



The Road To Recovery

LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP REACHES OUT TO CANCER SURVIVORS

by Sherry Kiser

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A candle to light your way, a paper clip to hold it all together, a rubber band to remind you to be flexible, a clothespin to help you hang in there, marbles to replace the ones you think you may lose along the way, a Life Savers candy because you are a lifesaver to other survivors: These are just a few of the items you'd find in a Cancer Survival Kit lovingly put together by a group of extraordinary local women. They are members of the Oroville Women Cancer Support (OWCS) group, and because they're survivors themselves, they know that little things often help in big ways—especially when it comes to living with cancer.

Lynndee Caput, president and program director of [Greater Oroville Community Outreach \(GOCO\)](#), the nonprofit that sponsors OWCS, explains their mission: "Our purpose is to encourage and empower women with cancer—any kind of cancer. We walk alongside them through their entire journey, from diagnosis to treatment and beyond. We do this with activities, outreach, and most of all, friendship. We gather every month to socialize, share stories, and work on projects like our Cancer Survival Kit. The road to recovery is always easier when there are helping hands to support you."

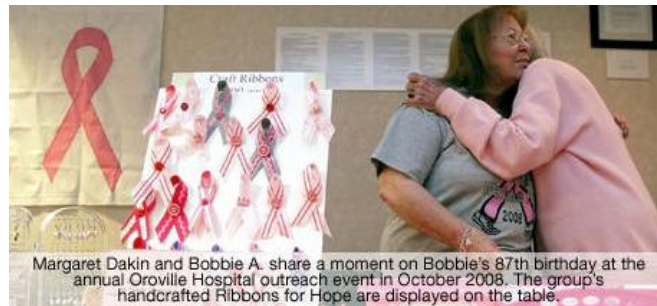


Members of the Oroville Women Cancer Support group, from left: Lynndee Caput, OWCS cheerleader and program coordinator; Bobbie A., 25-year cancer survivor and volunteer; Margaret Dakin, OWCS facilitator and seven-year cancer

The helping hands of OWCS are seldom idle. When they're not gathering at the [Greater Oroville Family Resource Center](#) putting together survival kits, the women are turning piles of donated lace, ribbon, buttons, and

beads into jewelry or handcrafted inspirations that become fundraiser staples. "Our Ribbons for Hope are beautifully crafted, handmade ribbons in the style of the well-known breast cancer pink ribbon logo," says Caput. "They sell for \$1 and are very popular."

Others, such as Margaret Dakin, the group facilitator, bring their unique talents to the OWCS team. Dakin is a breast cancer survivor, published author, and teacher of a creative writing and journaling class. She knows firsthand the therapeutic advantage of putting pen to paper. "Keeping a journal of my ordeal was very healing, and I encouraged the women in my class to do the same," explains Dakin. "Then, a member of the group, who has since passed away, suggested I gather the stories and put them in a collection. The result was Ribbons of Hope, published in 2006." The book is an anthology of survivor stories from 20 members of OWCS and is offered for a \$10 donation. The book was so well received that plans for a second book, Bands of Hope, are under way.



Listening to Caput, it's easy to recognize why she has been described as the team cheerleader. "I love our monthly meetings," she says. "They are upbeat and inspirational. We all are ready to assist each other in the recovery process. We get so much satisfaction from lifting people up, responding to their requests, or just being there in their moments of need. We provide a lot of what the hospitals and agencies cannot."

"That includes Lynn-dee's delicious homemade soup that she often serves up at meetings!" Dakin adds. "Laughter and humor are important to us as we try to keep busy and do things that benefit the community. Because we have faced cancer, we know how precious every moment of life is, and we try to utilize it to benefit others as well as enhance our own lives."



The Oroville Women Cancer Support group meets on the third Thursday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon. All programs, classes, and groups are available at no cost or low cost. Call 530-533-1576 ext. 207 or visit www.4qoco.info



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