

THE JOSEPH GROH FOUNDATION

A Beacon of Hope

The Lighthouse- From our Founder Joe Groh

Welcome to the Fall addition of the Lighthouse! Temperatures in North Texas are now in the 70s and 80s, with lots of blue skies and sunny days.

This is the favorite time of year for many in this part of the country. The state fair just concluded, baseball doesn't matter and neither will football if the Cowboys keep playing the way they are! Leaves are changing colors and nights become crisper.

Meanwhile, the foundation had its final golf tournament of the year in Orlando, and preliminary results show more than \$30,000 being raised for future grant recipients!

We all remember telling our small children not to put their fingers in their nose. Now there's another important reason for not doing that! Read about it in an article about nasal nerve cells.

For those of you who are Board of Director members, you'll want to read about the Corporate Transparency Act recently obligated by Congress.

After that read about our latest grant recipient John Milligan.

Then meet Kent Stephensen, he is someone you should know.

Next we are off and rolling for Staten Island, where you can read about Rachel Wallach.

Finally, your favorite column (or at least mine) – A Day in the Life. Enjoy!



Inside this issue

Golf.....	2
Clinical Trial.....	3
Corporate Transparency Act...	3
Grant Recipient Spotlight.....	4
Someone You Should Know....	5
Off and Rolling.....	6
A Day in the Life.....	7-8





The 19th Hole

Golf season 2024 is in the books after four events in Dallas, Minneapolis, Chicago and Orlando. The last of these events in Orlando was played only four days after a Category 2 hurricane barreled over the area. The course had predicted they would be ready to go – and they were. A few pictures from Orlando are shown below. Meanwhile, two weeks before Orlando we played our tournament in Chicago, and we have posted a few pictures below from that event.



Vicki LaPlant shares about great recipients Frances Glueck & John Milligan, whose story is included in the following pages.



Chicago Lunch sponsor Tempco bravely approach the tee.



Service Nation President Tom Peregrino addresses his drive.



Tough bunkers in Orlando.



Longtime friends Marge & Jerry Johnson & Denise & Steve Best take a break from helping out at the Chicago Tournament.

SAVE THE DATE

2025 Golf Tournaments
Dallas - May 5
Heritage Ranch GC
Minneapolis – July 14
The Links at North Fork

Much Anticipated World First Clinical Trial for Treating Spinal Cord Injuries



Branched nerve bridges made from ensheathing cells.

A Phase 1 clinical human trial to test the efficacy and safety of the transplantation of nasal nerve cells to treat chronic spinal injuries is about to begin. Australian researchers from Griffith University have developed tiny biological bridges, each made up of millions of nasal cells, which they hope will encourage nerve cells to regenerate and grow over a patient's spinal cord injury. A small biopsy is taken from the inside of a patient's nose to source cells for the transplant. Specialized cells, known as olfactory ensheathing cells, are then separated and expanded in the laboratory over several weeks. They can be frozen until the patient is ready for the transplant, and cell bridges can be prepared for transplant with a few day's notice.

Secrecy surrounds the science behind these biological bridges, which are the result of decades of research at Griffith University. For more information please go to <https://news.griffith.edu.au/2024/10/21/world-first-clinical-trial-for-treating-spinal-cord-injury/>

Corporate Transparency Act

As a board member of my HOA, I recently found out about a new law called the Corporate Transparency Act. At the end of 2020, Congress adopted the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) as part of the annual budget reconciliation process. The CTA requires companies to file a "beneficial ownership information" report with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network of the US Treasury. This report must identify each "beneficial owner" of the company along with basic information about the organization. (Name, state of organization, etc.) It must also supply information about each beneficial owner such as name, residential address, driver's license or passport number. A beneficial owner is defined as one who either owns 25% or more of a company, or an individual who exerts "substantial control" of a reporting company. The term "substantial control" includes four categories of individuals, including CEO/CFO/COO or General Counsel; Those who have the right to appoint or remove senior officers or a majority of the Board of Directors; Those who have "substantial influence" over important decisions; and Any other individual who has any other form of "substantial control."

The purpose of the CTA is to safeguard the financial system from illicit use, to combat money laundering and its related crimes such as terrorism and promote national security. Companies in existence prior to January 1, 2024 must file their report by January 1, 2025. Failure to do so could subject the qualified member to civil and criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment. For additional information, speak with your CFO. Even though the law was passed in 2020, filings weren't required until now.

Grant Recipient Spotlight: Meet John Milligan



John Milligan with Mike Thorne (installing contractor).



Lennox HVAC and Rheem water heater installation.

Thank you to our partners on this project.



John Milligan of Cambridge, Ohio worked out of Ohio operating union hall local 18 where he was a heavy equipment operator. He operated equipment such as excavators, bulldozers, side booms, rock trucks, and lattice boom crawler cranes. Some of the companies he worked for included US Pipeline, Associated Pipeline, Capital City Crane and more. He took pride in his job where one mistake could be catastrophic.

A motor vehicle accident on July 10, 2022 left him paralyzed from the waist down!

Following recovery from his injury John decided he needed a place that allowed him to be as independent as possible. He decided to build a 1600 square-foot Barndominium style home without a basement on land that he owned. Much of his labor was supplied by family and local friends. Our foundation made a commitment for the HVAC installation, and given John's location Joe Groh contacted an old friend whose family has had an HVAC contracting business in the area for many years. The contractor quickly agreed to help on the project and worked with John to put together a project scope. They settled on a split system design with a propane furnace, after which Joe contacted another old friend who was the Lennox District Manager in central Ohio. Lennox agreed to provide the equipment, and the foundation paid the contractor for the water heater, labor and installation materials.

“Thanks a million for everything you have done. I appreciate you sticking with us throughout all the changes, and it was nice working with industry professionals who understood what we needed. Thanks again!”

--John Milligan



Lennox HVAC and Rheem water heater installation.

Someone You Should Know: Kent Stephenson

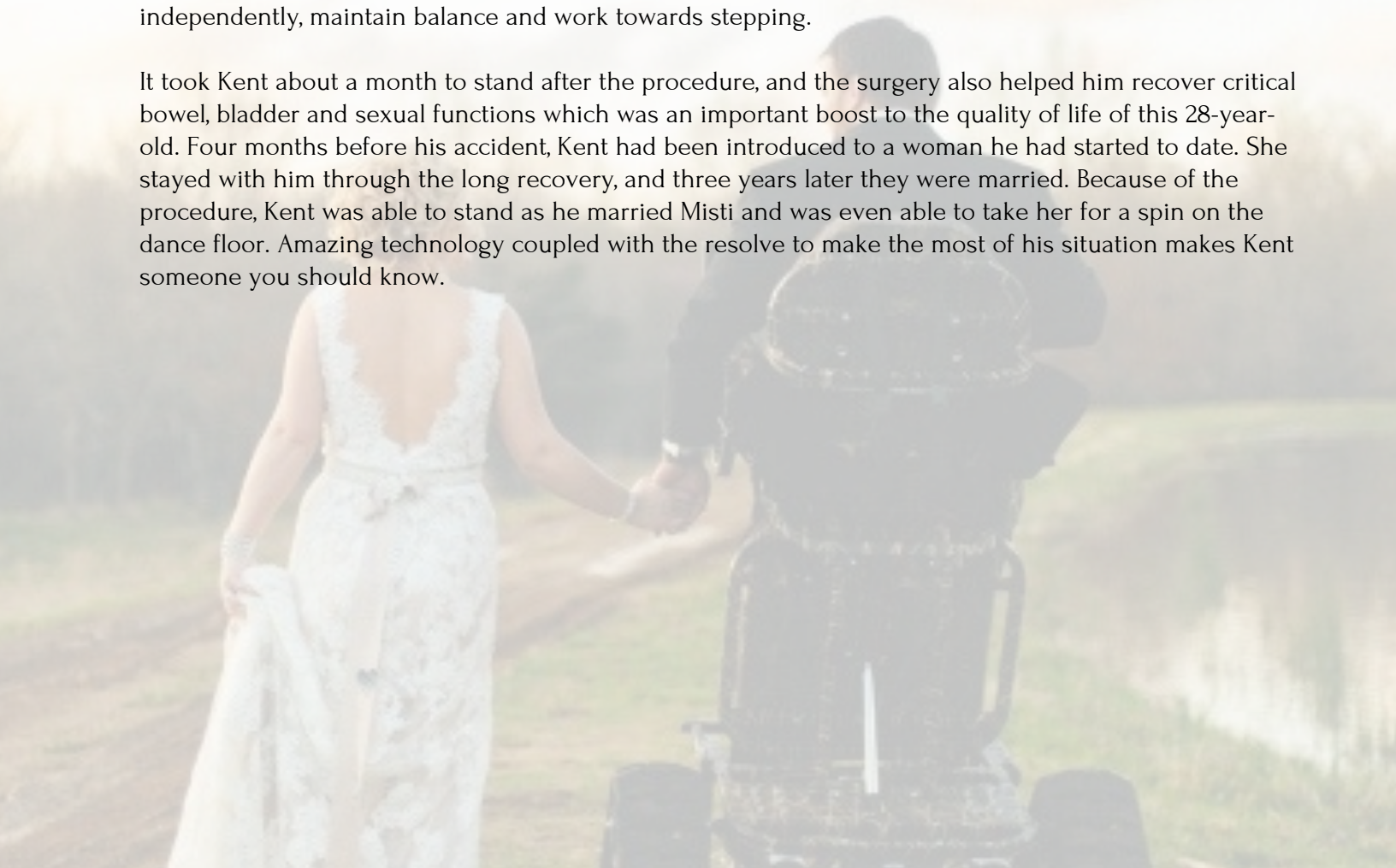
Kent Stephenson's fascination with motorsport began at a young age. It started out with go carts, then progressed to bicycles. When his grandpa took him to his first Supercross race, he knew it was something he wanted to do. Kent began training and was working to qualify for professional level competitions. There were a couple of races left and then he would have his pro points. In 2009 however a motocross accident left him paralyzed below the waist. When he first went to the hospital doctors were blunt in their assessment of his future. "You will never stand or walk again," they told him.

Participating in an experimental procedure funded by the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, doctors put an electrical implant in his spinal cord. The implant transmits low levels of electric current to stimulate the nerves, which help a paralyzed patient to stand. With this study, investigators had shown that earlier findings about a motor complete patient regaining movement is not an anomaly.

With this treatment, doctors implant an electrode array on the spinal cord just below the point of injury. This array emits a pattern of electrical signals that can evoke muscle activity in response to sensory input or other signals. "This is a wake-up call for how we see motor complete spinal cord injuries," said one of the doctors on the Reeve foundation team. "We don't have to necessarily rely on regrowth of nerves in order to regain function." The Reeve scientists are optimistic that this therapy will continue to result in improved motor functions.

Based on observations from the research, there is strong evidence that with continued advancements of the epidural stimulator, individuals with complete spinal cord injuries will be able to bear weight independently, maintain balance and work towards stepping.

It took Kent about a month to stand after the procedure, and the surgery also helped him recover critical bowel, bladder and sexual functions which was an important boost to the quality of life of this 28-year-old. Four months before his accident, Kent had been introduced to a woman he had started to date. She stayed with him through the long recovery, and three years later they were married. Because of the procedure, Kent was able to stand as he married Misti and was even able to take her for a spin on the dance floor. Amazing technology coupled with the resolve to make the most of his situation makes Kent someone you should know.



Off and Rolling

Rachel Wallach incurred a spinal cord injury 23 years ago, leaving her without the use of her legs. She had always felt a wheelchair limited her life to that of minimal mobility. At one point Rachel started Disrupt Disability, a 3D printing company centered on making wheelchairs that are customizable for users.

Along the way she received a Masters degree from Stanford University. In a chance meeting at the Staten Island ferry, Rachel met Noel Joyce, the founder and head of New York University's Project Mjolinir – the Norse name for Thor's hammer. Joyce, who was paralyzed from a mountain bike accident, was working to design, create and assemble the world's first open source adaptive mountain bike that could be built by wheelchair users.

Their goal was to build a bike that was cost-effective and easy to repair while allowing the design files to be publicly available. By the time Rachel met Joyce, the project had secured support from NYU's school of engineering and sponsorships from various specialized bicycle component companies. Having built their first bike, Joyce was looking for someone to test it out – and Rachel was all over that opportunity.

Outfitted with hand pedals and battery assist, Rachel traversed an area of Staten Island, reaching the park's highest point on North Mound – an impressive 450 feet above sea level. “When I am on the bike, I have a freedom that is not afforded to me in my wheelchair,” Rachel said. “I can go places I could only dream of before.”

The cost of an adaptive mountain bike can surpass \$20,000, making them inaccessible for most. Joyce's idea for this project came as he got back into mountain biking while in Ireland. “As a wheelchair user, I know only too well the barriers to those with disabilities is not just the physical environment, it's often the lack of access to the equipment to get you through the physical environment,” Joyce said. “I hope this project will break down the barrier of cost for those who need it most and get more people with disabilities and their friends and families building and riding bikes.”



Rachel Wallach riding the Project Mjolinir bike at Freshkills Park on Staten Island.

A Day in The Life

This feature is a sometimes humorous, sometimes offbeat, and sometimes irreverent look at life as seen through the eyes of a severely disabled person. Management takes no responsibility for these ramblings.

Oktoberfest

My introduction to Oktoberfest came in high school where I attended St. Francis high school seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio. Cincinnati had quite a German heritage, stemming from waves of German immigrants to the city going back as far as the 1780s. Being a high school boy, a festival combining good food, beer and German maidens was one that deserved serious attention.

One of my classmates who is from New Jersey pronounced it Awktaberfeast, a reference I sometimes make use of even today. In the late 70s I got an apartment with my brother in the Jefferson Park neighborhood of Chicago. After finishing my associates degree, I took a semester to research the various universities in the city where I would finish my bachelors degree. Back in those days, there was no such thing as online learning. During that semester I decided to take a coed volleyball class in the hopes of meeting date material. While that turned out to be a dead-end, I did meet a very outgoing guy who like me was very much a sports enthusiast. He had grown up in the German neighborhoods on the west side of Chicago, and he introduced me to the culinary side of these areas. It was there that I met and fell in love with Heffeweizen, a delightfully refreshing German wheat beer. It would be my staple for many Oktoberfests to come.

In the fall of 1996 Sue and I were fortunate to travel to Germany as part of a Lennox dealer incentive trip. Having studied German for four years in high school, I took a short class before the trip to brush up on my German as best I could. We stayed at the Vier Jahreszeiten (4 Seasons) hotel, not far from the Marienplatz in Munich. Every morning I would wake up early and walk down to the square to investigate the Farmers Market that was set up around 6 AM and gone by 8 AM. I found a bakery kiosk where the proprietor knew I was an American, but who could also sense I did not want to speak English. So every morning during our time there, I would partake of a baked good and coffee while we carried on a halting conversation in German. He would then give me a recommendation for a baked good to take back for Sue.



Mugs brought back from Germany. The ones on either end are from Oberammergau.

A Day in The Life... continued

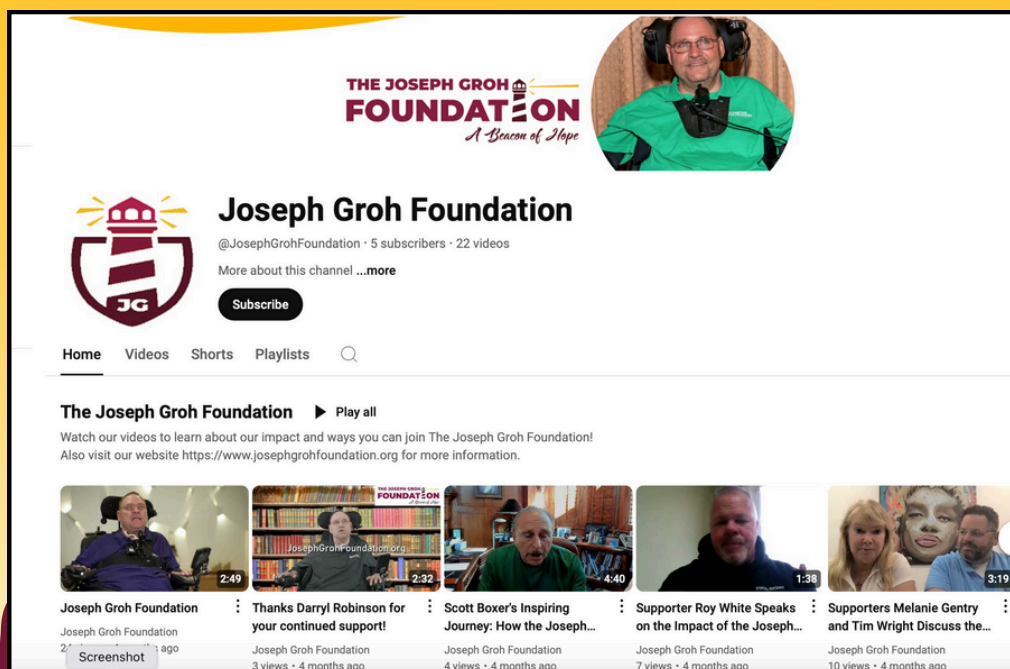


On one of our tours of Munich, the tour guide pointed out a large pile of concrete rubble that had been left over from the Allied bombing of the city during World War II. The rubble was used to construct the Olympic village for the 1972 Olympics, where sadly, Israeli athletes were massacred. On our last night in Munich, we were treated to a trolley tour around the Mittlerer Ring (a high-capacity ring road around the city center of Munich)

When you got on the trolley, you were given a shot of schnapps and a liter of beer! We toured various sites on the trolley, including Königsplatz, where books were burned by the Nazis in 1933. The trolley ride ended at the historic Ratskeller where we had dinner. Earlier that day we had rented a car and driven on the autobahn down to the Bavarian city of Oberammergau, located in the foothills of the Alps.

While there we found a beer stein that was virtually identical to one my dad had brought back for me in 1974. We had it shipped home along with a cuckoo clock, that today frustrates our grandchildren every time they miss the cuckoo bird doing its dance on the hour. Wherever you are this beautiful fall, Ein prosit und viel Gemutlichkeit!

Subscribe to The Joseph Groh Foundation YouTube Channel!



LIGHT YOUR BEACON FOR THOSE IN THE CONSTRUCTION TRADES LIVING WITH
DISABILITIES

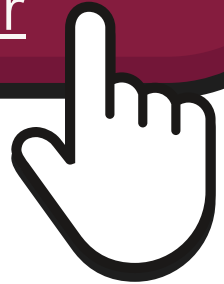
– BECOME A LUMINARY TODAY –

[Click Here](#)



SIGN UP

[Newsletter](#)



Thank You

Business Partners

