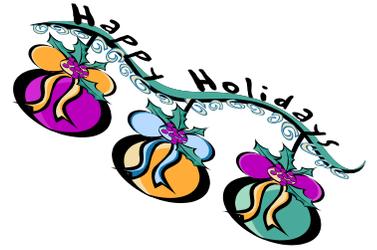


The VOICE of Brain Injury in
Georgia



MINDmatters

Brain Injury Association of Georgia

*May your home be filled with warmth and wonder
this Holiday Season and into the New Year!*

*The most beautiful things in this world cannot be
touched or seen. However they can be felt only in the
heart. May this holiday be a time for you to search and
enjoy these beautiful things*

*From the **Brain Injury Association of Georgia** to you*

*We Wish You All A Beautiful Holiday Season
and a Happy New Year*



If you would like to make a donation to support our mission— please visit braininjurygeorgia.org

The mission of the Brain Injury Association of Georgia is to provide help, hope and support to the citizens of Georgia that have sustained or have been affected by brain injury.

Brain Injury Association of Georgia is a non-profit 501(c)(3)

A Message From Paige Johnson, President



Hello and Happy Holidays to everyone.

I am honored to serve as the President of the board of directors for the Brain Injury association of Georgia, our members, our clients, our caregivers, and our community. I look forward to meeting each and everyone of you, hearing your story, and sharing mine. Your struggle and your success are my inspiration. When people ask me why I want to serve, it is easy to state that my mission is to advocate and speak for those who are unable to advocate for themselves.

I am truly excited about the year we are about to embark. We have

developed 4 new sponsorship levels: (\$500, \$1500, \$5,000, and \$10,000) When an individual or business sponsors the Brain Injury Association of Georgia, they will receive a recognition plaque as a method of saying Thank You.

I am equally excited about the events we will be having to recognize and raise money to serve our brain injury community. We will be completing "Walks for Brain Injury" in Augusta, Georgia and in Savannah, Georgia. We will also have golf tournament, 2 dinner events, and several new opportunities for education / training / and the ability for professionals to receive CEUs.

At the beginning and at the end of each day, I want to remind you that we are NOT defined by our brain

injury. We have arms, legs, elbows, freckles, and brain injuries. Each is only a part of our total package as people. Each of you are as important and special today as you ever have been.

Thank you for all you do to communicate, to help, to serve, and to live in our community at the Brain Injury Association of Georgia.

Happy New Year.

Paige Johnson

Christmas Gift Suggestions:
To your Enemy, Forgiveness
To your Opponent, Tolerance.
To a friend, your Heart.
To a Customer, Service.
To all, Charity
To every Child, a Good Example.
To yourself, Respect
Oren Arnold



Brain & Spinal Injury
Trust Fund Commission

Grant Opportunities for TBI/SCI

Sean was a typical child, growing up in the country, involved with Boy Scouts, loved working with animals and playing with his friends.

One day Sean was riding his bicycle when he hit something in the road, flipped over his handlebars and hit the pavement head first. He was sent to the local Blue Ridge hospital where he was airlifted to Scottish Rite in Atlanta for evaluation and treatment. Sean was only 14 years old when the accident happened, changing his life forever.

Even though Sean was physically ok on the outside where you could not "see" his brain injury, he did develop typical symptoms from a frontal lobe injury such as anger, depression, and problem with crowds, noise, sounds and short-term memory.

After many attempts for finding a way to help with his many deficits it was

suggested he apply to the Trust Fund for a computer which he gratefully received.

Thanks to the Trust Fund, Sean has developed cognitive gains and interaction with others. The computer has programs that have become his "memory" for storing information such as notes, contacts and appointments.

Even though Sean continues to struggle with executive functions, receiving this computer has made a big difference in his life and the life of his family.

If you have sustained a traumatic brain injury and are interested in finding out about eligibility or applying for a grant, contact.

www.bsitfc.state.ga.us

888-233-5760

info-bsift@dhr.state.ga.us



Caregivers Corner:

Enjoying the Holidays After Brain Injury By Elaine Phillips @ Brainline.org

Ideas around holiday theme for **Caregivers:**

- Keep it simple and free. Your loved one will treasure small gestures such as cookies or a personal note from you.
- When shopping, plan ahead and ask what's on the top of their list. Also, consider doing your shopping online for good prices.
- Going to the mall can be hectic—go to smaller stores especially in the morning.
- Helping to cook or plan a dish for a get together—cookbooks and internet resources for 3-4-5 ingredient recipes can make the event achievable and delicious.
- Attending earlier services can be hectic and crowded—if you stay up late attend a candlelight service which can be peaceful

and reflective.

- Give back—choose an activity that would be meaningful such as helping in a soup kitchen or delivery of goodies to hospitals or nursing homes. Click [here](#) to read the full story.

During holiday, leisure replaces work as a priority.

You are filled with the enthusiasm to explore, travel and learn. So indulge in laziness. Spend time with your loved ones and let your heart dance....

Roger Bannister

Behavioral Challenges and the Holidays By Carolyn Rocchio @ Brainline.org

Question: Ever since his TBI, my husband is sometimes a little inappropriate with his jokes and conversations. I can tell others feel embarrassed. And frankly, I'm embarrassed, too. How do I deal with this, especially with the added pressure of holiday gatherings?

Answer: The holidays can definitely come with more stress and more social challenges. As you probably know, when the part of the brain that controls a person's ability to self-monitor and inhibit inappropriate behavior is damaged, it can lead to difficulty managing social interactions. Your husband may also lack the ability to use feedback, such as reading other

people's facial expressions. *Rehearsing or role playing before attending a party or holiday gathering can be helpful.* Practice some cueing strategies to use if your husband starts to say or do something that could become embarrassing to you or others. For example, you could use a gesture such as a raised palm to alert him to stop.

It also helps to discuss, well in advance, what your expectations are and act out a scene you might encounter. For example, New Year's Eve parties can be fun, but they usually include alcohol and the expectation of a midnight kiss. You may want to rehearse your husband's response if he's offered a

cocktail — *"No, thank you. Since I was injured, I'm using medications that don't mix with alcohol."*

As for the midnight kiss, explaining and rehearsing proper etiquette before the party will help, especially since other party guests may be jovially hugging and kissing others. Unless he fully realizes that it is customary to kiss and be kissed "like a friend" on New Year's Eve, he may take offense. *Rehearsal and reminders during the evening will hopefully lead to a Happy New Year.*



GSU Student Project Honors Father—By Darby Johnson

"My dad fell walking the dog in May of 2011. He suffered a traumatic brain injury in which he had to have emergency brain surgery. There have been a few set backs since then but every day is a process of recovery. I know that he will never be the same as he was before but over time and with the support and love from family and friends I know he will overcome this.

I was assigned to a group in which we had to chose a charity and a plan to raise money. Immediately I suggested the Brain Injury Association of Georgia and also the

sale of rubber bracelets that say "1.7 Million" for the 1.7 million people that incur a brain injury every year.

We raised \$421 from the sale of the bracelets as well as donations. I hope most of all that awareness was taken away from this experience and I was glad to contribute in any way I could to the Brain Injury Association of Georgia."



We appreciate the donation by Darby and her team.

As a result of their efforts, the money they raised will help support many families with needed services provided through our programs.



Policy Corner—Preserve Access to Medicare Therapy Services

Congress has just 16 days to take action or **some stroke survivors will lose access to certain outpatient therapy services** under Medicare. **You can help** prevent this devastating policy from taking effect. Tell your members of Congress how important physical, occupational or speech therapy is or was to you and urge them to preserve these services for stroke survivors.

Congress has just 16 days take action or **some stroke**

survivors will lose access to certain outpatient therapy services under Medicare. **You can help** prevent this devastating policy from taking effect. Tell your members of Congress how important physical, occupational or speech therapy is or was to you and urge them to preserve these services for stroke survivors.

Unless Congress takes action, stroke survivors covered by Medicaid will lose access to some outpatient physical, occu-

speech therapy services starting in January 2013. You can help us ensure that access to these essential therapy services is maintained—so stroke survivors on Medicare have a chance at recovering to their fullest potential. **Take action today!**

Click [here](#) to be directed to a message you can send to your Representative or Senator.

Healthy Corner

Give the Gift of Health and Safety: Health Living Holiday Tips

The holidays are a time to celebrate, give thanks, and reflect. Give the gift of health and safety to yourself and others this holiday season by paying special attention to your health. To get started on your new year's resolution early; follow these **holiday tips** and start living a healthier lifestyle.

- **Make healthy food choices and prepare food safely.** Remember these simple steps:  wash hands and surfaces often, avoid cross-contamination, cook foods to proper temperatures, and refrigerate promptly.

- **Don't drink and drive or let others drink and drive.** Holiday cheer can raise many glasses, but remember, whenever anyone  drives drunk, they put everyone on the road in danger.

- **Ensure your travel is healthy and safe.** Whether you're traveling across town or around the world, pack a **travel health kit** and talk with your doctor about how to stay healthy and safe before, during, and after your trip.

Take a few minutes to make a healthy lifestyle part of your holiday and New Year's resolution.

During the holidays, we're often cooking bigger meals for more people than we're used to.

That's why it's particularly important to remember and follow the food safety steps: cook, separate, clean and chill during this time of year. Food-borne illnesses are at the very least unpleasant, but they can also be dangerous.

- Dr. Barbara Mahon, Deputy Chief, Enteric Diseases Epidemiology Branch, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Brainpower Practice Tip from Brainpower News:

Teach to Learn. If you really want to learn fast and be sure that you have a good grasp of the material, teach it to another person. This will strengthen the associations in your mind and immediately point out areas you need to work on. Hopefully you have a patient and curious friend to help you with this...if not, imagine teach to another person.

[Read more on CDC.gov](#)



In Loving Memory

Anita Faye (Lewis) Picarella, of Alpharetta, GA passed Friday, November 23, 2012. Anita was a beautiful soul that had a passion for living. Anita was an active member of the *Brain Injury Association of Georgia* and the *North Fulton Support Group* for many years.

She was always looking for another opportunity to celebrate life and throw a party for all those she loved.

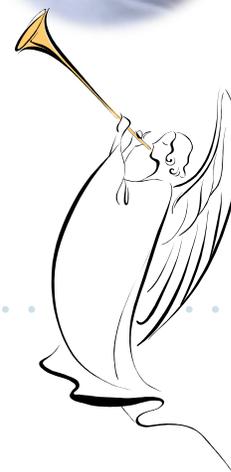
Each Christmas she hosted a Christmas Party for the No Fulton Group and her friends. With her contagious smile, Anita touched the life of everyone she came in contact with. She dedicated her heart, time, and energy

to help others in any capacity she could. In 1997, Anita helped pilot a "Stroke Peer Visitor Program" for the American Heart Association. Anita served as a peer mentor through the No. Fulton Support Group and the Brain Injury Association of Georgia peer visitor program for many years, touching the lives of many who were mentored by her wisdom and experience.

Anita loved the beach and spent countless hours building sandcastles, collecting shells, appreciating beautiful sunsets and spending time with her two kids whom she loved so dearly. Throughout her lifetime Anita had a special zest for life, a selfless heart and was the face of strength

and courage to all those who knew her.

Anita was rarely without that smile which we will all miss!



A Hero's Heart

I feel like a hero yet I've saved no one's life nor rescued a lost soul.

I feel like a hero, yet I've put out no fire nor climbed high mountains.

I feel like a hero yet I've slain no dragons.

I feel the high of a hero, the same as each of you.

We've all saved a life and we've each become heroes in our own special way.

May be an inspiration to all those we meet who are on their way to becoming heroes.



Anita touched the lives and inspired many. We appreciate Anita for everything she stood for and for all that she gave us over the years.

Brain Injury Association of Georgia



1441 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30322
(404) 712-5504 Helpline: (800)444-6443

info@braininjurygeorgia.org
www.braininjurygeorgia.org

• SUPPORT GROUPS

- (Listed By County)

- Please visit our [website](#) for details on group meetings and contact information

BIBB COUNTY

Macon, GA
"Macon Support Group"

CATOOSA & WALKER COUNTY

Rock Spring, GA
"Jimmy Simpson Foundation"

CHATHAM COUNTY (2)

Savannah, GA

Goodwill

"Advance Acquired Brain Injury"

Memorial *"Gray Matters"*

CLARKE COUNTY

Athens, GA
"Athens Support Group"

CLAYTON COUNTY

Riverdale, GA
"Miracles Happen"

COBB COUNTY

Marietta, GA
"Unlimited Possibilities"

DEKALB COUNTY (2)

Atlanta, GA

For Veterans

"VA TBI Support Group"

"Peer Visitor for Veterans Program"

VA Medical Center

Decatur, GA

"Emory Support Group"

Emory Rehab Center

Atlanta, GA

FANNIN COUNTY

Blue Ridge, GA
"Blue Ridge Support Group"

FLOYD COUNTY

Rome, GA
"Rome Support Group"

FULTON COUNTY (3)

"North Fulton Support Group"

Alpharetta/Roswell, GA

770-642-4236 x41

"Minor Brain Injury Support Group"

Atlanta/Buckhead

"The Seminole Spirit—A

Speech Listening Group"

Roswell, GA

GORDON COUNTY

Calhoun, GA

"Divine Restoration Abounds"

GWINNETT COUNTY

Lawrenceville, GA

"The Gwinnett County Area Support Group"

MUSCOGEE COUNTY

Columbus, GA

"Columbus Support Group"

NEWTON/ROCKDALE COUNTY

Conyers, GA

"Brain Injury Support Group of Newton/Rockdale"

RICHMOND COUNTY

Augusta, GA

"Augusta BI Support Group"

NeuroRestorative Rehab Center

SPALDING/LAMAR/UPSON COUNTY

Griffin, GA

"Lost and Found"

THOMAS COUNTY

Boston, GA

"Hope"

COMING SOON! PEDIATRIC BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

When: January 20th, 2013 -
3rd Sunday of each month

Time: 2:00-3:30 PM

Location: Scottish Rite Hospital,
room TBA

Additional Information to follow

• Board of Directors

Paige Johnson
Board President

Diane Ohmann
Board Treasurer

Kay Jones
Board Secretary

Kristen L. Beightol, Esq.
Board Member

David Dodson
Board Member

Dr. Jeremy Hertzka, PsyD.
Board Member

Jean Kropa
Board Member
Support Group Liaison

Gwen McKee
Board Member
Support Group Steering
Committee Chair

Beth Ann Miller
Board Member

Carolyn Stepp
Board Member



Raise money for the Brain Injury Association of Georgia by searching the Internet at www.GoodSearch.com (powered by Yahoo), do your holiday shopping online at www.GoodShop.com or dining at a restaurant in the www.GoodDining.com network.