co-op supplements, including the **Sublingual B Trio**.

Good to hear that Bea is taking her B's. People with multiple sclerosis commonly show a critical deficiency of vitamin B12, signaled by high levels of homocysteine, which may exacerbate symptoms and/or hinder recovery.

On a side note, did you know that a recent study found **ginkgo biloba** to improve cognitive impairment caused by multiple sclerosis? Take a look:

http://www.ohsu.edu/ohsuedu/newspub/releases/042705ginkgo.cfm

Back to Teri though. I asked what she was like when she was younger.

"Just like she is now! Let me give you an example. Teri was a baton twirler in high school but always wanted to be cheerleader. So during her last year of high school, she was determined to get on the one open spot on the cheerleading squad. And she did it!"

Hmmm. A cheerleader in our midst? Now, how did that happen?

Bea interjected, "She is my biggest cheerleader!" And then she remembered something that made her laugh again. Bea continued:

"Bet you can't guess what Teri did for me on my 77th birthday?"

“She took me to Daytona and I did six laps around the track in a race car. It was part of the Richard Petty Experience program. I put all the gear on, including the fire resistant helmet and driving suit. These guys helped me in the car through the window. Then I turned to the driver and said, ‘Honey, if you aren’t going to drive fast, I ain’t going with you.’”

“And, indeed, we drove fast! The smile stayed on my face for days!”

Who would think that this almost 80-year-old woman was such a race fanatic. Bea also pointed out that she is big Jeff Gordon fan. She belongs to his fan club and has a picture of him on her credit card.

She proceeded to say, “I may be older, but I don’t have to be old!”

And I just had to find out Bea’s reaction to her daughter’s recent engagement to Harley.

“I am so delighted! Those two just make such a great pair – they belong together!”

As we came to the conclusion of the interview, I asked what she tells people with MS the best ways to live their lives more fully?

“I don’t really tell them, I just encourage them and set an example. They see what I do and how I make my life better.”

“One more thing I do for myself each day - I exercise in bed before I get up in the morning. I do “arches” or what I call pelvic thrusts. It strengthens my leg and back muscles. While I am saying my rosary, I do an arch up and down for every bead. That’s about 70 arches every day. I don’t think that is sacrilegious, do you?”

“Also, I do arm exercises. Then I will go out and walk --if it’s not too hot! Heat and MS are not friends.”

“Mostly, you have to be positive. I thank God every day for giving me the ability to cope. Will, desire, and attitude are critical when it comes to fighting a disease like MS.”

Thanks Bea, we love you, and we hope to be reporting on your adventures for many years! ^..^

Calling All Interview Prospects

I’m open to new interview prospects again, so drop me a line if you have a story you would like to share with our far-flung community. ^..^

Health in the News

- **Flavonoids in diet may reduce prostate cancer risk**
- **Conjugated linoleic acid in milk may control inflammation**
- **Omega-3 fatty acids decrease dry-eye syndrome in women**
- **Component of daffodils gives hope in fighting dementia**

That’s it my friends. Drop a line if you have comments, and don’t forget to **tell your friends** about our little Co-op!

Still purringly yours,

Guido

Guido Housemouser
Chief Kat and Community Manager
Our Health Co-op
Making Health Affordable
Together

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DO NOT write to Guido about orders, as your order inquiry will only be delayed!!! The "kat" is happy to receive and respond to other types of notes though!

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