

Patient Stories, continued

The Gastroparesis and Dysmotilities Association
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Indomitable Mary

Bumping into Mary and Bob at our favorite GI doctor's office this past winter, Mary laid it out for me, “Jeanne, we have to get the word out about this disease and raise funds for research.”

With that announcement, she had a plan. Mary had been invited to speak to her women's group at the spring convention of the Florida Beta Sigma Phi Sorority chapter.

Through the decades, Beta Sigma Phi has grown to be the largest organization of its kind in the world. This international women's friendship network provides educational opportunities for its members. As well, each chapter selects projects to fund, from health research, to fighting hunger and other worthwhile causes.

Mary needed information pamphlets tailored for her meeting. Working with GPDA, we would be able to devise information that Mary requested.

Hospitalized just weeks before her scheduled presentation, Mary was getting Bob to e-mail information for the pamphlet development.

It is apparent that not much slows Mary down once she sets her mind to something. With this wonderful opportunity, Mary was able to share her experiences with over 450 members and asked them to take on gastroparesis research as a funding project for their state.

Mary has set a wonderful example for what other individuals can do to help support the efforts of GPDA

Celebrating her 59th birthday on May 14, Mary was diagnosed in 1985 with idiopathic gastroparesis. Mary has been through TPN, problems of sepsis, numerous hospitalizations and enteral feeding tubes. Her stomach and small intestines are affected; but she has been holding her own since September 11, 2001 when she was implanted with the gastric pacemaker. Still in need of enteral nutrition, Mary can eat fruits and soft foods and is living as normal a life as possible as a wife, mother and now, proud grandmother.

She is an unstoppable force and tireless campaigner for awareness of gastroparesis and digestive nerve-gut motor disorders.

Mary lives with her husband Bob in Gainesville, FL.