



WELCOME
SPRING

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MARCH/APRIL
2025

ZOOM MEETING

Tuesday, March 11

7:00 pm



Image by Alexandra Koch from Pixabay

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MEETINGS

Meetings and gatherings are held at the hall at Community of Christ Church on Arthur and 8th. Throughout the year we will have a combination of face to face and ZOOM or a hybrid of both for our get togethers. We look forward to meeting you.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

March 11 - Zoom meeting 7:00 p.m.

April - NO Meeting

May 3 - Seminar - Spring into Education 11:00 - 3:00



DON'T MISS THIS ONE

Carla Zahaik – Convatec Rep & Christie Seymour, NSWOC me+ Recovery Program

Peristomal skin care, tips & tricks

Open Q & A time for all your questions

Zoom Link below

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89683057309?pwd=9VJfGumEIKsUy6DTpVXWdL4pr7QQRV.1>

OH NO!!

DID YOU FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2025?!



If you haven't sent in your renewal yet, now's the time! Membership dues are \$30.00

"Greetings from Patty"



Hello Friends,

Wow! What an old fashioned winter we have had. You probably wouldn't be surprised to know that Saskatchewan lays claim to both the country's lowest recorded temperature of -50C on January 1, 1885 and the highest of 43.3C on July 5, 1937. Without the moderating effects of a large body of water, the prairies are vulnerable to some of the worst weather in Canada. Lucky us!

The week of April 14 to 18 is when we take time to thank our NSWOCs for all they do. Their Vision Statement is "Every person deserves specialized wound, ostomy and continence care." Isn't it reassuring to know that over 600 NSWOCs provide care and support to ostomates across our country.

Some facts about our NSWOCs:

- They are registered nurses with advanced and specialized knowledge and clinical skills in wound, ostomy and continence care who have graduated from a recognized education program.
- NSWOCs are the ONLY nursing specialty with CNA certification in wound, ostomy and continence care (WOCC (C)).
- From acute care hospitals, outpatient clinics, community, long term care and in independent practice, an NSWOC provides specialized care to people and their families with ostomies and wound care.

Three cheers for our NSWOCs!

Upcoming Events:

Zoom Meeting: March 11 at 7 p.m. Don't miss out on guests Carla and Christie from Convatec who will tell us what's new and also talk about their support program. We organize zoom meetings to allow our entire province to listen in and participate as well to avoid our local members from driving in the dark. So please mark your calendar and join us on March 11.

Ostomy Canada Webinar: March 19, 2025 – 8:00 p.m. EST - Skin Health: Your Ostomy Change Routine (Coloplast)

SAVE THE DATE: Regina will be hosting a half-day education session on **Saturday, May 3** from 11 to 3. We are busy securing professionals to speak. It is sure to be interesting and inspiring. See page 3 for more information. We've set the time to accommodate those who may need to travel. We'd like to see our 'out of towners' from across the prairies join in. Come meet us.

"Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush." Doug Larson

MISSION STATEMENT

Ostomy Saskatchewan is a mutual support group for the benefit of people who have had, or are about to have intestinal or urinary diversion surgery.

Our purpose is:

- To help people with intestinal and/or urinary diversions to lead full and productive lives and to provide information and emotional support to their families and caregivers.
- To educate the public about intestinal and urinary diversion surgery.
- To provide trained visitors to someone who has undergone intestinal and/or urinary diversions, including preoperative and postoperative visits or phone calls, at the request of the individual, an ostomy nurse (NSWOC) or physician

Get The Support You Need!

OSTOMY VISITOR PROGRAM

Speak to a Certified Ostomy Visitor for personal support with your ileostomy, colostomy, urostomy or j-pouch. Visits are available at the hospital, in-person, phone & virtually. It could be either pre-operative or post-operative or both. At times you may just have a few questions or at other times you may be 'working' your way through something and it's good to talk to someone who can relate to your situation personally. All you have to do is ask.

A visit may be arranged by calling the Visiting Coordinator, Ruth Suderman at 306-450-4690 or emailing sudermanruth@gmail.com



Thrive with an Ostomy

By Ed Pfueller, UOAA Communications and Outreach Manager Courtesy of UOAA, Summer 2024; via Ostomy Association of Houston Area August 2024; modified for Ostomy Saskatchewan March 2025

Ostomy surgery saves lives but it's normal to feel overwhelmed, whether it is temporary or permanent. Accepting that you're going to the bathroom in a whole new way can take time. The emotional hurdles are often more challenging than any physical ones. With the right knowledge and support, people don't just survive but can thrive in life with an ostomy pouch. Here are a few things our ostomy community says leads to success.



Seek out an ostomy nurse specialist and custom-fit your pouch.

Certified Wound, Ostomy, and Continence (WOC) or NSWOC nurses, are the experts in ostomy care. They can help you find the ostomy pouching supplies that will work best for you to prevent leaks and skin irritation. Your stoma and body contours may change over time so it's important to consult with one. If you don't have a certified nurse that you see, or near you, *another option is to contact one of the major companies (Hollister, Coloplast, Convatec) as they have care programs (modified).*

Find peer support and trusted information

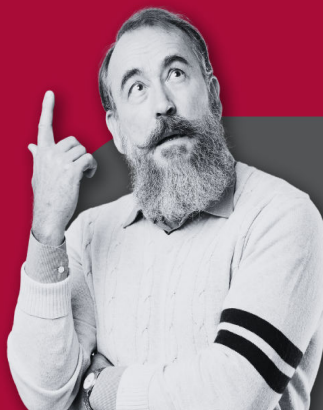
Ostomy nurses are wonderful but nothing can compare to talking with someone who has been through this profound change before. You are not alone. *Ostomy Canada estimates up to 150,000 people in Canada are living with an ostomy or continent diversion (modified).* United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA) estimates up to one-million people are living with an ostomy or continent diversion in the United States. UOAA has hundreds of peer support groups and also events to connect with people like you. Ask for advice on returning to work, sex, and how to talk about your ostomy with others. You'll find that many ostomates even name their stoma and celebrate their "stomaversary."

Our website <https://www.ostomycanada.ca> is considered the most trusted place to find educational resources, self-advocacy tools, supply information, information on support groups and details on topics like nutrition and peristomal hernias. Fact-check anything you may discover on social media.

Don't Limit Yourself

You don't have to want to climb mountains or run marathons but you should know that plenty of people living with an ostomy do. Read realistic but positive ostomate stories you can relate to. If doing what you love means going out with friends and not worrying about the nearest bathroom, you may discover an ostomy is a big improvement. Everyone should expect to swim, play sports or do whatever makes you, well you!

"People living with an ostomy are eligible for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) when a qualified practitioner certifies the DTC Application and the CRA approves it."



Learn more at
ostomycanada.ca



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Spring into Education

Saturday, May 3, 2025

11:00 to 3:00

Community of Christ Church Hall

4710 - 8th Avenue, Regina

Guest Speakers & Vendors

Lunch will be provided

\$15 per person (pay at the door)

Register: patty.gianoli@sasktel.net

(306-535-8251)

carpentier.deb@gmail.com

(306-536-3319)



BEAUTIFUL BAG PODCAST

Eyes sore from surfing the net looking for articles about ostomies? Give those eyes a rest and get your ears going! Podcasts are a simple, entertaining, informative and free (usually) way to learn about others' lives and experiences of living with an ostomy. The Beautiful Bag is a podcast created by LeeAnne Hayden for anyone who has an ostomy, may have to have one and those that want to learn more about what life is like living with one. Each week LeeAnne interviews a new guest, sharing a story or educating you on what it is all about.

About LeeAnne

At the age of 45 I survived a very rare form of cancer which left me with a colostomy for life. "It is the challenges that you face every day that make you stronger", is my motto. I will show you how to make fear your ally, not your enemy.

Little did I know that these challenges I had faced would launch my life into another direction that I am forever grateful for. During this time, I had felt called to speak more about my ostomy. To bring awareness to this medical device that GAVE ME a second chance at life.

With this second chance, I knew that I had to speak on this. I had to talk with others who had gone through what I had. We had to let the world know that yes, we may be different, BUT we can still live our life the way we want! We can accomplish our dreams, we can work out, we can wear what we want, we can be confident and put on a bathing suit or model. We can do ANYTHING we did before, maybe even more!

This is where The Beautiful Bag Podcast was born. It was born out of passion and determination and the need for something like this out there in the world. It was born of the survivors... I wanted to be an Ostomy Advocate for others who were not comfortable sharing their stories. I wanted to give them the outlet and the opportunity to step outside their comfort zone and talk about their journeys, their stories, their struggles, their accomplishments.

We so desperately needed a place where we could discuss these things as well as teaching survivors about how to eat, how to work out, what to wear, and how to care for their Ostomy. It has even helped others become more confident with their bodies and shift their mindset from, "This is a burden to my life. Or others cannot see my bag." In to, "This has given me a second chance at life, this is where I am supposed to be and I want to show it off and teach others about this!"

We needed a place for this, and we needed others outside of the Ostomy world to learn about this BEAUTIFUL BAG that has given us a new chance at life.

Check it out:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-beautiful-bag/id1548558782>

Vancouver Ostomy High Life March 2023

A Great Lesson on Stress



A young lady confidently walked around the room with a raised glass of water while explaining stress management to an audience. Everyone knew she was going to ask the ultimate question, "half empty or half full?" She fooled them all... "How heavy is this glass of water?" she inquired with a smile.

Answers called out ranged from 8 to 20 ounces (250 to 600 grams). She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it."

"If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my arm. If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance. In each case it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes," She continued, "and that's the way it is with stress. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on. As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden... holding stress longer and better each time practiced.

Source: Greater Atlanta Ostomy Assoc; and North Central OK Ostomy Outlook, May 2013 via Winnipeg Inside/Out November 2024

PRODUCTS MENTIONED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY ENDORSED BY THE SASKATCHEWAN & DISTRICT OSTOMY CHAPTER. SEE YOUR DOCTOR FIRST BEFORE TAKING ANY OF THEM!

Colorectal Cancer Canada is the nation's non-profit colorectal cancer patient organization. They are dedicated to colorectal cancer awareness and education, supporting patients and caregivers, and advocating on their behalf. Their goal is to reduce the incidence and mortality of colorectal cancer in Canada and to improve the quality of life for patients, their families and caregivers.

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Disability Tax Credit • Ostomy Visitor Program

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Care and Management of the Skin beneath your Ostomy appliance.

- Lauren Wolfe RN, BSN, CWOCN, MCISc(WH) Macdonald's Prescriptions
Fairmont building (via Vancouver Highlife January 2021)

Our skin is the largest organ of the body and is composed of 2 layers. The skin acts as a barrier to harmful substances, chemicals and protects us from the environment. The outermost layer of the skin is called the epidermis. The skin is part of the immune system. When it has been compromised by foreign materials such as bacteria or allergens it will become red and inflamed. (Approximately 20-70% of people living with an ostomy experience skin complications, these can be due to multiple reasons such as leakage, allergy, and skin stripping due to the removal of the flange. Removing the pouching system too quickly can cause skin damage such as skin stripping, exposing the skin to further injury such as irritant dermatitis. As we age, our skin changes and becomes thinner and more fragile skin, resulting in skin tears. The additions of adhesive products to assist with a pouch seal may increase the risk of skin damage and should only be used when necessary.

In order to protect the skin from harm and chemicals the NSWOC and WOCN Society recommend using warm water to cleanse the peristomal skin and the stoma. Water is readily available and not harmful to the skin. A frequent question that stoma nurses get asked is; Should I use alcohol wipes, antiseptics, baby wipes or flushable adult wipes for cleansing the stoma and the skin? In reviewing the literature, it was interesting to see what the dermatologists and biochemists are saying about the use of these products on neonates and babies' skin. In 2016 Yu et al., reviewed the ingredients in multiple baby wipes and found many ingredients to cause contact dermatitis in infants.

Although, this study was evaluating baby wipes on infant skin, it is known that the skin beneath the flange is susceptible to injury due to the frequent removal of the pouching system.

Contact dermatitis is when the ingredients in a product that is applied topically, causes a reaction to the skin. A reaction may not be noticed immediately but can develop over a few days, weeks or years. Once an individual develops a contact dermatitis beneath the flange, the skin becomes red and weepy preventing the flange from adhering to the skin. When this occurs, the skin has been compromised, therefore the natural barrier protecting you from infection has been breached, allowing for bacteria to penetrate the skin.

In discussion with Dr. Greg Schultz PHD, a well-known researcher and biochemist in wound care, "Different baby wipes have substantially different formulations. Common ingredients include acetyl hydroxyethyl cellulose, a plant-

based product used as a cleaning agent along with glycerin or propylene glycol that are humectants that can help other ingredients penetrate more deeply into skin. Most wipes contain a buffer like citric acid which helps with product stability and maintains the pH balance of the products. Also, preservatives like parabens can be present and these chemicals can cause skin irritation." Not only may these ingredients be harmful, but some may prevent your flange from adhering and allowing you to achieve the wear time you desire.

Maintaining the skin around your ostomy and beneath your flange is extremely important. When considering which products to use, it is important to recognize that many products that are not designed for ostomy care do not have the research to support the use and may put you at risk of injury to your skin. See your ostomy nurse to discuss which products are safe to use and to help you with a skin assessment. []

If you have further questions, contact the author at lau-ren@macdonaldsrx.com
References for this article available upon request

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Let's Talk Peristalsis

UOAA • via Lincoln Ostomy Association

Why does your stoma move without permission? It's a bit scary, funny, and amazing. Credit peristalsis. Peristalsis sounds complex, but it's a fundamental process in our digestive system that's particularly important for ostomates. It's also called intestinal motility. Peristalsis is the wave-like contraction and relaxation of muscles in the digestive tract.

These coordinated movements propel food, fluids, and waste through the gastrointestinal system. Imagine squeezing a tube of toothpaste from the bottom up, that's similar to how peristalsis works in your body.

"Peristalsis exists in ostomates after surgery," said Dr. Jacques Izard, University of Nebraska. "It ensures that the food transits throughout the digestive system. Not always predictable, but you surely know that the output is coming and that you can manage it."

For ostomates, understanding peristalsis is crucial because it directly affects stoma function. Stoma movement is often a result of peristalsis, as muscles close and open. It pushes intestinal contents towards and through the stoma opening. This rhythm helps maintain a healthy, functioning ostomy.

"Ostomates are the only ones who see their peristalsis happen outside their bodies," said Rhonda Soucek, RN BSN CWCN. "That's pretty cool. If we don't have the movement of that smooth muscle, there is no way to propel stool through the colon." By understanding peristaltic patterns, ostomates can better anticipate active output periods. This knowledge aids in planning optimal times for appliance changes and emptying, reducing the risk of leaks or skin irritation.

Peristalsis affects the speed at which food and fluids move through the digestive system. For ostomates, who may have shorter digestive tracts, this can significantly impact nutrient absorption and hydration levels, according to UOAA. Proper peristalsis ensures that the body has enough time to extract necessary nutrients and water from ingested food and drinks.

Awareness of normal peristaltic patterns helps ostomates recognize changes that indicate problems.

Alterations in output consistency or frequency could signal potential blockages or obstructions, allowing for early intervention. The rate of peristalsis influences how effectively medications are absorbed in the body. This is particularly important for ostomates who rely on certain medications to manage their health conditions.

Understanding and working with the body's natural rhythm can significantly improve an ostomate's quality of life. It allows for better planning of daily activities and can reduce anxiety related to ostomy management. Various factors can affect peristalsis, including diet, hydration, stress levels, and medications. Some medicines can slow down peristalsis, while others can speed it up. It's crucial for ostomates to discuss medications with a doctor and/or ostomy nurse, as changes in peristalsis can affect ostomy management.

Beyond medications, ostomates can influence their peristalsis through lifestyle choices. Staying well-hydrated, eating a balanced diet rich in fiber, appropriate to your situation, eating regularly, engaging in regular physical activity, and managing stress can all contribute to healthy peristaltic function.

Foods to Slow Peristalsis: Meat, milk, hard cheese, refined carbohydrates, and white rice can slow peristalsis because they move slowly through the digestive tract. Red meat, which is high in fat and iron, can also make you constipated.

Foods to Stimulate Peristalsis: Fiber-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can stimulate peristalsis by adding bulk to the digestive tract. Fiber also absorbs water and lubricates the large intestine, which can soften stools and make it easier to defecate.

Ostomy shape can vary with the wave-like muscular contractions of the intestines, AKA peristaltic movement.

Sometimes peristaltic movement stops (particularly after surgery). It's called Ileus. According to the Cleveland Clinic, this may be due to excessive handling of the intestine during surgery, anesthesia, pain medication and other causes.

Source: *UOAASTL Live and Learn Fall 2024, Winnipeg Inside-Out Sept 2024*

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¹Maria Teresa Szewczyk, MD, PhD; Grazyna Majewska, RN, ETN; Mary V.Cabral, MS, FNP-BC, CWOCN-AP; and Karin Holzel-Piontek, RN; The Effects of Using a Moldable Skin Barrier on Peristomal Skin Condition in Persons with an Ostomy: Results of a Prospective, Observational, Multinational Study, *Ostomy Wound Management* 2014;60(12):16-26.

²Consumer sampling survey, N=61, ConvaTec Inc, February 2021, data on file.



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Image by pikisuperstar on Freepik

Now What???

So, you're home from the hospital and everything feels a bit overwhelming and confusing. There's a pretty good chance your medical support sent home a package with information that can help you through these early days. Take a look for that too.

Initially I remember thinking these questions. Will people know by looking at me? What will I wear? Do I smell? (because I think we all think we smell in the beginning.) Can I eat normal food? Can I still have sex? All of these questions that make us worry if life will ever feel normal again. The internet has a wealth of information. If you're not familiar with how to search for information perhaps you have a family member or friend who can assist you. Here are some questions that may come up for you. We will carry this special item in every newsletter, changing questions. Always happy to receive more questions (carpentier.deb@gmail.com).

I forget how to change my appliance. What are the steps?

If you have an information booklet from the hospital or clinic when you were discharged, check there for some instructions. Here's a link to instructions and another link to a video as to how to change your appliance. If you need to call your NSWOC or who is your contact person.

<https://www.ostomycanada.ca/ostomy-care-basics/general-management/changing-your-pouching-system/> and <https://www.veganostomy.ca/?s=how+to+change+my+appliance>

As I gain expertise with changing my appliance, how long should it take?

Getting into a process and routine that works for you will take a bit of time. Based on comments from many people, it could take anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes.

What can I use on my bed to protect my mattress from leakage?

If you are concerned about leakage you can get a moisture resistant mattress pad for under your sheets.

How do I deodorize, clean and store my night bag (urostomy)?

Night drainage bags can be cleaned and deodorized using a mixture of 1-part vinegar and 2 parts water. Hang it to dry. (SHA Ostomy teaching booklet).

Should I reuse a leg bag? How do you deodorize, clean and store a used leg bag? How many times can you reuse a leg bag?

Yes, you can reuse a urostomy leg bag in Canada if it's labeled as reusable by the manufacturer and you follow the manufacturer's instructions. There is a lot of information on the website listed here. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/14832-urine-drainage-bag-and-leg-bag-care>

Can I shower or bath? How do I prepare my appliance for bathing or showering? Yes, you can and it feels good. Some people take no additional steps before bathing/showering and others may use tape along the sides of the adhesive or you can purchase a waterproof cover. Some people enjoy showering without their appliance on.

What can I eat now that I'm home? Check the materials you came home with, there may be some guidelines. For a person with an ileostomy, going easy and slow with foods is recommended. Generally softer, low fiber foods is the way to start and be sure to stay hydrated, 6-8 glasses of non-caffeinated beverages per day. With a colostomy you will want to maintain a well-balanced diet, introducing food that may cause gas or odour one at a time. For a urostomy there are no food restrictions but give your body a chance to recover, eat little and more frequently.

How long will it take me to fully recover from my ostomy surgery? There are so many circumstances that impact recovery, i.e. cancer, chemo, radiation, general health pre-surgery, etc. Surgery has a major impact on your body. Be sure to see your physiotherapist or OT as to when you can start exercise and activity. It could be a number of months before you start feeling stronger and perkier.



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SASKATCHEWAN OSTOMY COMMITTEES

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Co-facilitator	Deb Carpentier	306-536-3319
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Visiting Coordinator	Ruth Suderman	306-450-4690
Partner & Family Support	Bob Fearnside	306-924-5993

Letters to the Editor . . .

Dear Readers, our aim is to provide you with articles that inform and entertain. Every personal story has an impact for others. Please consider writing your story, I'd be happy to assist. Here are some ways to contact me or connect with a larger on-line group.

Deb Carpentier

carpentier.deb@gmail.com

Phone: 306-536-3319

<https://ostomysaskatchewan.ca>

<https://www.ostomycanada.ca>

Facebook coordinates:

Ostomy Saskatchewan group

Ostomy Canada Society group

Ostomy Canada Parents' group

Young Ostomates support YOS+FG



Ostomy Saskatchewan Membership and Donations/Bequests

Membership is open to all persons interested in supporting people living with an ostomy and their circles of support. As a member supporter you can enjoy the benefits of being part of Ostomy Saskatchewan as well as Ostomy Canada. You'll receive newsletters, opportunities for webinars, a magazine and the support of people here and across the country. You will be supporting an organization that is striving to be the voice for people living with an ostomy in Canada.

A \$30 "supporter" donation will give you all the benefits of membership. \$25 will go to Ostomy Canada and any donation above \$25 will allow us to continue to support our local group with support and advocacy. No donation is too small or too big. You will receive a tax receipt for your entire donation.

Your financial contribution supports many initiatives including supporting the youth camp, an education fund for our ostomy nurses, the visitor's program, educational seminars, outreach and training programs. We have regular 'get togethers and updates will be listed in the newsletter and/or on the website (<https://ostomysaskatchewan.ca>).

ONLINE, e-TRANSFER or CHEQUE - Income tax receipts will be issued for entire donation.

Cheque: Make your cheque out to Ostomy Canada Society Inc. WRITE SASKATCHEWAN on the notation space at bottom of cheque. MAIL TO: OSTOMY CANADA 5800 Ambler Dr., Suite 210 Mississauga, ON L4W 4J4

Debit/Credit: Go to the DONATE NOW page on the Ostomy Canada website. Fill in the details. Choose "Saskatchewan" under "Fund Area". Mark yourself as a "Supporter". <https://www.ostomycanada.ca/donation/>

E-transfer: Be sure to state Saskatchewan in the comments section. etransfer@ostomycanada.ca

FRIENDS OF OSTOMATES WORLDWIDE (CANADA) 2024: A Year of Incredible Impact

Thanks to YOU, 2024 has been the most successful year in Friends of Ostomates Worldwide Canada's history! When we set out to ship 784,000 kgs of ostomy supplies – an ambitious 20% increase over last year – we couldn't have imagined what was ahead. Because of your generosity, **we shipped over 1.1 MILLION kgs** of life-changing supplies to ostomates in Iran, Ukraine, Kenya, Cuba, and Zimbabwe. This is a record-shattering achievement and a testament to what this community can do when we come together.

After years of dedicated leadership, Lorne Aronson will be stepping down as FOWC's Chair. His reflections on this incredible journey are below, but we'll sum it up in two words: **thank you!** Lorne's passion and leadership have carried FOWC to new heights, and his impact will be felt for years to come. In January, we look forward to introducing our new Chair, Joel Goldenberg, who will guide FOWC into an exciting new chapter.

With gratitude,
The Friends of Ostomates Worldwide Canada Team
<https://www.fowc.ca>

Mary was a pretty redhead doing some Christmas shopping in Dublin. She strolled up to the counter and was trying to decide which of the many types of tinsel she would buy. Finally, she made her choice and asked Mick, the young clerk, "How much is this gold tinsel?" Mick seeing the pretty young woman, replied, "This week we have a special offer, just one kiss per metre." "Wow, that's grand," exclaimed Mary. "I'll take 12 metres." With expectation and anticipation written all over his face, Mick measured out the tinsel and gave it to Mary. After Mick handed her the bag, Mary gestured toward an older gentleman seated on a bench and said, "Me Grandpa will settle the bill."

