

# Cancer survivor now helps others.

By Jim Ott  
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Less than two years ago, Sandra Wing had cancer and believed she was going to die. And that was all right with her.

"For some odd reason, I felt OK about it," said Wing, 49, of Pleasanton. "If I was supposed to go, then fine. I'd had a good life."

Wing, who has founded a nonprofit foundation to help local cancer patients, was suffering at the time from both uterine and ovarian cancer. The only thing she hadn't done on her "bucket" list was see Tony Bennett in concert. But she was fortunate to have many great friends, and she'd traveled to many countries with her loving partner of 14 years, Gracie Santos.

In fact, it was Santos who identified healing therapies that would alleviate Wing's discomfort and help her stay positive, especially since treatment for the ovarian cancer included a hysterectomy and chemotherapy treatments.

Wing credits her gynecologist, Dr. Renee Hilliard, with having the foresight to do some "extra testing" for what initially appeared to be routine pre-menopausal symptoms.

"My doctor and gynecologist often see symptoms like this in women in their mid-40s to mid-50s," Wing said. "I had no other symptoms and felt fine."

After a few tests, Wing's blood count came back a little high, though not alarmingly so. Doctors also found a small growth on her left ovary, but nothing that looked absolutely like cancer.

To be safe, she underwent surgery to remove the small tumor, which had grown substantially by the time it was removed.

"During the surgery they did a biopsy of the tumor," said Wing. "That's when they discovered I had both the aggressive ovarian cancer and the uterus cancer."

Though both cancers were detected early, the treatment caused pain, stress and worry, which nearly all cancer patients experience.

Wing's body was tormented as she lost her hair and experienced neuropathy, or numbness in her fingers and toes.

"I felt frail," she said. "I was unable to perform the simplest of tasks."

But with Santos by her side, Wing participated in deep breathing exercises, guided imagery meditation and visualization techniques and benefited from acupuncture, acupressure and therapeutic massage.

"These healing therapies helped me immensely," said Wing. "They allowed me to stay positive and focus on healing."

In fact, the therapies helped Wing manage her pain without medication after her surgery and helped her continue her chemotherapy treatments, which many patients suspend as they battle neuropathy.

"Recently I was told cancer is not a one-person experience but a team effort," said Wing, who finally

attended a Tony Bennett concert after her treatments. "This resonated with me and validates the need for the foundation."

Named the Sandra J. Wing Healing Therapies Foundation, the new nonprofit helps people from the diagnosis of cancer, through surgery, and through chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

The foundation is designed to provide financial assistance and support to Tri-Valley cancer patients so they can experience the healing benefits of the same type of complementary services that assisted Wing. Such therapies are typically not covered by health insurance.

"I'm really excited about this nonprofit venture," said Wing. "The foundation is accepting donations for grants, which we'll begin to distribute next July."

For more information or to make a donation, visit [www.healingtherapiesfoundation.org](http://www.healingtherapiesfoundation.org).

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