Bonnie Schulz, 70

joboschulz@hotmail.com

September 2007, first symptom;
July 2012, diagnosed

BRAF V600e

What Gives me Hope…

When I was diagnosed, I was told that as advanced as I was I had approximately 48 months to live. I feel very hopeful about the medication I am on, the support from family, friends, church, the ECDGA community volunteers, Dr. Hendrie, and the many doctors who dedicate so much time to treating this disease.

Who Am I?

I am married. I live on Camano Island in Washington State. I worked full-time as an expeditor at the Boeing Company until 2009 when I had to take early retirement because I was extremely tired, had severe muscle and joint paint, and loss of balance. I used to enjoy painting, arts & crafts, gardening and hiking.

My Diagnostic Journey

I was diagnosed by Dr. Nguyen, my rheumatologist in 2012. Between 2007 and 2012, I was put on numerous medications which did nothing but make me sick and feel hopeless.

My Treatments

ECDGA led me to Dr. Estrada-Veras at the NIH in 2012. In 2015, I volunteered to do the clinical trial for dabrafenib and trametinib. At the end of the 1st year, my lesions and symptoms were gone. When they stopped the medications, within 3 weeks all my symptoms returned. I have remained on dabrafenib and trametinib ever sense.

How I'm Doing

Most days I feel good. I do chair yoga two days a week. I walk my dog and I am active in church. I play board games with friends. I limit my activities because I get very tired.