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***Newsletter of the Joseph Groh Foundation  
Fall 2020***

## **News Bytes**

A Crazy End to the Golf Season



***Runaway Bay Golf Course on Lake Bridgeport***

In our winter/spring newsletter, we had to announce the cancellation of our Dallas tournament. Subsequent to that, we had to announce the cancellation of our remaining 2020 tournaments. At that time, we said that it was our full intent to host a Dallas event later in the year, after things settle down and people's lives are on a more normal plane. While that didn't really happen, we were able to hold a fall event in the DFW area. During the summer, we were contacted by a course just northwest of Fort Worth, which was holding a tournament for 10 charities whose fundraising was hard-hit by the pandemic. It was to be a "touchless" tournament, keeping everything as safe as possible. After polling a number of our Dallas area sponsors and golfers, we decided to participate. Precautions for the tournament included 100% online sign-up/registration/payment, utilization of a shamble format which helped with golfer separation, golfers were offered their individual cart if they so desired, mandatory mask mandate when not playing, no group gatherings for meals etc., reduced touch points throughout the course, including no flag removal and a hook on each whole to facilitate ball removal without reaching into the cup, and more. Coincident with the tournament, we launched a Carry the Torch campaign to help raise funds for two specific individuals. Sponsors and golfers from Minnesota, Illinois and across the country donated as a part of that effort. The results were nothing short of spectacular. Over \$40,000 was raised from these combined fundraisers! This enabled the foundation to continue funding grant requests into the fall. Work for Gregory Laville of Binghamton, New York, one of the individuals highlighted for a grant as a result of these campaigns, will be completed soon. Gregory was severely injured after falling off a work truck in 2014. He desperately needed renovations to his 100-year-old house in order to be able to stay in it. In partnership with Arctic Bear Plumbing and Heating, his water heater and boiler have been replaced. In addition, badly needed floor leveling/repairs have been made, and his windows are about to be replaced. Gregory's full story will be published when the project is completed. We hope to have a more normal year in 2021, we will see how things progress. Until then, the foundation urges everyone to follow protocol as outlined, and stay safe!

Welcome Golfers to the 2020 Boxer Family Tournament for the Joseph Groh Foundation

**Boxer Family Tournament at Runaway Bay**

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**BALL SPONSOR**



**THANK YOU DONORS**

Denise Best – Cambridge, IL	Mark Lenz – Bedford, TX
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**The Good Side of the News**



During the month of June, our foundation received a grant request from Sue Carrizal of Houston, Texas. Sue’s husband Isaac had been a member of Union Pipefitters and Plumbers Local 211 for over 40 years, but passed away in 2018 from stage IV prostate cancer. The last company Isaac had been employed with as an HVAC service technician was Honeywell. Isaac worked on chillers in commercial properties in downtown Houston, and was always on call according to Sue. “If there was a problem, he would be called to go take care of it,” Sue said. “This was especially urgent if the problem was in the room where the big computers were housed,” she said.

Sue contacted the foundation because her HVAC system was 17 years old and needed to be replaced. “I just live on and pay my bills with Social Security,” Sue said. “I’m 74, and I just can’t afford a new air conditioning unit. I had one quote, it was for just under \$19,000,” she continued. “My husband always took care of our AC. He had all the equipment like gauges,

and he would add more Freon if needed. He always helped people who could not pay for repairs, now I am in need, but don't know what to do. Please help me." At the time Sue contacted the foundation, our funds were at a low ebb, and our remaining fundraisers for 2020 had been canceled. Joe Groh contacted the Houston office For Lennox Industries however, and that's when things started to happen. District Manager Paul Boartz agreed to provide a Merit Series 14 SEER air conditioning system, with a matching 80% AFUE furnace. Territory Manager Tammie Thomas then contacted Dave Williams of Cypress Creek Air Conditioning-Heat in the Woodlands, and asked if he would help. Dave didn't hesitate. Mother Nature did her best however to interfere however. First, dangerous heat waves rolled through the Houston area, and contractor scrambled to keep their customers safe and comfortable. Next, hurricanes lined up to keep them scrambling. Nevertheless, Cypress Creek, a Premier Lennox dealer, took the time to make sure Sue was taken care of. The company was started by Ernie Williams Sr. in 1979, and today Dave continues his father's work ethic and compassion for others. Dave's motto is, if you take care of others, you will be taken care of. Sue was impressed by how neatly they left everything following the installation. "I am so grateful, she said. Cypress Creek Air Conditioning-Heat is a family owned and operated company that serves The Woodlands, and Montgomery county Texas. They provide all manner of HVAC installation and service, and all their technicians are NATE certified. As the writer of this article is a longtime former Lennox employee, I just can't help myself. Atta boy Dave!



***Sue's New Furnace and Air Conditioning Unit***

## Gary Orlando – Someone You Should Know

*World War I was the most horrified conflict to date in the history of the world. Modern weaponry combined with outdated tactics and disease, combined to kill an estimated **15,907,000 people around the world**. This included 117,000 American combat troops. World War I ended at 11 AM on November 11, 1918. Originally known as Armistice Day, the cease-fire came into effect at 11 AM in order to allow time for news to reach combatants. Legislation that was passed in 1938 designated November 11 as a day dedicated to world peace. Veterans Day is not only the time to remember deceased veterans, but the day is set aside to thank and honor living veterans who served honorably in the military – in wartime or peacetime.*

This article is in honor of all who have served as we celebrate Veterans Day.

Erie, Pennsylvania resident Gary Orlando knew he wanted to serve in the military ever since he was in 10th grade. His father and other family members served in the military, and it was his dream to follow in their footsteps. In 1969 he found his opportunity, serving as a door gunner on board a helicopter in Vietnam. In 1971 however he was injured during an attack and it left him paralyzed.

"I went from fighting a war one day to being paralyzed at Walter Reed Medical Center the next," Gary said. "It was a very emotional time for me, but members of the paralyzed veterans of America supported me during the transition." That event spurred Gary toward a lifetime of service for other wounded vets. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America chapter. In this role, he is responsible for overseeing services for veterans who are paralyzed due to MS and ALS. He also serves as the hospital liaison officer for his region, and starting next month he will serve on the national chapter field advisory committee. "I like to visit and encourage vets who are in the hospital," Gary said. "I tell them not to give up, you don't know what the future holds." Beyond his professional career, Gary has found great success in athletic competition. "I began volunteering for the national veterans wheelchair games in 1998, and started competing the following year" said Gary. Gary has completed in every game since 1999 and won medals each year he competed. "I felt lucky and proud after winning, but I don't compete for the medals," Gary said. "It's a great way to meet new people and see old friends, and the best part is being able to help newly injured veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan." "My main goal is to be an example. Even if I can just impact one person, I consider it a huge success" he concluded. Thank you Gary for both your service and your example!



**Gary Orlando**

## **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.***

When I was at Baylor rehab, they had a program in place to pair us newbies with volunteer veterans from the wheelchair crowd who had spent time at Baylor before us. I was paired with a gregarious young guy whom I would estimate to be in his late 20s, a C5 from somewhere in the Metroplex. I noticed that whenever he dropped something, he would say, "There's a hot dog on the floor." When I asked him about that peculiar expression, he told me that he learned it from his wife. One day we were sitting around having a freewheeling discussion, when I asked him what the strangest or most embarrassing thing was that had ever happened to him as a quad? I asked that question because I was new to the lifestyle, where at times, you felt like your dignity had no value, and that to some of the staff you seemed like an object to be moved, like a piece of furniture. I could not have been less prepared for his answer.

Dave (not his real name – I don't remember it anyway) proceeded to tell me he had a colostomy bag, and that most of the time it served his purpose well. He then described some of the times when it didn't, which sounded pretty familiar. "Oh yeah, I have to tell you about this one time," Dave chuckled. What followed sounded to me like a horror story. He and his wife had visited a restaurant, a fairly new, higher end deli in their neighborhood. "It had that warehouse look, you know," he said. "The type of look that featured concrete floors, nice, steel tables and chairs, and an open ceiling, showing all the lighting, ductwork and stuff. It was kind of an expensive place," he said. "Sandwiches were like, 15 bucks." Like me, he needed occasional pressure coughs to, as he put it, "Feel right with the world." As he

continued to plunge into the story, his wife, who had been sitting next to him, excused herself to go to the cafeteria for a soft drink. After asking both of us if we wanted anything, she was off. "Mary (not her real name) and I typically split a sandwich, because they are so big," Dave continued. He went on to explain that for some reason, he had been coughing a lot that day, needing a lot of pressure coughs. "At one point, about halfway through the sandwich, I needed a cough. The first one didn't do any good, nor did the second. In frustration, I told Mary to really push hard on the third one, but I shouldn't have," he said, almost ruefully. Why, what happened I asked? "It wasn't so much what I saw, it was what I heard," Dave said. "The sound of something hitting the floor, that sounded exactly like splat," Dave continued, now almost laughing. Your sandwich, I asked, confused? "No," he exclaimed. "Mary and I looked down at the floor at the same time, and I turned to her and said, oh scheist." (Or something like that) Mary simply said, "There's a hot dog on the floor." Dave still hadn't specified what fell, although I was beginning to get an idea. "So, what was it," I asked more insistently? "It was my colostomy bag man, and it was full," Dave said emphatically. At this point, he was laughing hard, but I was silent, almost shocked. What did you do then I asked, incredulous at what I had just heard. "Well, Mary decided it would be best to find the manager and tell her what happened." I was quite surprised at where the story went from there. He related that the manager told them she had a relative who was disabled with a colostomy bag. She told them she completely understood their situation, and even helped clean everything up, but in such a way that nearby patrons didn't notice what was going on. Dave said his biggest concern at that point was getting home without a colostomy bag on, and without further issue. I told him that I bet they were mortified. His response surprised me. He explained that the understanding response of the restaurant manager was so unexpected and such a relief, that it really ended up being a positive experience. "You think nobody understands your situation," Dave said, "because that has been the bulk of your experience. Because of this ladies response to our problem, we have been back a number of times to that restaurant, and we have recommended it to many of our friends. You'll be surprised at how understanding some people can be," Dave concluded. Twelve years down the road of my own journey, I can only say – Amen brother!



***There's a Hot Dog on the Floor***

*SCI World is a newsletter production of the Joseph S Groh Foundation*

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