



Newsletter May

GRATITUDE AND GROWTH

Change is inevitable. It is a universal truth and our growth is measured by our ability to adapt. When it comes to stroke recovery, change is something to certainly be embraced. Last September, Laredo Stroke Support celebrated its fifth anniversary and so much can be said about the ways we have embraced change and learned to grow for the good of our survivors. We have grown not only in numbers, but in the development and enrichment of our nonprofit, which includes a pilot program for group therapy and monthly recreational outings with our survivors and their caregivers. We proudly continue to offer three to five weekly activities at no cost. We promote our services and stroke awareness through multiple outreach events and public service campaigns. We enable our survivors' independence and involvement in the community with yearly rec center memberships. We have been witness to the opportunities that make a difference in the lives of survivors and the hope which might spark an interest in someone facing the same struggles. Through a community of support, we have redefined stroke recovery. What we do for survivors is what is really worth doing.



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Bill Hrncir, *Co-Founder*

Deedee Hrncir, *Co-Founder*

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Paola Huerta, *Executive Director*

Monsie Bedolla, *Program Coordinator*



A Letter From Our Co-Founders

You wake up, have breakfast, get ready for your day, and you put one foot in front of the other. You go to work, talk to friends, family, and coworkers, or your kids. You have lunch and continue your day. You go back home or to the gym and then you have dinner. You might relax watching TV in your favorite chair, and then you go to bed. The next day, you start all over. Then one day, you have a stroke. Suddenly, all of those things that you did every day seem more difficult, and in some cases impossible. You may have loss of mobility on

one side of the body, not to mention you can't get your mouth to communicate with your brain to simply say "good morning" to your spouse or kids. For many stroke survivors - that is the brutal reality.

At LSSG, we know that's not good enough. We are here to remind you that no matter what you lost you still have the tools and insights to guide you back - even if it means helping you find your "new normal." You deserve to work again. You deserve to have meaningful relationships again. You deserve independence and

choices for how to rejoin society in a way that gives you purpose.

Whatever you are looking for, we know you will find it here - direction, a positive path, hope, healing. Whether you are feeling challenged by what's ahead, are in physical pain, are confused, or feel a loss of the person you once were, know we are here. We supply encouragement and an extended family. So let's get you back on track TOGETHER.

Bill & Deedee Hrncir



Laredo Stroke Support held its first 5K race on November 11th, 2017. The event, held at North Central Park, generated stroke awareness by donning the well-known acronym of stroke detection and celebrated the numerous accomplishments of those whose lives have been affected by stroke.

Despite the cold and rainy weather, over 200 participants and many other community members braved the elements

and attended the race. 25 local agencies, businesses, and partners set up informational booths and activities for attendees. More than 75 volunteers of all ages graciously gave of their time, not only on race day but in the weeks prior to it by campaigning and recruiting on our behalf. Stroke survivors and their families cheered each other on from start to finish.

There are never enough words to describe how incredibly

humbled and grateful we are to everyone who continues to believe in and support our mission. The F.A.S.T. 5K was a success only made possible by the combined efforts of our staff, board members, donors, friends, and family that continue to be champions for our survivors. It is because of this that we may continue forth with our mission of turning stroke victims into stroke survivors.





AMANDO

Two years ago, Amando was living a normal life. He was a hardworking manager at Hal's Landing and enjoyed spending his free time outdoors hunting or fishing. On July 22, 2016, Amando suffered his first stroke. Although it was seemingly mild, the damage to his brain affected his right leg. A couple of weeks later, he suffered a second stroke which completely affected his ability to walk or talk. He spent the first two months of his recovery in San Antonio.

By the end of the year, Amando and his wife Becky joined the Laredo Stroke Support Group. At the time, he was in a wheelchair, unable to speak. Now, Amando can walk, has learned to speak and write clearly, and is determined to learn how to ride a bicycle again with the help of his new survivor buddies. "Laredo Stroke Support has been very helpful. I have gained a new sense of confidence for myself and I am thankful."

LAREDO STROKE SUPPORT SURVIVORS



"Laredo Stroke Support is unique. I'm very new to the group, but I have thoroughly enjoyed each activity. Everyone is trying to make it pleasant for all, and the group is lively and happy!"

- Isabel



"The group gives positive support. I have learned to bring out painting skills that I did not know I had. I have gained friends. It's the best."

- Javier



"The group has been an amazing blessing to all survivors. I get to witness all positive ideas and optimism from the group."

- Adriana



Volunteer Program



Laredo Stroke Support firmly believes in the power of volunteerism. As our group has continued to grow, we have emphasized the importance of a volunteer program. Our volunteer program allows individuals from our community to join our group and help assist our stroke survivors during our weekly activities. Last summer, we were fortunate to have three

outstanding volunteers, Brian Kriger and Beth and Roger Rueweler join our group. They have been huge assets to our organization and we could not be more grateful for the time they have dedicated to our survivors.

In the fall, we established our first formal partnership with TAMIU Canseco School of Nursing students as part of their clinical learning experi-

ence. 5 students provided one-on-one assistance during our Life Skills and yoga classes, and educated our group about healthy living and diabetic care. We are thrilled to continue this partnership with future students.

For volunteer opportunities, visit our website and complete the volunteer form.



Community Partnership



In our time as a non-profit, we have met many generous individuals who share our passion for helping others. Because of them, we have been able to advance our efforts to better the lives of survivors. From those facing the overwhelming initial moments of recovery to those who have almost perfected the "new normal," we are there. As we take time to reflect on our accomplishments and mile-

stones, we have to recognize all of our partners that have made our unique program possible. To our friends at Laredo Rehab Hospital and Providence Hospital, San Martin De Porres Church the Laredo Tennis Association, the Haynes Rec Center, Austin Speech Labs, the UT Health Science Center of Laredo, Alli Flores and Casa Yoga, Enid Vargas, and Paty Orduña,

THANK YOU!

Because of you, our survivors walk away with a sense of pride and accomplishment every single day. They set goals, they regain their confidence, and they find purpose. Your roles in the lives of these people are invaluable. Thank you for always rekindling the light of hope in our group. It takes a village, and you are our people.



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& thank you to all donors for financial contributions and in-kind donations. Your support has helped our survivors **connect, learn, and recover.**



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