

ReFocus



A REPORT OF THE CLEVELAND STROKE CLUB

FEBRUARY 2016

Cleveland Stroke Club,
c/o Geri Pitts
9284 Towpath Trail
Seville, OH 44273
330-975-4320



A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The public is invited to attend the next meeting of the Cleveland Stroke Club at Disciples Christian Church, 3663 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Heights, OH 44121



February 17, 2016

Nutrition for the New Year

featuring

Brenda Goodman and Carrie Rudow



The Cleveland Stroke Club was founded on the basic self-help concept. That is, stroke survivors and their families banded together to exchange coping techniques for the many stroke-related problems they experience.

Meetings are held on the first and (usually) third Wednesdays of each month. The focus of the meeting is on some aspect of stroke through discussions, lectures, or films. Meetings last for about two hours. Dinner is provided at both meetings at 6:30p.m. at a nominal cost. Look for details in this newsletter.

If you or a member of your family has had a stroke, we invite you to visit our meeting anytime. New members are always welcome. There is plenty of parking at both meetings.

**Officers 5/2015-5/2016****President:**

Chris Vuyancih

Vice-President:Deena and Brian Barrett
216-410-2306**Secretary:**

Barry and Barbara Schecter

Treasurer:

John Pumper

Assistant Treasurer:

Brian Barrett

Founder

Bill Pitts

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORGeri Pitts
330-975-4320**Executive Director & Editor**Emeritus
Dorothy Norton**Editor**

Lu Higginbottom

Board Committees:**Public Relations Chairperson**

Sue Sheridan

Membership and Picnic**Chairperson**

Kay Exl

Marketing Chairperson

Kathy Wendorff

Secretary to the Board:

Sue Sheridan

Volunteer Coordinator:Shirley Patterson
216-751-9376**Assistant to the Board:**Bonnie Morris
440-552-3970**Greeters**June Emmerson &
Roger Gulbranson

*A message
from your President....
Chris Vuyancih*



It's that time of year again! Just when we were enjoying the balmy December weather that we experienced here in Cleveland! Alas, the cold, slippery side streets, wind, and snow covered walks have returned! We decided to cancel our January 20th meeting @ Disciples Christian Church due to the weather predictions earlier in the week. A few members live in the Snow Belt area or need to drive quite a distance, so the decision made good common sense. Added to this, all of the extra winter mobility challenges we opted to be 'better safe than sorry.'

It is also that time of year again, 2nd semester, for the Tri-C Health, Wellness and Preventative Care Center to reopen.

I personally believe this is one of the best, affordable, resources, which we get to take advantage of as a member of the CSC! I say this because I feel, even after 20 years, they have helped me with my remaining balance issues! The most accurate statement ever said to me, once many of the 'seen' limitations resided, was from a previous therapist of mine. It was as true then as it is now, she said, 'you know, you have this way of making others think nothing is wrong with you.' I thought, 'yah, but just spend some time with me. You'll see...' Well, I certainly have adapted, to my life now, almost too much in a way, and that is what I love about therapy at Tri-C. They have made me take a look back to work on my basic challenges, which remain, and may forever, who knows? What is important is the constant movement forward. I know there are a few members that I have been delighted to see at Tri-C taking advantage of this high quality program!

Tri-C's goal is to provide non-insured and under-insured adults with healthcare services that will enhance their health, wellness, and will offer education in preventative care.

This is a teaching clinic that opened in 2009. Care is provided under the supervision of licensed or certified health care practitioners, including Tri-C and CSU faculty members. It is open from 2:00 to 5:00pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays during Fall and Spring Semesters, by appointments. The phone number to call is 216-987-3555. Parking is available at no cost. Services offered include blood pressure, bone density, glucose, balance, and cholesterol screenings for minimal fees, nutritional coaching, hydration education, physical and occupational therapies, as well

as stress management and relaxation techniques. All services are on a cash only basis, and no doctor referral is needed. The OT and PT initial evaluation is \$10, and treatment is \$5. Last October they had a Fall Risk Assessment Clinic .

Not at the main campus, Tri-C also offers a Dental Clinic and a Massage Center and an Optical Dispensary. Information on these can be found on the Website. This is an amazing resource available to us. Everyone at the clinic is very knowledgeable. The students in the program are so thankful to be able to 'learn' about real life challenges that the patients experience in their daily lives. They make you feel special and it is a win-win for all! Please call Cindy Rakow @ Tri-C if interested in attending. 216-987-3555. Cindy spoke to us at our Sept. meeting last year.

Announcements

We are so sorry to tell you that long-time member, Sari Loxterman, passed away in November. Sari was part of the "Eastern Gang of 4." Vicki Curtis (Sari's sister) would pick up Sari, Ruth Ann, and Denise and make a night of it. We worried that the world would tilt just a little too much when these ladies were out on the town. These ladies were the best of friends. I'm not sure how Vicki kept the car on the road with all the laughter.

Sari was known as the quiet one with the Mona Lisa smile. She knew everyone's secrets. Sari was best known in the Club as the lady who taught us how to tie our shoes with one hand on talent night. She was strong, courageous, and the most kind-hearted person we will ever know. She always had an open heart and gave a nice little knowing pat on the hand to everyone. She was quiet competence. Sari broke her leg and had to spend some time recovering in a rehabilitation facility. We would ask her what we could bring and she said, a "great hamburger with everything on it." So we were taste testing hamburgers from across the city: Grovewood Tavern, Red Robin, and 5 Guys. She had a very discriminating palate when it came to burgers.

We extend to Vicki, her family, and her gang and our members our deepest condolences. She was our long, long term member and we are missing our friend.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, February 17, 2016 at Disciples Christian Church, 3663 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Heights 44121
5:30 p.m. - BINGO
6:30 p.m. - Dinner by Rita - meatloaf, mashed potatoes and veggies - cost is \$5.00.
Remember to bring your place settings.

7:30 p.m. - Featured speaker: Brenda Goodman and Carrie Rudow . **Topic:** Nutrition for the New Year. You will hear about the evils of sugar, oxidative stress and what we can do about it, fueling our bodies with whole food and how it affects our brain and fat (if there's time). They will have informative handouts.

Get Well: Dan Sekeres, Dorothy Story

Keep improving: Alice Ladanyi, Lucy Conde, Nancy Ackerman, and Mason Camp

Sympathy: John Donnelly 

HAPPY February Birthdays...

to Herb Kleiman (1), Rob Schulman (2), Derrick Ross (2), Teresa Penland (3), Rita Perna (4), Jacky Williamston (10), Denise Houston (16), Kanisha Womack (18), Barry Schecter (21), Dennis Losz (23), Delores Jones (29).

HAPPY February Anniversaries

to Sue and Pat Sheridan (2-19-66), the Curtis' (2-28-81), & the Fraziers' (2-29-00).

Congrats: Charles DeForest and Helen Rose (2-22-47)

HOLIDAYS & CELEBRATIONS for this month

9 **Mardi Gras / Fat Tuesday**

10 **Ash Wednesday**

14 **Valentine's Day**

15 **President's Day**



A Valentine to the Cleveland Stroke Club



by Debbie Felt



First and foremost, we want to start by sending our love to the **stroke survivors** who have endured unimaginable pain and uncertainty with great courage. You are quiet warriors who beyond all odds, have grace, humor, sarcasm, rebelliousness, and hope. We celebrate you and listen to you with all our being. **You are our heroes.**

We want to express our love to the **caregivers** who haven't slept through the night or eaten a hot meal in many years. At night we know you bounce between rage, worry, and fall-on- your-knees gratitude. We know your pain and joy of watching your loved one struggle to make the next stage of recovery, have set-backs, and then begin the recovery process again. We know this is a roller-coaster disease and you live much of your life with your hearts in your throats. **You are lionhearted.**

We want to thank **our therapists and presenters** who ask questions...the ones who know the brain is 98% unknown. The ones who study hard, then throw away the book, and then put themselves on the line to create new programs/therapies. These therapists do not tell us what they know, they do not tell us what they can do, instead they ask, they listen, and they create something new. The answers for stroke do not exist in books, they do not exist in past knowledge, they exist in the future for a brave few who have the humility to question, experiment, and listen with their hearts and their heads. **Our ease of life depends on you.**

We want to send our love to our **volunteers**, most of whom have lost loved ones to strokes. You remember vividly walking the halls in hospitals and nursing homes, watching your loved one suffer, and then saying good bye. And in the same instant of despair, you remember an encouraging phone call from a survivor, a caregiver who silently shared your waiting room, a card or newsletter that made your loved one smile in their last days. You are the ones who cook and serve our meals, greet survivors with smiles and wheelchairs, fill coffee cups, cut cake, and meditatively wash dishes at our general meetings. You are the ones, who serve as board members. You are the ones who do not ask for change when you pay for your meals and buy "plus one" donated tickets to our special functions. You are the ones who quietly offer rides to stranded members. You are the ones who edit our newsletter. You are the ones who add the finishing touches to each of our meetings and our personal outreach efforts (phone calls, nursing home and funeral visits). **You are our rock** and we know that many of you have served our Stroke Club quietly for over 25 years. We honestly cannot understand how such unimaginable grief can result in such a wondrous contribution for over a quarter of a century. **We cannot comprehend your love but it sustains us.**

And finally we want to send our love to the late **Bill Pitts**, who started an independent Stroke Club, 41 years ago, because hospitals saw stroke survivors as ill—as patients. Bill had the courage to see persons with disabilities as people: fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, sisters, and brothers. Bill had the ability to connect, not as a therapist, but as a person. Everyone knew where he lived, his phone number, and his family. **Geri**, his wife, was his silent partner. She cooked meals for the meetings and did the newsletter. Together they hosted meetings and visited members regularly in their homes and in medical facilities. They attended every funeral. Geri, became a speech therapist, and would often work nights with survivors, while Bill comforted caregivers. Not only did Bill have Geri by his side; he also had two other friends 41 years ago: **Sue Sheridan and Joanne Bergole**. As you know, Geri is Executive Director and Sue and Joanne are currently volunteers to the board. That means that board has 3 members who have been living Bill's vision statement for 41 years! More recently, **Dottie Norton**, lived Bill's dream for 20 years.

Bill, Geri, Sue, Joanne, and Dottie: your dedication is incomprehensible because you were not personally impacted by stroke. Not one moment of your extensive contribution directly served yourselves or your families. (When I think of my last 41 years, I am humbled.) In the process of leading full lives of your own, somehow you acquired the empathy to gently improve the quality of each of our lives. **We have no understanding of what miracle created you, but we treasure, respect, and honor you. We rely on you to teach us about our better selves.**

The Cleveland Stroke Club
c/o Geri Pitts
9284 Towpath Trail
Seville, OH 44273



→ DATED MATERIAL

We are appreciative to Disciples Christian Church and Kindred Hospital for their support of our endeavours to meet the needs of stroke survivors and their caregivers.

NEXT MEETING FEBRUARY 17, 2016 Nutrition for the New Year featuring Brenda Goodman and Carrie Rudow

ReFocus Staff:

Lu Higginbottom = production,
Bonnie Morris, Reporter
Geri Pitts, Coordinator
Assembly is done by volunteers
at the Kindred meeting.

**For More Information on
the Cleveland Stroke Club
visit...**

WEBSITE:
[http://
clevelandstrokeclub.wordpress.com](http://clevelandstrokeclub.wordpress.com)

EMAIL:
pittsgeraldine@yahoo.com



KEEP SMILING!



Remember Our Troops

<http://anyservicemember.navy.mil/>
www.operationDearAbby.net
(Send a greeting card)
www.operationuplink.org/
(Donate a calling card)



CAREGIVERS MEETING

*The caregiver meetings are at 6:30 pm on
the first Wednesday of every month.
Stroke survivors are invited as well. After
dinner the stroke survivors and caregivers
separate and each have their own meeting
until 8:30 pm. The meeting is at Kindred
Hospital, 11900 Fairhill Road, Cleveland,
OH 44120. Reservations are required.
Call Kay 440-449-3309 or Deb 440-944-
6794.*

*Many of our members also attend: **Speak
Easy at Cleveland Hearing & Speech
Center***

For info visit
www.chsc.org/speakeasy
or call 216-231-8787