

'I never thought about ovarian cancer'

September recognized as Gynecological Cancer Awareness Month throughout the nation

By JENNIFER COHRON
Daily Mountain Eagle

Karen Globetti's fight against ovarian cancer is the part of her life that she wishes she could forget.

Instead, she is speaking out in hopes of reaching at least one of the 353 women in Alabama who are expected to be diagnosed with ovarian cancer this year.

Globetti was experiencing abdominal discomfort and fatigue when she visited her gynecologist in September 2007.

After the results of her annual exam and pap smear came back normal, she blamed her symptoms on menopause and a busy work schedule.

"I was rather naive. Pap smears only detect



Karen Globetti



cervical cancer. I never thought about ovarian cancer," Globetti said.

When an ultrasound of her gallbladder failed to provide any answers, Globetti returned to the gynecologist in February 2008. This time, there was a different diagnosis.

Globetti was not prepared to hear that she had Stage III ovarian cancer.

There was no history of breast or gynecological cancer in her family. She took care of her body through a proper diet and exercise.

Even the doctor who delivered the diagnosis noted how healthy Globetti looked.

A year and a half of chemotherapy took its toll emotionally as well as physically, but a strong support system carried her through the dark days.

Now cancer-free, Globetti is committed to raising awareness of ovarian cancer by supporting organizations such as the Laura Crandall

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Cancer

Brown Foundation.

"Awareness is so important. If I had known about ovarian cancer and some of the symptoms, I would have been more in tune with what was happening to me," Globetti said.

Based in Birmingham, the Laura Crandall Brown Foundation is named for a young woman who died in December 2009 at age 25.

This month, the foundation is sponsoring A State of Teal during Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month.

The city of Jasper is one of the dozens of municipalities around the state expected to participate.

Teal ribbons will be going up on city buildings and businesses, and the Jasper City Council will approve a proclamation that will be

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- Karen Globetti, who has battled ovarian cancer

given to Globetti and other ovarian cancer survivors at Tuesday's meeting.

Cecilia Crandall, Brown's mother,

lives in the Smith Lake area and is available to speak to groups about ovarian cancer awareness.

Because there is currently no screening available to detect ovarian cancer, women must know the symptoms, which include abnormal vaginal discharge of bleeding, pelvic pressure or pain, abdominal or back pain, bloating and changes in bathroom habits.

The foundation has also awarded more than \$300,000 in grants for ovarian cancer early detection research since 2009.

Last year, the foundation expanded its mission by joining the CanSurvive GYN Cancer Support Group to provide patient support.

For more information, visit www.ThinkofLaura.org.