

LEGACY OF HOPE.

WINTER 2021



A CHARITABLE AND GIFT PLANNING GUIDE FOR THE BARBARA ANN KARMANOS CANCER INSTITUTE

JOHANNA'S LEGACY TRIBUTE GIFT SUPPORTS BETTER TREATMENTS FOR OVARIAN CANCER



Give women the facts and they will take care of their health.

That's the premise behind the philanthropic drive of Sheryl Silver, a leading national advocate for ovarian cancer awareness.

"Early diagnosis of ovarian cancer is crucial to long-term survival," Sheryl says. "It's very important that women be armed with information about risk factors and common symptoms of this disease because symptoms are often incorrectly attributed to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), perimenopause or menopause. Sadly, by the time many patients receive a correct diagnosis, the cancer has metastasized."

The five-year survival rate for ovarian cancer patients with a localized tumor is 92 percent, according to the American Cancer Society. That figure drops to 30 percent when the cancer has spread distantly to other parts of the body. For specialized centers like Karmanos, the survival rate for Stage III/IV patients is typically better, due to access to expert Gynecologic Oncologists, clinical trials and newer, targeted therapies.

To help late-stage and recurrent ovarian cancer patients, Sheryl made a generous tribute gift through the Silver Family Foundation for Ovarian Cancer Research. This gift established Johanna's Fund for Ovarian Cancer Research.



Sheryl Silver



Johanna Silver Gordon

To help late-stage and recurrent ovarian cancer patients, Sheryl Silver made a generous tribute gift through the Silver Family Foundation to the Karmanos Cancer Institute. This gift established Johanna's Fund for Ovarian Cancer Research, named in honor of Sheryl's sister, Johanna Silver Gordon, who passed away in 2000 at age 58 after a valiant battle with ovarian cancer.

The funds supported the research of Ira Winer, M.D., Ph.D., an ovarian cancer specialist and member of the Gynecologic Oncology and Phase I Developmental Therapeutic Multidisciplinary Teams at the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute. Dr. Winer is focused on developing new ovarian cancer fighting drugs that may help improve outcomes for all patients. The funding has allowed a promising new treatment to be brought to the clinics in the form of a clinical trial at Karmanos.

The fund is named in honor of Sheryl's sister, Johanna Silver Gordon, a Southfield high school

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English teacher who passed away in 2000 at age 58 after a valiant battle with ovarian cancer.

The cancer diagnosis was a shock to Johanna, who had led a healthy and active lifestyle. Her doctor initially attributed her symptoms to perimenopause but tests months later revealed the true nature of her illness.

“Johanna said she had played the best game of tennis in her life the day before surgery revealed she had advanced-stage ovarian cancer,” says Sheryl, who divides her time between Bloomfield Hills and Hallandale Beach, Florida. “Unfortunately, far too many women have similar stories about being blindsided with an advanced ovarian cancer diagnosis.”

Sheryl’s mission to promote ovarian cancer awareness was the springboard for her proposal of Johanna’s Law. Johanna’s Law authorized The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to create and administer a national education and awareness program to provide women and health care providers the latest information about the symptoms and risk factors of ovarian and other major gynecologic cancers. Authored by Michigan Congressman Sander Levin, in whose district Johanna taught, Johanna’s Law ultimately passed the U.S. House and Senate by unanimous consent. President George W. Bush signed the bill into law in 2007.

Since then, researchers have made progress in developing better treatments for ovarian cancer, and awareness of the symptoms and risk factors has grown. However, there is still no early screening test.

“Many late-stage diagnosed patients may respond well initially to chemotherapy,” Sheryl says. “But they tend to deal with cancer recurrence until they run out of treatment options. That’s why I prefer to fund researchers who emphasize new ways to treat and perhaps cure late-stage and recurrent ovarian cancer...I was very impressed



Ira Winer, M.D., Ph.D., an ovarian cancer specialist and member of the Gynecologic Oncology and Phase I Developmental Therapeutic Multidisciplinary Teams

by the fact that Dr. Winer is a clinician as well as a researcher. He deals directly with patients and understands the urgency.”

“We are grateful to Sheryl and the Silver Family Foundation for Ovarian Cancer Research for helping us pursue promising ovarian cancer research,” Dr. Winer says. “It’s our honor to carry on Johanna’s legacy through Johanna’s Fund for Ovarian Cancer Research so that future generations of women will have access to the best treatment options available.”

Until an early screening test is developed, Sheryl encourages women — and the men who love them — to know the facts about early warning signs.

“This is one of those instances where ignorance is not bliss. It can be deadly. Even if you think the issue is just a minor gastric problem, insist on further tests. Err on the side of caution. Make sure ovarian cancer is not the cause,” says Sheryl. “The earlier ovarian cancer is detected, the better. Ovarian cancer doesn’t have to be a death sentence.”

Visit [karmanos.org/karmanos/ovarian-cancer-facts-and-prevention](https://www.karmanos.org/karmanos/ovarian-cancer-facts-and-prevention) to learn more about ovarian cancer symptoms and risks. To support Johanna’s Fund for Ovarian Cancer Research at Karmanos, please contact Denise Lowe at **1.800.KARMANOS 1.800.527.6266 or lowed@karmanos.org.**

PLANNED GIVING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: ROBERT E. KASS

Robert E. Kass is a member of the law firm of Barris, Sott, Denn & Driker in Detroit, where he heads the firm's Tax & Estate Planning Practice Group. He concentrates on estate planning, tax counseling, wealth preservation and planned giving.



Additionally, he has served as long-time member of the Karmanos Cancer Institute's Planned Giving Advisory Committee. The Planned Giving Advisory Committee counsels Karmanos on ways to effectively market and communicate the financial and tax benefits of gift planning to our donors and to the community.

Bob described a scenario that you may have considered during your gift planning:

Q I inherited my spouse's IRA, which is rather large. I am drawing down the benefits as required under the law, but it's likely there will be something left when I am gone. My children are all doing well and won't need the entire amount. I am not worried about estate tax, but have heard that the IRA will be subject to income tax when received by the beneficiaries. Would leaving a part of this to Karmanos make any sense?

A Yes, leaving all or part of your IRA to Karmanos would make an excellent use of the IRA. You can leave other non-taxable investments to your children. Making Karmanos a beneficiary on your IRA is a simple thing to do, and a tremendous gesture in favor of Karmanos, which will be able to benefit from the full amount it receives to continue its activities in the fight against cancer.

The above question was contributed by estate planning attorney Robert E. Kass for educational purposes and does not constitute legal or tax advice. Contact Karmanos for detailed illustrations of any giving technique, and consult your own legal advisor to determine whether a particular charitable giving solution is appropriate in your situation.

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WHAT ARE YOU GRATEFUL FOR?

3 IDEAS TO START A GRATITUDE PRACTICE

It can be hard to find the bright spots in today's world. Research shows that cultivating gratitude in our lives can yield many benefits, for our mind, body and spirit. Consider these ways to focus on the positive.

GRATITUDE JOURNAL

Make time each day or week to write. Start with three things you are grateful for. Or, create themes of thankfulness, like:

- ABCs: Note something starting with every letter of the alphabet.
- Colors: Name three things of a certain color, then work your way through the rainbow.
- Senses: Reflect on something you tasted, smelled, touched, saw or heard.

HAPPINESS JAR

Instead of journaling, fill a jar or vase with notes.

- Take note of a special memory or when something makes you smile or laugh in the moment.

- Once the jar fills up, choose a note to read at the end of each day or week to remember how you felt.

MINDFUL MOMENTS

Find a way to practice mindfulness. Some ideas:

- As you go to sleep or wake up, reflect on what you're grateful for.
- Eat a meal without multitasking. Instead, savor the flavors and give thanks for all the hands that brought food to your plate.
- Take a walk without distractions. Thank your body for moving, the sun for shining, the birds for chirping. See what you notice by pausing to pay attention.

WE'RE GRATEFUL FOR...YOU!

Thank you for all you do to support Karmanos Cancer Institute. You help provide the necessary resources to give our patients their best chance at a favorable outcome—today and for years to come.



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Gerold Bepler, M.D., Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer

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Mission: To lead in transformative cancer care, research and education through courage, commitment and compassion.