

BIRCoTMWI Bulletin

Vol 6 Issue 1 | Quarterly Newsletter

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Tony & Donna De Stefano with Kathy Richardson & Kyle Castellion at last years Brew Game

Our Goal

Our goal briefly explains why our non-profit was founded and what we intend to do with this organization.

Brain Injury Resource Center of Wisconsin, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization which was co-founded by a mother-daughter team (Lois York-Lewis and Bari L. York). They saw first hand that they needed to help survivors of brain injury in Wisconsin lead a fulfilling life after brain injury.

Tragedy Brings to light a Need in Wisconsin

This need was first realized in 2005 after Bari sustained a severe traumatic brain injury from a crash involving the car she was a passenger in and a semi-

truck. Once Bari was released from the hospital and tried to re-enter daily life she found it to be very difficult.

Their main goal is to help with this transition back to daily life once a brain injury is sustained. With the help of her family and their unconditional love, they pressed forward.

This gave Lois and Bari the drive to move forward and develop this organization.

Doctors and nurses are there to help a person when they are in the hospital and a lot of times shortly thereafter, but what do they do after the brain injury survivor has recovered to the point where they can re-enter daily life?

This is where the *Brain Injury Resource Center of Wisconsin, Inc., BIRCoWI*, steps in to help.

There can be a lot of confusion during the "what now" phase of brain injury recovery.

What Now?

Confusion can be included as part of brain injury recovery, and the *BIRCoWI* wants to help all survivors during this phase and after!

Bringing Brain Injury Survivors Together

Are you a brain injury survivor looking to make a social connection with other Brain Injury Survivors and those who have the compassion to understand brain injury? Gatherings are scheduled to assist the brain injury survivor in building strong, long lasting bridges of trust, respect, understanding, and acceptance.

Be part of our social and skills program today! Download your form from our web store.

BIRCOFWITM BULLETIN

Dear Friends:

This issue of the BIRCOFWI Bulletin comes at a time when we pay more attention to the trials, tribulations, and triumphs of brain injury survivors. How can you help educate your community? Simple, just spread the word!

Educate yourself about issues important to the brain injury community then tell the world what you found out.

Use Brain Injury Awareness Month as a great reason to post your positive thoughts about the brain injury movement on your Facebook page or Twitter account.

Follow the BIRCOFWI on Facebook and express yourself.

Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper explaining to your community why they should care about brain injuries.

Join us during March and let people with brain injury know they are not alone by wearing your Green Brain Injury Awareness Ribbon proudly. Send an email to admin@bircofwi.org to get yours today!

Lois M. York-Lewis

Lois York-Lewis
Executive Director & Mother of a TBI Survivor

Brain Injury:
I can *explain* it to you, but I can't *understand* it for youTM

TM **BIRCOFWI Bulletin Editorial Staff:**

Lois M. York-Lewis Executive Director, Resource Facilitator
& Mother of a TBI Survivor (Editor and Writer)

Bari L. York Director of PR and Marketing & TBI Survivor (Editor and Writer)

Lucille J. Krebs TBI Survivor (Editor)

Kathy Richardson Resource Facilitator & TBI Survivor (Writer)

Elaine Lovett TBI Survivor (Writer)

Katie A. Marshall TBI Survivor (Editor)

Pictured to the left is Lois M. York-Lewis serving up a brat!



BIRCOFWITM Community Store in the Community

March 12, 2016

(Second Saturday Mar, Apr, May, Jul, Aug, Sep)

H.O.P.E Support Group

Open to all caregivers and survivors. Spiritual Outreach focused. This unique group will concentrate on issues that affect our spiritual and emotional well-being.

Time 12:30 pm until 2:30 pm

BIRCOFWI Community Store - Gathering Area

330 East North Street, Waukesha, WI 53188

Beverages and Light Snacks will be served.

Contact Us at admin@bircofwi.org or 262-770-4882 to let us know you are coming.

March 19, 2016

(Third Saturday Mar, Apr, May, Jul, Aug, Sep)

Men and Wood Support Group

Open to adult men who are caregivers and/or brain injury survivors. Items created during this group will be sold as gift items in the community store. It will also be an opportunity for the guys to have time to socialize and share common experiences.

Time 12:30 pm until 2:30 pm

BIRCOFWI Community Store - Gathering Area

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Beverages and Light Snacks will be served.

Contact Us at admin@bircofwi.org or 262-770-4882 to let us know you are coming.

March 26, 2016

(Fourth Saturday Mar, Apr, May, Jul, Aug, Sep)

Life's a Puzzle Support Group

Open to all caregivers and/or brain injury survivors. Relieving stress through puzzle building provides an opportunity to socialize and share common experiences. Items created during this group will be sold as gift items in the community store.

Time 12:30 pm until 2:30 pm

BIRCOFWI Community Store - Gathering Area

330 East North Street, Waukesha, WI 53188

Beverages and Light Snacks will be served.

Contact Us at admin@bircofwi.org or 262-770-4882 to let us know you are coming.

March 28, 2016

DINE 4 a Cause Day!

Visit the Quaker Steak and Lube in New Berlin, WI (4900 South Moorland Road). Show your support and enjoy a delicious meal at the same time. Take the attached flyer and give it to your server. Our organization will receive 25% of the food sales for this date. Bon Appetite!

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Out of respect for privacy, donor names will not be published on our website or listed in our annual report unless otherwise authorized. We are a 501(c)(3) organization.

Donating as little as \$1.00 per family member goes a long way!

If your personal budget is feeling the pinch, why not ask your employer to host a green and purple day, chili cook-off, bake sale, or any easy to run event that does not interfere with the work day.

Contact us today and we will send information about our organization to share at any work-place fundraiser event.

Brain Injury Resource Center of Wisconsin, Inc.TM

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 808 Muskego, WI 53150

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Sundowning Syndrome and TBI

Written By Kathy Richardson / BIRCOFWI Bulletin Staff

"Sundowning" Syndrome has been defined as the appearance or exacerbation of behavioral disturbances, confusion, anxiety or aggression and is associated with the afternoon and/or evening hours. This psychological phenomenon usually exists only in traumatic brain injury survivors with Alzheimer's or some form of dementia.

Research has linked moderate and severe traumatic brain injury to a greater risk (2.3-4.5 times greater) of developing Alzheimer's disease or another type of dementia years after the original head injury. "Sundowning" occurs most frequently during the middle stages of Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Symptoms include: general confusion, agitation, mood swings, mental and/or physical fatigue, tremors, restlessness, screaming,

moaning, delusions, pacing and wandering. 20 to 45 of Alzheimer's and dementia patients will experience "sundowning."

The exact cause of this behavior is unknown, but seems to be connected to the body's circadian rhythms. Physiological processes that regulate our bodily functions and behavior are influenced by our circadian rhythms.

Our circadian rhythms are regulated by the "suprachiasmatic nucleus" and include body temperature, heart rate, secretion of hormones, red cell production, and other physiological characteristics. Traumatic brain injuries can disrupt our body's ability to monitor our circadian rhythms. Strategies for coping with "sundowning" include:

- Keeping the home well-lit in the evenings.

- Keeping a consistent daily routine and sleep schedule.
- Avoiding stimulants like caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, sweets.
- Avoiding having a big dinner.
- Planning more activities during the day.
- Trying to identify triggers.

References

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www.mayoclinic.org/sundowning

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Woof, woof!

How Dogs can Help Migraine Sufferers: An Opinion Piece

Written By: Elaine Lovett / BIRCOFWITM Bulletin Staff

Chances are, many of us can remember growing up with Dorothy's Toto, from the Wizard of Oz, Rin-tin-tin, or the beloved creation of Charles Schulz, Snoopy.

Indeed, the world has watched the little beagle win hearts in films, books, and the New York City Thanksgiving parade as a giant balloon. Given the joy, smiles, and peace of mind these fictional entertaining dogs bring us, I can't help but wonder how many families have a bundle of friendly furry joy that evokes such warm and loving emotions.

This article will be focused on the impacts our dogs bring about in our lives, in terms of companionship and relief from life's stresses. A very intuitive person once wrote, "sometimes the strongest among us are the ones who smile through silent pain, cry behind closed doors and fight battles nobody knows about." (unknown)

People who suffer from migraines often await their next episode and the stress brought about by these painfully incapacitating events, can interrupt one's quality of life. Some times the best medicine to

what life throws at us comes with a wet nose.

According to Cesar Milan, Dog Behavioral Specialist, dogs are keenly adept at reading our mood, whether you are having a good or bad day. Many dogs can naturally sense when we may be stressed, and will respond by quietly being by our sides and providing a warm cuddle.

Some dogs can be specially trained to work with people with disabilities. Migraine sufferers who have trained service dogs are often known to have the ability to alert them and others of a problem, enabling them to act accordingly.

Similar abilities have been documented about patients who experience seizures. Trained medical assistance dogs that are constant companions can, due to their high sensitivity to scent and chemical changes, recognize an oncoming incident.

For those in severe migraine pain, the presence of a dog can release endorphins, feel good chemicals naturally released in the brain. It is important that we decipher between assistance and therapy dogs.

Therapy dogs are not usually assistance or service dogs. Service or assistance dogs are not pets.

The job of a service dog changes depending on what they are being used for, for example; we are familiar with the value of a seeing-eye dog for the blind, deaf or physically disabled. They are strong, hard working dogs that can pull a wheelchair, assist their owner, and turn on light switches to name a few. They can also alert when a phone rings, a timer goes off, a smoke detector is sounding, and alert when a patient is experiencing a medical incident.

Therapy dogs can often be seen when visiting nursing homes, schools and hospitals. They provide comfort and love to those needing reassurance and self-confidence.

You can see where they would be helpful in relieving stress that often initiates a migraine headache.

It is important to note that, to train a medical assistance or medical response dog can be costly, \$35,000 on average. Our own furry babies, who are our constant companions, can simply be trained as

Woof, woof!

How Dogs can Help Migraine Sufferers: An Opinion Piece

Written By: Elaine Lovett / BIRCOFWI Bulletin Staff

assistance dogs, allowing them to accompany us and provide their humans access to stress relief.

Dogs may be the comforting source for those who suffer from migraines and will allow their owner to navigate their way through every day life. We must remember that a dogs tendency to bark can cause some with migraines, to have episodes.

Those with allergies would not find dogs to be beneficial, given that the onset of an allergic reaction could bring about a migraine. Although some may find a friendly canine helpful, they are not for everyone, just as individuals take different medications.

Positive medicinal affects dogs or indeed other pets may have on migraine sufferers.

They bring laughter, tactile interaction, they encourage social interaction with others, diminish our stress levels, encourage exercise through walks, and help us slow down by just playing fetch. We mentioned in a previous article entitled

"Let's Get Physical", how important exercise can be in the life of those suffering from migraines.

From the brave rescue dogs at the New York 9-11 site, to the police dogs who track missing people or criminals and protect us as they are guard dogs, it is no surprise to me that this is yet another example of dogs being man's and woman's best friend!

Be well, stay warm, and scoobeedoo!!

My thanks to Mrs. Linda Bobbit, dog trainer, Ms. Wendy Wire, dog trainer, and Bonnie, Archimedes(Archie) and Little Bits, my special canine family members.

As Rachel McPherson, Founder of The Good Dog Foundation, says, "every dog has a gift," and that gift is improving our lives.

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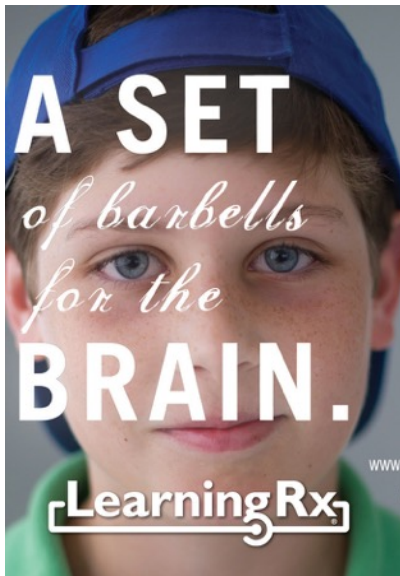
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"Don't be concerned with the bridge you can't cross, instead build upon the one which you are destined to!"

Quote provided by
Jay Baukin
(Brain Injury Survivor)

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Quote provided by
Tony Fromader
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What Really Happen: Gary Rieth **UPDATE**

Written by: Bari L. Rieth / BIRCOFWITM Bulletin Staff

The night of July 19 2007 will remain a mystery for Gary Rieth who was involved in a serious car accident that night.

Gary was a camp counselor and taught archery that summer to the 150 kids who attended Red Arrow Camp in Woodruff, Wisconsin. The night of July 19 2007 he and some other counselors decided to attend a party near by.

Gary admits he does not remember much from that day, but his mother Sandy Rieth remembers all to well and shared with me that Gary was "supposed to be the designated driver for a group of people" that went to this party. She mentioned further that Gary did not have the keys at the beginning of the night and "when it was time to leave, the driver refused to give them up."

Witnesses gathered around the duo as a fight was about to ensue, but Gary backed down before anything began. The next decision he would make would turn out to be nearly fatal one, because he let this intoxicated person drive him back to their destination.

Gary shared with me that this individual was two times over the legal limit two hours after the crash had happened.

"On their way home, the driver lost control," which forced the car to turn sideways and hit a tree on Gary's side of the car Sandy, explained to me. The force from the impact jarred Gary's body and partially ejected him out of the vehicle.

Once the paramedics were called they needed to use the JAWS of Life to get Gary out of the car. He was then flown to the nearby St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield,

WI that was 100 miles from the accident scene.

Sandy informed me that the main reason behind why they chose a helicopter to transport her son to St. Joseph's Hospital was because; he was "combative with the paramedics, which indicated head trauma and they suspected massive chest injuries." She continued this thought by stating that he did not have any massive chest injuries just a broken nose.

Upon arrival at St. Joseph's Hospital, Gary presented as combative and was put into a coma, which he remained in for three weeks. His stay at this hospital would total four weeks; he was then transferred via ambulance to the Sacred Heart Rehabilitation Institute located inside Columbia St. Mary's Hospital on Milwaukee's east side.

Once Gary was transferred to Sacred Heart Rehabilitation Institute, his stay would total eight weeks. During this time frame Gary would meet Greg Steinberg.

The two became fast friends and when Gary's parents were not able to make the drive down from Northern Wisconsin; Greg's parents, Gary and Mary Steinberg, were there to make sure his recovery stayed on track.

This was not his final stop along his road of recovery; Gary would then be brought home and taken to N.E.W. Curative Rehabilitation Inc. for additional therapy and services during the day. He would continue his therapy at N.E.W. Curative for nine months before the therapists would release him from their care.

Sandy told me that Gary "has made an amazing recovery physically, does not need to take any medications, has never had a seizure, and is able to do work at a physical job full-time.

Jim Rieth, Gary's father, and Sandy both say that "Gary was extremely good at social interaction before his accident," but now this is an area they have noticed that he tends to struggle with. According to Gary he learns "from failure, I learn that when I do it again I do it differently so that failure is not an outcome."

Failure is not a word that should be associated with Gary; he went back to college after his accident and graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Conservation and a minor in Biology from the University of Wisconsin, River Falls.

While Gary was along this road of recovery he met Bari L. York and started a long distance friendship. When the two decided to take their relationship further and turn this friendship into a dating relationship it was love at first sight. Gary and Bari dated for a little over six months before Gary proposed to Bari who said yes!

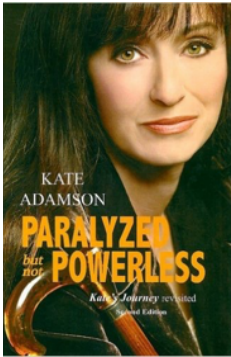
They were married on October 10, 2015 and the two agree by saying that they "married their best friend." "She gets me when no one else can" says Gary and Bari continues this thought by saying that "he is my other half."

Gary's family has always lovingly referred to him as "GareBear" and in the same way Bari's family has referred to her as "Carebear." The two of them together truly encompass the name "GareBear."

"Paralyzed but not Powerless"

Written by: Kate Adamson / Nosmada Press

Review Done by: Bari L. Rieth / BIRCOFWITM Bulletin Staff



Overview

Paralyzed but not Powerless is the courageous story of Kate Adamson's Journey during and as she recovered from a stroke. Kate goes into detail about her experiences, "I felt everything-the entire operation every cut and I had no way of communicating." This detail helps us readers try to understand the horror she went through. She furthers this detail by offering opinions and thoughts from the medical team as well as her husband, "from the other side of the bed." I would recommend this book to adult readers due to some of the medical terminology being difficult to grasp.

Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 5 Stars (out of 5 possible)

Adamson, K. (2008). *Paralyzed but not Powerless*. Redondo Beach, CA. Nomad Press

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BIRCOFWI Bulletin

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Mrs. Bari L. Rieth

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**Look for our next issue
coming out
June 2016!**

Thank you for reading and make sure to look for the next bulletin!