

*Portland Maine Ostomy
Support Group
Newsletter*

The Visitor

November-December 2006



www.uoportland.com

**Next Portland Meeting:
Sunday, November 19, 2:00 p.m.
Mercy Hospital**

Program A viewing of the film "Farang Ba"

**The Next Seacoast Ostomy Meeting:
Sunday, November 19 - 2 to 4 p.m.**

**York Hospital
Ellis Conference Room**

Contact Jerra Sullivan with Questions
207-351-3456

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From the Editor – Peter McGinn

The September meeting, held overlooking the Harraseeket River, was pleasant as it has been every year. The weather was pleasant and the food was delicious. It is bound to be a little bit cooler for the November meeting.

I just read in yesterday's paper that Grace Moulton has died. Anyone who has been involved with our group for more than a couple of years knows how involved she has been with us for many, many years. And ours is just one of several support groups she has graced with her energy and spirit. She has touched many lives and will be missed.

Unfit Exercises

These activities often use the body's energy unproductively. If you engage in any of these activities, think about saving some of the wasted energy for a more healthy activity.

- Jumping to conclusions
- Pushing your luck
- Beating your head against a wall
- Making mountains out of molehills
- Fishing for compliments
- Dragging your heels.
- Adding fuel to fire
- Throwing your weight around
- Dodging responsibility

Preventive Measures Are a MUST for Fall and Winter

It is extremely important to take precautions to avoid illness or injury that may result in the need for long-term care services. Pneumonia, heart attacks, and injuries resulting from falls are the most common reasons individuals need this type of care during the fall and winter months.

Pneumonia – If you are older, are recovering from surgery or an illness or have respiratory problems, you may be susceptible to infection and pneumonia. If you start to get a sore throat or do not feel well, try to avoid crowded areas such as shopping malls where germs and bacteria are prevalent. Call your doctor if you experience a persistent cough, an elevated temperature, shortness of breath or colored mucus.

In order to avoid infection, consider taking advantage of the flu and pneumonia vaccines that are available. Also, make sure you have adequate fluid and nutritional intake.

Heart Attacks – During the winter, many heart attacks are the result of exposure to the weather and overexertion. Protect yourself from the cold weather with appropriate clothing: warm coat, gloves, hat and scarf. Breathing cold air may be too intense for your heart, so you may want to cover your face with a scarf. If you are not normally active, you should not attempt to shovel snow. If you absolutely must shovel, make sure to rest frequently. You may be having a heart attack if you are experiencing any combination of the following symptoms: a feeling of indigestion; nausea; vomiting; chest, jaw or shoulder pain; light-headedness; or sweating. Immediately contact a medical professional if you experience these symptoms. If you have a history of cardiac problems, contact your doctor before shoveling or engaging in any cardiovascular activity.

Injuries – Although shoveling snow may not be recommended, it is important to make sure your driveway and walkways are cleared and well lit. Wear good soled shoes or boots that provide traction and use the railing when climbing stairs. Following these tips will help you minimize the chance of falling during slippery winter months.

It is also important to have a support system in place. For example, if you have to walk a dog or shovel your own driveway, have someone assist you. Local senior centers are a great resource, or you may find community assistance through The Eldercare Locator. This is a public service provided by the Administration on Aging and the

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The number to call is 1-800-677-1116. This service will connect you with plowing services, Meals-On-Wheels, and homemaker and transportation services in your local area.

Planning ahead, whether it is getting a flu shot or putting your support system in place, may help you avoid a situation that could result in the need for long-term care services. Like the old saying, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

(F.Y.I. AARP Health Care Options)

How to Proofread a Prescription

Before you leave the druggist's counter, compare your doctor's prescription to the label on your bottle. You might catch a deadly mistake. June McKoy, M.D., of the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University in Chicago, tells of a patient who was given Lanoxin (a heart drug) instead of Levsin (a drug for irritable bowel). To catch similar errors, follow this prescription for proofreading:

IS YOUR NAME correct on both the prescription and the medicine bottle?

IS THE NAME of the medication correct? Look carefully. Some drug names are similar. Norvasc, for example, is for treating high blood pressure. Navane is for psychosis.

IS THE DOSAGE the same as what your doctor told you?

ARE THE INSTRUCTIONS understandable?

Doctors and pharmacists often communicate in Latin. With the help of the mini-dictionary below, you can decipher their dialogue.

Latin Terms/Abbreviations

<i>Latin</i>	<i>Abbrev.</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
anti cibum	ac	before meals
bis in die	bid	twice a day
gutta	gt	drop
hora somni	hs	at bedtime
oculus dexter	od	right eye
oculus sinister	os	left eye
per os	po	by mouth
post cibum	pc	after meals
pro re nata	prn	as needed
quaque 3 hora	q3h	every 3 hours
quaque die	qd	every day
quarter in die	qid	4 times a day
ter in die	tid	3 times a day

The Back Page (cont'd from page 4)

"No, just my bag," Mom joked weakly. "It doesn't get out much."

"This is Katt," Dad said. "I was just showing her around."

The front door opened again and Jake came outside. One thing I would learn about him was that he liked to be in the center of things. I guess once you have been highlighted in the harsh glare of the media spotlight, it is hard to give it up.

"Maybe I should see them first before I guarantee they can be pierced." Only Mom and I had a clue what he was referring to, and neither of us wanted to admit it. Just when I thought the situation couldn't become any more awkward, Katt walked up to me and put an arm over my shoulder, facing Mom.

"I'm Dale's sister," she announced. "See the resemblance?"

"You might be his stepsister," Mom said, "knowing Sam as I do, but I know I only squeezed one kid out between my legs."

"So far," Dad said under his breath.

It seemed time for another introduction. "Katt, this is my mother. Mom, Katt is-" okay, I was stuck now, but Katt jumped in.

"I'm sorry, that was a bad joke," she said to Mom. "I'm Dale's new girlfriend, sort of."

"Well, that's all right, then," Mom said. But of course it wasn't quite all right, as Jake had heard that, and he was supposed to think Katt was my sister. He stepped towards me, and I nearly followed my first instinct to duck.

"Could I have a quiet word with you, Dale?" His massive hand wrapped around my upper right arm. Resistance was futile. We siepped away a few yards.

"You're a dark horse, aren't you, Dale, my man. Listen, my temper landed me in prison, and rightly so. But Michelle has a temper herself, and if you go flaunting your girlfriend in front of her, you'll feel its teeth. Believe me, I've been there. I don't care. I'm open-minded. But she even frightens me. Be careful, is all I'm telling you."

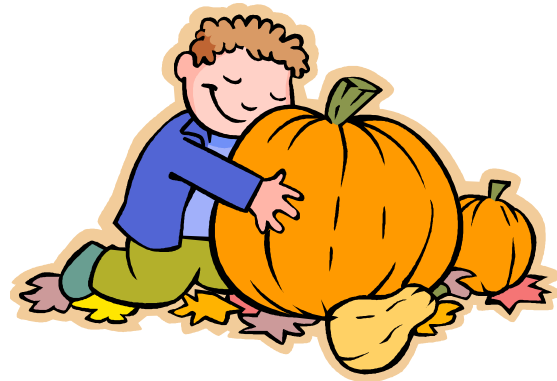
So that was where my life was: receiving advice on a relationship that didn't exist from a felon who had ended his marriage from the business end of a gun. But there was hope. If I survived the weekend, I might lose a fiancé and gain a girlfriend.

Happy Birthday to UOAA ... now officially one year old!!

Major Genetic Link to Crohn's and Colitis Found

Discovery Should Lead to Improved Therapies and Diagnosis

New York, NY – October 26, 2006: A major genetic link to the development of Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, as well as other inflammatory diseases, has been revealed in a recent study. "This genetic discovery is special because it may have a rapid impact on diagnosis and treatment of these chronic digestive diseases," said Jonathan Braun, M.D., Ph.D., Chair of the National Scientific Advisory Committee of the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America (CCFA). "It is also important news for a spectrum of inflammatory diseases, because the gene may similarly affect patients with psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis, and multiple sclerosis." The study, announced today in an online publication of the journal *Science*, builds on a groundwork laid by more than \$125 million in Crohn's and colitis research funded by CCFA.



The UOAA now represents 236 ostomy patient support groups! You can see the entire list at this link: <http://www.uoaa.org/supportgroups.shtml>



The Back Page- Fiction by Peter McGinn

(Hey, a lot has happened so far, but you read it all in past newsletters by going to uoportland.com.)

Installment 7: More Complications.

Michelle went off with Jake to feed him an early supper. Dad's cook wasn't due to arrive for a half-hour, so Jake would be eating something simple and cold. Michelle could cook, she assured me more than once, but she didn't care to bother when there was a professional chef within arm's reach.

That left Dad with me and Katt. Dad looked like he wanted to pursue the idea of Katt playing his girlfriend in front of Jake, so I figured I had better bring him back to earth quickly.

"Is it going to be a big wedding, Dad?"

"What?" Dad looked blank for a moment before the words developed meaning for him. "Yeah, I guess so. How often does a guy get married?"

"Sometimes once too often," I suggested.

"Or twice too often," Katt added.

"Well, Jake likes you," Dad said to me, "perhaps you should marry Michelle and I'll help Katt get over you."

Katt laughed. I wondered if it was a bad sign that she thought it was funny that father and son were both interested in her. Of course, I didn't think it was humorous at all. People Dad's age should stick to one unlikely relationship at a time. Katt's laugh seemed to cheer Dad up, and he put his gentrified face on.

"Would you like to see the estate, Katt?"

"Sure," she said with enthusiasm. "Are you coming, Dale?"

"Nah, I've seen it," I said, trying to sound like a guy not worried about competition, but probably sounded peeved instead, because Katt laughed again.

I walked around to the front of the house in time to see Mom's car come up the long driveway. She got out of the car and pulled an overnight bag out after her.

"Mom, are you crazy?"

"What? I suppose I should go to a hotel, but your father has about fifty rooms here and a guest house, so he must have room here so I can be close to you."

"Mom," I said, "the maestro just got home a day or two ago. I wouldn't think you two would have time to fall out of bed yet, let alone fight."

"Don't be crude, Dale. It's not a fight. He is driving me crazy, that's all. My baby is about the size of a Brazil nut and he is already picking out a preschool and piano teacher. I need a sanity break."

"Boy, have you come to the wrong place," I informed her. "Have you forgotten that Dad has a girlfriend here? A pregnant girlfriend?" I added for emphasis. "She'd hardly want you staying here."

"Maybe so, but I'd like to hear her say it."

"Consider it said," Michelle said from the doorway, framed by the outer screen door.

"This is my mother," I said, trying to inject a shred of normalcy.

"I know. I've seen a younger version of her in some pictures."

Mom didn't like that, though heaven knows it was true. It must have been the way Michelle said it. "I asked Mom to come for a visit," I said. "I think she misunderstood me."

"Nice try, Dale," Michelle said. "You're a bad liar."

"Can't all be as good as it as you are, darling," Jake said from behind her as he chewed on a sandwich. She gave him a look that could curdle milk. I think even his Betty Poop tattoo felt it. "What?" he said.

"Get inside and eat," she said. She turned back to us and said to Mom, "Do you want to speak to my fiancé before you leave?"

"I'd rather have my nipples pierced," Mom declined eloquently.

"I know someone who can do that for you," Jake said. Michelle moved him back so she could close the inside door, but as it swung closed I heard Jake say, "You'd better pry him from his mommy before the wedding." The rest was lost behind the closed door.

"Who was that moron?" Mom asked me.

"It's a long story," I replied. "But I think he is available if you are serious about leaving the maestro."

"I never said I left him, and he has a name, Dale."

I was unrepentant on that score. "When he stops referring to me as the devil's spawn, I'll use his name."

"He only said that once," Mom argued.

"Twice," I disagreed. "Go home to him, Mom. Preschools and music teachers won't matter. Your child will hate you anyway for saddling him or her with such a loser for a stepfather."

"He's not a loser."

"Okay, dork, then."

"I give up," she said. "I'm going home."

But because the gods enjoy their bits of entertainment, Dad and Katt came around the corner of the house just then.

"Are you going on a trip?" he asked Mom when he got close enough, having spotted the bag.

(cont'd on page 3)