



The Spinal Column

Issue I

March 2006

GAELIC BLESSINGS

A WISH FOR A FRIEND

*Wishing you a rainbow
For sunlight after show-
ers
Miles and miles of Irish
Smiles
For golden happy hours-
Shamrocks at your door-
way
For luck and laughter
too,
And a host of friends that
Never ends*



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LIVING BATTERY-OPERATED BY LASZLO NAGY

Three and a half years ago I was involved in a motorcycle accident that left me a C3 tetraplegic. A week or so after the accident, I woke up to find myself attached to a ventilator. For one year, I lived with a noisy, cumbersome, relatively unreliable machine that kept me alive. It was the most horrible year of my life.

Then one day, during an examination with Dr. Frederick Frost, he suggested that I consider the diaphragm pacer. He referred me to Dr. Anthony DiMarco for evaluation. Good news came when I was deemed a candidate for this experimental surgery than can make me breathe by using my own diaphragm muscles to operate my lungs. That meant no more ventilator. I am happy to say that since I have been using the diaphragm pacer, I have been ventilator free 24 hours a day seven days a week for 2 1/2 years now. I am even happier to say, without any problems.

The relevance of my story is that substantial technological advancements are being made for spinal cord injured persons. Just a few years ago the diaphragm pacer was not available. Now, there are 20 people to use this wonderful system to breathe. We can smell, we can talk normally, and we don't have to worry about the 18 possible ways that a ventilator can fail, leaving us without our life-giving breath. If you are a spinal cord injured person, Cleveland is considered to be the GOLD standard for a variety of F.E.S. (functional electrical stimulation) systems now available. These systems include just to name a few, the diaphragm pacer (for breath-

ing), upper extremity systems (for arm and hand use) and lower extremity systems (to enhance leg use).

I realize that surgery and the prospect of hair thin wires protruding from one's body may be daunting. Take it from me, I am all the better because of my surgery. Not to mention I am able to give valuable research information and data to remarkable people that are working on making our lives better. Until there is a cure for SCI people, this wonderful F.E.S. technology can improve your life, by allowing you to use you body in a variety of ways, to where you can be more independent and healthy. Think about it, the diaphragm muscles that I am now using again, are now as pliable, strong, and thick as they were prior to the accident. When there is a cure, or I heal more on my own, my respiratory system will be ready to go. Please look into possibilities that may be available to you in regards to F. E. S. Contact Dr. Gregory Nemanaitis, at MetroHealth Center for Rehabilitation in Cleveland, Ohio at 216-778-5514 or the Cleveland F.E.S. Center on the 6th floor off the C elevators at MetroHealth Medical Center.

Your life may be vastly improved as mine was.

**Editor's note:*

Mr. Nagy is a volunteer on the Spinal Cord Injury Unit at MetroHealth Medical Center.

He visits with patients at least twice a week to encourage them and answer any questions they may have about life as a spinal cord injured person.

Thank you Laszlo.



Ask the Rehabilitation Psychologist by Dr. Foliart

Dr. Roland Foliart is the Rehabilitation Psychologist at MetroHealth Center for Rehabilitation Spinal Cord Injury unit. He is available to assist any patient and/or family needing psychological counseling or support as an inpatient or on an outpatient.

Dr. Foliart writes:

You have probably heard plenty about the extra risks associated with the use of recreational drugs or alcohol by the spinal cord injured, so I won't impose more about that now, but I would like to address a related problem. This is the rather delicate problem of use of these substances by caregivers. This can be downright scary as it represents a serious safety issue, and it's often very difficult for the patient to deal with. Depending on the extent to which one is dependent on the caregiver for basic needs, angering them by accusation of substance use can present a dangerous risk of abandonment. Therefore, it is often wise to consult with a professional before confronting the caregiver.

In general, however, it is very important to not take an accusatory attitude in broaching the subject. Rather, you might start by commenting on your observations of the caregivers behavior, express concern for them

and ask if their responsibilities are becoming burdensome. Let them know that you are uncomfortable with their drug/ETOH (alcohol) use when working with you. Ask for their suggestions about what to do. Try to avoid becoming defensive or having them become defensive—make it clear that you are not accusing but only discussing something that is a problem for you. Express concern for them and offer your help to them. It may take more than one conversation to come up with a plan. It is not up to you to convince the caregiver that they have a drinking/drug problem, and you need to stick to the point that you need to have safe, reliable care.

*More about this topic in a future issue.



Some suggestions for now from the editor:

*If you would ever feel threatened and at personal risk, you should call 911.

*If your caregiver is hired from an agency, you would need to contact the caregiver's manager/supervisor should you feel at risk.

*Call your doctor, Dr. Foliart, or Social Work for help.

AMC MUST IMPROVE WHEELCHAIR SEATING AT THEATERS..... K. Sullivan Recreational Therapy



Federal court has mandated the AMC movie chain to improve wheelchair seating in its theaters nationwide.

The U.S. District Court for the Central District in California stated that movie theaters must provide access to the stadium seating section for wheelchair users. The same movie experience should be provided for all persons, regardless of the disability. The lawsuit was originally filed under the ADA. Originally filed in 1999, the resolution took place Jan. 11, 2006.

The theater chain must pay over \$200,000 in fines and damages as well as improve wheelchair seating in approximately 1200 of the AMC's 1933 stadium style auditoriums. Ramps will be provided in over 360 auditoriums. The lawsuit also stipulates that any theater built over the next 5

years must comply with the new rulings.

The Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, Wan J. Kim, stated, "These improvements will make the goals of the ADA a reality for thousands of Americans who want to enjoy this popular form of entertainment."

Contact the Special Assistant to the Assistant Attorney General Civil Rights Division U.S. Dept. of Justice at voice: (202) 616-7920/ TDD: (202) 514-0617/ or fax: (202) 307-2839 or email:Ollie.Cantos@usdoj.gov.


To obtain more information on the ADA or this lawsuit call (800)514-0301 or (800) 514-0383/TTY.

ADA home page at <http://www.ada.gov>.



The Chapter welcomes Jeff Schieman as the new treasurer, taking over for Char Heppner. Jeff graduated from Ohio Northern University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Accounting/Finance and Management in 1978. Admitted as a CPA in 1980. Worked for Arthur Anderson from 1978-1981; Parker Hannifin 1981-1985. In 1988, Jeff graduated from Case Western Reserve Law School. He is a self-employed Attorney/Accountant since 1988. In 2002, Jeff sustained a T10 ASIA A Spinal Cord Injury secondary to a fall. WELCOME JEFF!

March 2006

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 7pm AA	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 7pm AA	15	16	17 	18
19	20 7pm SCI Chapter	21 7pm AA	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 7pm AA	29	30	31	

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR THE EVENTS NOTED! EVERY MONTH, WE WILL TRY AND KEEP EVENTS CURRENT. SUBMIT ANY EVENTS, MEETINGS, ETC. TO THE EDITOR ASAP!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

JUNE 24TH/25TH THE AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION IS HOLDING A CLASS ON ADAPTIVE PADDLING INSTRUCTION. REGISTRATION IS DUE BY MAY 31,2006 *REFER TO ATTACHMENT TO NEWSLETTER!

***AUGUST 4TH, 2006 IS THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL SCI FORUM AT METROHEALTH, "BLAST OFF TO WELLNESS".
AUGUST, 2006 (DATES TO BE ANNOUNCED) FOR THE FISHING HAS NO BOUNDARIES WEEKEND OUTING!***

MAY YOUR POCKETS BE HEAVY AND YOUR HEART LIGHT, MAY GOOD LUCK PURSUE YOU EACH MORNING AND NIGHT!

How to keep your Bladder Happy and Healthy!



- ◆ Drink plenty of fluids, especially cranberry juice to keep the bladder acidic, which makes it hard for bacteria to grow.
- ◆ Monitor urine daily for signs of infection, including: foul smelling, cloudy, sediment, and bloody urine. Incontinence, nausea, fever, increased spasticity and autonomic dysreflexia may also be other signs of infection.
- ◆ Maintain good hygiene when managing your catheters.
- ◆ If you are doing ICP and are *re-using* your catheters make sure to discard them after using the catheters outside of your home.
- ◆ If you are doing ICP you need to *discard catheters* after one week when re-using.
- ◆ Keep catheters clean with soap and water between use and make sure they are dry before re-using.
- ◆ Keep IC volumes below 500cc and if larger, you will need to IC more frequently.
- ◆ Indwelling catheters should be changed every 3-4 weeks at home.
- ◆ If you have indwelling catheters, make sure to clean connections with alcohol when changing bed and leg bags or extension tubing.
- ◆ Empty bed and leg bags frequently, and do not allow them to over fill.
- ◆ Every 2-4 weeks, throw old bed and leg bags away and get new ones.
- ◆ Clean bed and leg bags every day with dilute bleach/water solution (1:10).
- ◆ If you are having problems with re-occurring infections and you are following the above, contact your doctor to talk about other solutions to prevent urinary tract infections such as irrigating the bladder with acetic acid, obtaining a closed IC system, etc.

Noteworthy items from the February 20th SCI NorthEast Ohio Chapter Meeting Recorder: Tom Connelly LISW, SCI unit

The meeting was called to order by president Adam Sweeney. A discussion of the Christopher Reeves Foundation Grant ensued. The grant needs to be completed and turned in by March 1st. Adam and Kendra will meet with Dr. Nemunaitis to work on the grant.

Char Heppner must step down as treasurer due to her increased participation with the "Dancing Wheels". A new treasurer, Jeff Shieman, was welcomed by the group. Treasurer's Report showed a balance of \$232.00.

New letterhead for the chapter was passed around for inspection. There was discussion about a brochure being developed to advertise the Chapter meetings.

Thanks to Paradigm Medical Services for sponsoring the meeting. Paradigm has been in business for over 5 years now, located in Stow. Brochures of new products, for example, frosted catheters, were distributed. Paradigm's products also boast a latex/powder free glove, coloplast catheters, spray called "bye bye odor", and skin repair cream called Remedy Skin Repair Cream. Dr. Nemunaitis plans to purchase the Paradigm product liner for the 3-1 commode-no smell crystals that are biodegradable, for camping/hunting! Great idea!

President Adam Sweeney called for the membership to contribute articles, items for sale etc. to the newsletter.

Euclid General has a Break out fitness program for \$28.00/month. Contact the PT dept. if interested.

An informal discussion took place on how to increase the membership.

The next meeting will be held March 20th at 7pm in the Activities room at Metro.



THE NORTH EAST OHIO CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL SPINAL CORD INJURY ASSOC.

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THANKS TO OUR MEETING SPONSORS for their generous donation of time and refreshments!! Yum yum!



Adapted Ford Focus Hatchback for Sale!

- ◆ 2002 Ford Focus ZX5 Hatchback 4D \$8,000 (just the car lists for \$8100)
- ◆ Hand Controls included in price
- ◆ Push button gears included
- ◆ Motorized chair topper that stores a folding manual wheelchair on top of the car
- ◆ Able to be easily driven using the regular gas and brake pedals, not using the hand controls
- ◆ Color is bright blue
- ◆ Good condition



Contact Cindy Kolbe (NWONSCIA) at 419-448-1715 or email kolbe c@yahoo.com

The NorthEast Ohio Chapter of the Spinal Cord Injury Association is a non-profit organization aimed to support and empower those persons with a spinal cord or associated injury.

Chapter meetings are held once a month on the third Monday of each month. The meetings are held at MetroHealth Medical Center 7th Floor Activities Room (down the hall from the SCI unit).

Parking is free and wheelchair accessible. Food is provided by donating vendors and companies at no cost to participants.

A Chapter newsletter is published several times during the year.

Any member of the chapter is welcome to submit ads, articles, or other newsworthy items to the editor. Please do so at least one week prior to the meeting. Items for sale are welcome.

PARALYSIS RESOURCE GUIDE from the Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Research Center is available at **NO COST** call toll free 1-800-539-7309 or email info@paralysis.org or internet site www.paralysis.org 9am-5pm Eastern time.

JOB POSTING

POSITION: Telemarketer-Home/Independent Contractor

DESCRIPTION: Primarily call accounts from TM application and record accurate status of every call. Accurately recording the result of each call is very important because this helps improve the accuracy of the database and ultimately helps you and every other telemarketer. Objective is to make as many qualified appointments for sales personnel as possible. A qualified appointment is for an account that needs service at least twice a month and not one that we set the appointment simply because we are offering "FREE walk-throughs". As a telemarketer you are the first impression that a potential account hears. Thus, it is important that you are always professional and courteous.

SUCCESS: Aggressive and assertive, not abrasive.

CHARACTERISTICS: Good phone etiquette, personal sales and communication skills. High energy and motivated by appointments and not frustrated by rejection. Discipline, Reliability, Ability to think fast, turn objections into sells.

HOURS: IC's can make calls anytime but the most common times to each facilities managers, office managers, etc is from 9am-12pm and 1pm to 5pm Monday through Friday.

BENEFITS: Holidays observed: Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years Day. Not eligible for hospitalization or employee benefits.

COMPENSATION: \$25.00 per qualified appointment.

CONTACT: Ed Hammer at ehammer@system4usa.com

7A SCI Cord Injury Unit: 216-778-3805

Dr. Greg Nemunaitis, Director, Spinal Cord Injury Unit: 216-778-5514

Outpatient Therapy Services: 216-778-4414

Wheelchair Clinic: 216-778-5514

Social Security: www.ssa.gov

National Spinal Cord Assoc: www.spinalcord.org

Hank's Outdoor Journal: www.bjbiii77.us

Chapter Officers:

Adam Sweeney (President): asweeney@leapinfo.org

Dave Lytle (V.President): lytle101@msn.com

Kendra Bohland (Secretary): sweetcope@hotmail.com

Jeff Shieman (Treasurer): jjscpad@aol.com

May evening find you gracious and fulfilled. May you go into the night blessed, sheltered, and protected. May your soul calm, console, and renew you.