

# Remembering Kia

By Claire Nagel

My name is Claire. Joanie Wegman of J Amelia's Salon in Pequot Lakes is my hair stylist extraordinaire.

My daughter, Kia, passed away in the summer of 1998. She was 26 years old and she died of ovarian cancer.

Since then, the life path for my husband, Craig, and I, has been a very difficult one. In some ways we have both become stronger persons, but with Kia gone, there is a hole in our hearts that cannot be filled. As the years passed by, I found myself wondering if I could somehow help other women or other daughters.

One day not long ago I noticed that my daughter-in-law's mother was wearing a small bright pink extension in her hair. I asked her about it and she said this was in honor of her own mother who had just found out she had breast cancer.

So, at my next hair cut appointment, I asked Joanie if she had teal extensions (teal is the ribbon color for ovarian cancer). She DID! So she proceeded to affix a short teal extension to my short white hair.

I also ordered symptom cards from the Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance. These are business-sized cards which I keep handy in my purse or pocket at all times to give to anyone who asks about why I have a bit of teal in my hair. The card tells us that there is no test for ovarian cancer. It tells us to know the symptoms of ovarian cancer: bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, difficulty eating or feeling full quickly, or urinary symptoms (urgency or frequency). It tells us to see a doctor if any symptoms occur almost daily for more than a few weeks.

It tells us to Learn-Hope-Act. It is in the hope of helping just one daughter, granddaughter, mother, sister, aunt, grandmother, niece or friend that I wear teal in my white hair.