

*Reberta J.*

Common Factors® Advocate

*My life at a glance*

I'm married and we live in Utah. I have 3 children, 3 step-children, and 20 grandchildren. Before retiring, I worked as an administrative assistant and a real estate agent. I love music, especially playing the piano and singing. Some of my other interests include dancing, fishing, and watching sports with my husband.

VWD runs in our family. My family's bleeding history can be traced back to my great-grandfather. My 3 sisters and I have moderate to severe Type 2B VWD. My son and a nephew also have this type of VWD disorder.

I was diagnosed with VWD in 1978. Growing up, I bruised easily and had many nosebleeds. In grade school, I was hospitalized and transfused 2 times. As an adult, routine procedures such as wisdom tooth extraction required hospitalization and transfusions. I had hemorrhages after giving birth and suffered a stroke during the delivery of my third child. I have been experiencing gastrointestinal bleeds for over ten years.

Prior to my diagnosis, I was told that I was a "pseudo-hemophiliac."

*As a speaker, preferred topics include*

I love to talk about self-advocacy: being a partner is determining which treatment is best, having the courage to adhere to it, and accepting the fact that one has VWD but not settling for less. I talk about being actively involved in bleeding community outreach and taking advantage of every opportunity to educate others about VWD. I enjoy helping people understand that they are not alone in this and that I understand their fears and concerns. I nurture them in any way that I can, helping them put their disease in proper perspective and helping them go on with life, so they can enjoy it to its fullest.

*My message to you*

*"Become as educated as possible about VWD. Having a treatment plan and sticking to it is critical. Be an advocate for others by educating people in your individual communities and circles of influence.*

*My journey with VWD has been very difficult because doctors have had to learn how to treat me by trial and error. I feel a great responsibility to help further VWD research and education in any way that I can."*

*-Reberta*

COAGULATION