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News on the Side Summer 2013

Rebuilding Lives After Brain Injury

Get Up and Do Something

sidebysideclubhouse.org (770) 469-9355 (770) 469-9385 fax

Side by Side Brain Injury Clubhouse 1001 Main St. Stone Mountain, GA 30083

Our Mission

Side by Side Brain Injury Clubhouse is a bridge of support for a person with brain injury to transition from medical patient to contributing community member.

Our Vision

We envision a world where people living with brain injuries have access to medical, physical, social, financial, and vocational resources in order to have the best possible quality of life.

If you wish to be removed from this mailing list, please contact Marian at marian@sidebysideclubhouse.org or 770-469-9355. Thank you.

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Though members and staff stay busy and productive with Clubhouse tasks during the work-ordered day, a significant amount of our time is spent giving back in the greater community. As a group, we take weekly trips to FODAC, the Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB), and the Stone Mountain Memorial Association.

In volunteer service to these nonprofit organizations, we help organize their thrift store, pack boxes of food for those in need, and maintain gardens and grounds. In April our volunteerism was recognized at an appreciation luncheon at the ACFB. We were awarded the **President's Bronze Volunteer Service Award** for completing over **200 hours** of volunteer service this year.

We don't volunteer because we feel like we have to or for the recognition, we do it because it's the **right thing to do**. We do it because we enjoy giving back and helping out and feeling like we're a part of something grand.

"The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope."

— President Barack Obama

Happenings











Starting from the Top: Angie and family serving Thanksgiving lunch; Mark Gannon and Karen Baker of our Board; Jack packing food at the Atlanta Community Food Bank; Cynthia & Frank polishing the trophy for the 2nd annual Jawbones vs. Sawbones; yoga on the front porch; Antonio preparing for spring planting; Cindi finally wins a game of dominoes.

Happenings



Introducing... Candler and Jennifer Broom with Cindi as Jen receives Circle of Excellence Award; Lilburn Woman's Club hosting our Halloween Bash; Charles creating a new mandala; Jack Sartain leading holiday carols during the 7th annual Stone Mtn. Woman's Club holiday brunch; Chris with awards for his art; Jawbones vs. Sawbones highlights with the lawyers taking the trophy this time.

Rubber Match in 2014!

Presenting

Cash, Krugler & Fredericks, LLC Long & Holder, LLP

Full Court Press

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Slam Dunk

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of Side by Side
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Woodruff Health
Sciences Center
Ingwersen & Taylor, LLP
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Assist

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Private Bank of Decatur Representative BJ Pak Rogers & Hardin, LLP Savell & Williams, LLP

Thank You, Jawbones vs. Sawbones 2013 Sponsors!

Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP
Staff of Side by Side
Steven Goldman
Swift, Currie, McGhee &
Hiers, LLP
The Amen Clinic—Atlanta
Tom Holcomb

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Alan Cleveland, Gwinnett Injury Lawyer Albert M. Pearson, LLC **Brent Bremer** Buck Law Firm Dan & Ellen Hillegass E. Marcus Davis Gary M. Kazin, Attorney at Law Goodman & Goodman, LLP John Drummond, MD Lanham & McGehee, PC Law Office of Casev Stevens Law Office of Lloyd N. Bell, PC Lawrenceville Rd. United Methodist Church in Tucker Marvin L. Price. Attorney at Law Susan J. Sadow. Attorney at Law The Comprehensive Care Group Van Sant Law, LLC Zachary & Seagraves, Attorneys at Law

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Steering Committee

Cheryl Bauer Cindi Johnson Dan & Laurie Wexel Dave & Barb Hess Don & Elizabeth Wells Greta Ann Hurst Jack & Pat Sartain Jim Long Kim Garcia LuRae Ahrendt Marian Dickson Martha Decker Sandy McGuire Terry Ingwersen Virginia Vaughan Wanda Staebell

Notes from the Corner Office

Seven years ago I plopped myself right down at a table in a Washington, DC airport and invited myself to lunch with Georgia's Senator Johnny Isaakson. After spotting him waiting for a plane, I paced back and forth in the ladies' room, saying to myself, Cindi, you came here to make a point and now's your chance. Go big or go home... So I proceeded to wave my arms from my soapbox about how TBI was going to be the signature injury of this war and that TBI would one day be dinnertime conversation for American families. And in response to his acknowledgement that such and such hospitals are handling this, I droned on about how these men and women would need our support for the rest of their lives, not just in the usual ways of honoring those who serve our country including lifelong medical care, but in practical day-to-day ways like: knowing that you're still valued and can contribute to your family and community even though your wife had to remind you to take your medicine this morning; vou flipped out when you couldn't figure out what to do when the lawn mower suddenly died; or you feel bad because it didn't occur to you last night to help your kid with her class project due today.

And now, *finally*, in the summer of 2013, the Wounded Warrior Project has recognized Side by Side as a good investment to help a few service members injured since 9-11. We are *proud* to be one of 15 organizations selected during this grant cycle; *proud* to share values like- cut through the red tape and help a few folks a whole lot even in small ways; *proud* to Get Up and Do Something.

You can too... for these families or any family caring for an ill or injured loved one. Don't wait for an invitation, a list or the perfect idea. Take someone out for coffee. Mow the grass. Invite the kids or dogs over for a play date. Drive someone to get a haircut or an ice cream cone. Random acts of kindness ripple on forever. **Get Up and Do Something!**

Blessings,

Cindi Johnson, Executive Director



Matt joined our Business Unit team two years ago. Twice a week, Matt performs our attendance audit, assists with lunch money collection, alphabetizes thank-you requests, and finishes his day by drying dishes after lunch. When Matt's not helping out around the Clubhouse, he attends physical therapy and enjoys reading—his newest hobby. Matt enjoys his time with us because he knows his contributions are needed here. And we love the patience this father of 5 brings to our community.

Meet our Members

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Cynthia, a member of Side by Side since 2005, celebrated her 4th year of volunteerism at the Ronald McDonald House in April. When she's there, she eases the families' worries with her delightful spirit while doing whatever it takes to make them feel at home. She's fulfilled with her volunteer service and really enjoys giving back. Side by Side is happy to share her huge heart and support her efforts to be a healthy and engaged member of our community.





Oscar attended the Clubhouse during high school years ago then rejoined in 2012. With Ken's clear instruction and gentle guidance, Oscar has learned several tasks that keep our Clubhouse clean and safe—cleaning the elevator, laundry room, and dining room tables, vacuuming the carpet, watering flowers, and taking out the trash and recycling. His ownership of the Clubhouse makes him proud and we are awed by his upper body strength as he propels up the outside ramp several times a day. He likes spending time with his friends and Work Unit Coordinator, Ken, when he's taking a break from his duties.

Rebuilders

Supporters of Side by Side from June 2012 to May 2013

GFWC Decatur Woman's Club

Glen & Marilyn Riekhof

& Marian Dickson

Foundations & **Charitable Organizations** Avon Foundation, Inc. Central Georgia EMC Foundation, Inc. Community Health Charities of the Southeast DeKalb County GFWC Dunwoody Woman's Club GFWC Georgia Fourth District Jackson EMC Foundation, Inc. Lawrenceville Rd. United Methodist Church in Tucker Rotary Club of Stone Mountain Snapping Shoals Electric Trust, Inc. The Home Depot PAC The Stephen & Robin Wilks Family Fund

<u>Honorees</u> & Those Who Honored Them

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Wounded Warrior Project

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Memorials &Those Who Memorialized Them Addie Mae Bordeaux

Addie Mae Bordeaux
Suzanne Dickinson
Bill Principe
Marilyn Principe
William K. Principe
David Vaughan
Cindi Johnson
Emma Kiser
Greta Ann Hurst
Susan Ray
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Walter & Virginia Vaughan

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Rebuilders

Supporters of Side by Side from June 2012 to May 2013

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Wymon Mathis

*Side by Side

Board Director

Clubhouse member, Chris, remarks on his

Clubhouse member, Chris, remarks on his newly reacquired ability to drive independently. "Well, what can I say? Other than, I am absolutely ecstatic that I have been selected to go through Shepherd's Return to Driving Program. I am elated that I was chosen to embark on this journey, and am extremely proud of myself for continually persevering through the up's and down's, to finally be approved to drive once again. It is truly a reward, when I wake up in the morning, and realize that I will be the one responsible for transporting myself to the Clubhouse. While it did take a lengthy amount of time to complete, I can look back now and say it was necessary to be put through the rigorous as-

Side by Side Successes



sessments. Faced daily with different situations, I now feel I have the confidence to navigate my way safely through the roads in Atlanta, GA. I feel this opportunity has given me a great deal of hope, a realistic perspective in that if I put my mind to it, the possibilities can become realities. The sky is honestly the limit! This "blessing" will also open up more doors for me in the future, in allowing me to expand the radius I am now allowed to drive within. I feel like I could go on and on about this, but I will close with this note. Thank you Shepherd, for showing me that it is, indeed, possible to have a fulfilling and successful life post injury!"

This spring, a Side by Side member returned to her profession of practicing law. Tina joined Side by Side for a short time to learn, What can I do now? Now that I've learned the hard way that I can't do this job exactly as I did before my injury a few years ago; now that I'm willing to accept support and moreover give support to others, what NOW? Tina worked closely with Judy Wissing, our Vocational Specialist, to expand her network, rebuild self-confidence, explore strengths and learn techniques to accommodate for challenges in this fast moving, complex, detail oriented profession. A few of our board directors helped her network to create an employment opportunity that is a good fit. Through her determination, perseverance, and most of all her willingness, Tina has realized her dream of working in a field she loves where her contribution is needed and valued.

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One of our newest members, Lauren, expresses her creative energy in colorful abstractions and summertime depictions. She's created two collections of gift cards for our Tribute Fund participants.



A gift to Side by Side ...

Supports the relearning of lost skills

Defeats loneliness

Builds confidence

Achieves goals

Keeps families together and loved ones cared for

\$100 becomes...

A day of rehabilitative support to an individual in need A day of respite for a caregiver An opportunity to set personal goals and achieve them A chance to give back, get up and do something

... Here, we heal at our own pace ...

- Richie, member since 2003

Staff Transitions

Employees at most nonprofits stay for 2-3 years then move out to move up. Side by Side, yet again, proves to be an exception to the rule. With an inspiring mission and talented leadership, this organization retains its personnel twice as long as others, about 6 years. It's truly a great place to work—you're given autonomy when you

need it and guidance when you want it. You're encouraged to and it's expected that you'll commit yourself to the members yet not be tied to your email when you're off the clock. There's space here to grow personally and professionally, alongside colleagues you can rely on and laugh with. This year, though, we are saying good-bye to several staff and welcoming otherswith new ideas, personalities, and cultures. We celebrate each good-bye in high style—with memberwritten poems, parties and thoughtful gifts.

Doug's wife earned a promotion to Washington, DC so he now works at Adapt Clubhouse in VA!

Congrats to Renn who's leaving for grad school at Duke! Welcome to the Kitchen Unit, Melissa, recent college grad and long time volunteer.



Astrid married and accepted a job in retail management; Virginia's gradually retiring–like Tom, she still works with us part-time; and welcome to Marian, our new crackerjack Development Director!