

# THE JOSEPH GROH FOUNDATION

*A Beacon of Hope*



## The Lighthouse: From Our Founder Joe Groh

Welcome to the winter/spring edition of the Lighthouse! As you may have noticed, this newsletter features a new look, new visuals, a new format, and a new name! We hope all this makes it easier and more enjoyable to read. It has been a very short but busy off-season since our last golf tournament at the end of October in Dallas. In 2022, our golf season will move to a spring-summer-fall format for Dallas, Minneapolis and Chicago respectively. In addition, we will be playing at new courses in both Dallas and Chicago. In this edition of the Lighthouse you will read about exciting neurological developments for those living with long-term spinal cord injuries. The focus of neurological research has typically not included these individuals heretofore. New websites have been added to our powerful links resource tab, and you will find an update about our exciting new Luminary program. These are not intended to be static sites, help us spread the word about both of these to individuals in your sphere of influence. Given that we are in the season of Valentine’s Day, Someone You Should Know features a couple from Iowa who embody the spirit of this holiday. Finally, A Day in the Life humorously explores the real, game changing technology now available to those with severe motor challenges. As always, your feedback is welcome. Enjoy!

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### Special points of interest

- Luminary Impact
- Amazon Smile
- Links/Resources
- 2022 Board of Directors



## 2022 Golf Tournaments:

Save the date now for the 2022 annual golf tournaments (see below) which will be held in Dallas, Minneapolis and Chicago. The first tournament is on Monday, May 2, 2022 at Heritage Ranch Golf & Country Club located in Fairview, Texas. Voted #16 of the top 50 courses in the nation by Golf Advisor, and both the Best First Impression as well as the #3 golf course in Dallas/Fort Worth East by Avid Golfer 2020. This scenic course features a rolling terrain, strategically incorporated water features and fairways lined with aged pecan, oaks, and cedars on this Arthur Hills designed championship facility. Golfers will appreciate simple changes in elevations as the course traverses through rolling hills and meandering creeks. This scenic par 72 course measures 6988 yards from the back tees, demanding accurate shot making. Four sets of tees and a wide variety of challenges however promote playability for golfers of all skill levels. The 24,000 square-foot rustic clubhouse is reminiscent of the grandest ranches of the Texas Hill country, with its handcrafted maple trim and beautifully adorned ballroom. For more information about Heritage Ranch Golf & Country Club; <https://heritageranchgolf.com/> ***Dates and course information is available now on the websites' golf tab.*** Sign up information for Dallas will be available on the website by the end of February.

**DALLAS:** Monday May 2 - Heritage Ranch Golf & Country Club  
(Fairview, TX)

**MINNEAPOLIS:** Monday July 25 - The Links at North Fork  
(Ramsey, MN)

**CHICAGO:** Monday September 26 - St. Andrews (West Chicago)

### 2022 Board of Directors:

Joseph Groh: Founder  
Vicki LaPlant: President  
Eric Groh: Vice President  
Sue Huckabee: Treasurer  
Sue Groh: Secretary  
Mike Hajduk: Director  
John LaPlant: Director



## Happy First Birthday to our Luminary Program:

One year ago the foundation launched a new fundraiser outreach for individuals who may not golf or don't live in one of the cities where we hold tournaments. We called this program Luminary, because it is a way literally anyone can positively influence the life of someone living with the kind of disabilities few of us can imagine. Simply put, it is a subscription giving program with levels starting as low as \$10 per month. Prior to this program, 85-90% of our grant money was derived from golf tournaments. The Luminary Program allows individuals to participate in the mission of the foundation much more broadly than before. The results of this initiative in its' first year far exceeded our expectations. ***During that timeframe, 53 individuals signed up to become Luminaries, and collectively their pledges exceed \$61,000.*** Thank you to all our wonderful Luminaries, we invite you to spread the word about this program to your personal and professional contacts, along with why you are a Luminary.

# FOUNDATION

*A Beacon of Hope*

*Luminary – a person who influences or inspires others.*

*Become a Joseph Groh Foundation luminary, and give the invaluable gift of hope, today, and every day.*

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#### LUMINARY DETAILS

- *Monthly giving program starting at only \$10 per month*
- *Benefits include exclusive content, thank you gift and individual recognition*



#### LUMINARY IMPACT:

- \* Individuals have pledged over \$61,000.
- \* That's the equivalent of 6 new grants per year.
- \* Levels: \$10/month - \$25/month - \$50/month - \$75/month - \$100+/month

**JOIN US TODAY:** [www.josephgrohfoundation.org](http://www.josephgrohfoundation.org)

*The foundation Links page is a powerful resource for individuals with disabilities. Nearly 200 Websites packed with information including:*

Global sites  
National sites  
US Govt sites  
Research sites  
State by state sites  
Medicare/Soc Sec  
Caregiver sites  
Rehab facilities  
Durable med equip  
Wheelchair vans  
Social networks  
Pain management  
Mental health  
Business/employment  
Assistive technology  
Disability products

***SPREAD THE WORD!***



***Sign up and designate The Joseph Groh Foundation as your charity and Amazon Smile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the foundation. It's easy, it's painless... And it MATTERS!***

## **Engineered Spinal Cord Implants Provide New Hope:**

The physical challenges resulting from a spinal cord injury not only necessitates a complete lifestyle change, it can also lead to mental challenges. A team of researchers in Israel are taking on their own monumental challenge – that of solving paralysis caused by traumatic injury. They have created an implant that restored movement in not only acute situations, but also for those with chronic paralysis. A recently published study has shown the success of an implant that mimics early-stage development of the spinal cord. The next step is a phase 1 clinical trial.

The implant consists of fatty tissue called adipose tissue, which consists of two components – cells and a gel like substance called the extracellular matrix. Researchers took a biopsy of adipose tissue and separated these two components. They then used the extracellular matrix from the adipose biopsy to create a hydrogel that acts as a supporting scaffold for the spinal cord implant. The gel mimics the microenvironment of embryonic development, while avoiding rejection or an immune response caused by foreign bodies. The team used these implants to treat both long-term and short-term paralysis cases. The results are extremely encouraging thus far, with 100% of short-term paralysis and as much as 80% of those with long-term paralysis regaining their ability to walk.

These and other developments such as those in the field of neurotechnology offer real hope that the next generation of those with spinal cord damage won't be sentenced to a lifetime of living with the challenges these injuries present.

***Source: Biotechniques***



## Most Americans are more prepared to die than they are to deal with disabilities



According To Kaiser Health News, 55% of construction workers have no access to disability insurance.

Just over one in 20 of today's 20-year-olds will be disabled before they retire – mainly due to illness (i.e. heart attack) not accidents.

65% of Americans could not cover normal living expenses for one year if employment income was lost.

68% of adult Americans have no savings earmarked for emergencies.

#### Sources:

disabilities can [happen.org](http://happen.org)  
American Journal of Medicine  
US Social Security Administration  
Counsel for Disability Awareness  
US Federal Reserve Board  
American Payroll Association

One of the Missions of the Joseph Groh Foundation is advocating for pathways to affordable short/ long term disability insurance for employees of small businesses in the contracting industry.

***For more information about disability insurance, why you need it and where your company can get it, please visit:***

<https://www.josephgrohfoundation.org/webapp/p/277/obtaining-disability-insurance>

## **KEN KLEIN - Someone You Should Know**

Ken Klein wouldn't consider himself Superman. He does, however, share the condition that "Superman" star Christopher Reeve dealt with the final nine years of his life -- a high spinal cord injury that makes him unable to use his arms or legs.

To move his wheelchair, Klein has what is known as a sip and puff control system that directs the chair right or left, forward or back, fast or slow. "Stuff happens," said Klein, a 71-year-old Iowa City resident. "You always hear about it happening, usually to somebody else." "I've been fortunate since that time; could have been a lot worse," Klein said.

With the help of friends and family -- especially his wife, Sue -- Klein has done remarkably well managing his medical condition, one of his doctors said. Many high spinal cord patients are plagued with complication after complication for the rest of their lives, said Dr. Joseph Chen, clinical associate professor and medical director of the UI Spine Center. "The Kleins have done so well avoiding those complications," Chen said. Physicians often recommend close, routine follow-up for a spinal cord patient, but Klein has needed only fairly minimal visits following his initial care, a testament to Klein and his wife, Chen said. "I wish all my spinal cord patients were so well versed," he said.

Klein was a school teacher for 35 years, including 30 years at City High, where he taught driver's education. "It was a good 30 years," he said. Before the accident, Klein was an outdoor enthusiast who loved time on his bicycle. He rode his first RAGBRAI in 1974, skipped the year after that, and then didn't miss another for 30 years. Even when he taught summer school, Klein always arranged his schedule to have time for RAGBRAI. He also participated in two cross-country rides -- a 100-day trip that took him coast to coast in 1995 and another from New Orleans to the Canadian border in 2005. There were summers after he retired where he would walk 1,000 miles, bike 2,000 miles and golf 100 times. He walked every morning from their Iowa City home to St. Wenceslaus Church on Davenport Street. People he didn't know, but who recognized his daily presence walking on North Dodge Street, would wave as they passed by, he said.

His life-changing injury happened while he was outdoors, riding his horse on a friend's property out in the country. Sue Klein said she remembers looking across the road and seeing her husband's horse, but no one on it. They found her husband curled up on his side on the ground. "Stuff happens, and it doesn't take long to change people's lives completely," Ken Klein said. Klein, in fact, says he is lucky that it didn't happen to him earlier in life. "I was always pretty stupid. I'd always try anything or think I could do anything," he said. The same day Klein went into the hospital, a man his same age tripped on a curb, causing a similar spinal cord injury result, he said. Sept. 28, 2010, will mark four years since Klein's accident. "I didn't think I'd last half that long," he said. "I think there's always a reason for it," Klein said. "In the scheme of things, this is the way it was supposed to be." It's hard for Klein to travel now, and he can't enjoy the outdoors like he used to. "I used to love being outdoors, but it was always for a purpose," he said. Just being out of the house "doesn't do it for me," Klein said. Even though he can no longer ride, Klein said he can't quite bring himself to sell his bicycle. "That bike and I spent quite a bit of time together," he said.

Klein and his wife's lives are now filled with his daily medical needs, including waking up every three hours in the night to turn him from prevent bed sores. "Life is good if I can keep my wife healthy enough to take care of me," he said. Klein jokes that he's now "high maintenance" and knows it is hard for his wife because "once she starts working on me, there's not much time for what she wants to do." "He's worth it, though," Sue Klein said. "We're blessed," Ken said. "Yes, we are," his wife replied.

*Reprinted by permission from the Iowa City Press-Citizen*



***Ken Klein and his wife Sue, in their Iowa City home.***

## **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.***

### **Emerging from the Technological Stone Age**

About 20 years ago some of my loving family members gently informed me that I was operating in the technological Stone Age. At the time, I brushed off such well-intentioned remarks because I envisioned myself closer to the forefront of technology. After all, in an era where flip phones were state of the art, I took pride on being a two thumb texter, considering it a challenge as to how fast I could send messages without typos. At work, some of my similar well-meaning colleagues told me I was the “King of the spreadsheets,” yet another badge for technological sophistication. In retrospect however, they were more likely telling me to call more frequently on the right side of my brain for creative thinking relative to problem-solving. Then came my accident, and everything changed.

Flip phones became smart phones, which didn't seem to hold much value for me since I couldn't use my hands. I would see people frantically swiping up and down, left and right, madly multitasking on their magical devices. Meanwhile, I plodded along with my flip phone, using it only for its God-given purpose in life – making phone calls! After all, what would Alexander Graham Bell have thought of all this manic activity on his evolutionary creation? Okay, forget that question. He would probably have been amazed, thinking it very cool. On the other hand, I was at least keeping pace on the PC side of things, continuing to crank out word documents, PowerPoint slides, Publisher newsletters, and yes – even spreadsheets. Furthermore, I did so with ever chic assistive technology by way of Dragon NaturallySpeaking. Meanwhile, some of the same loving family members who once had accused me of living amongst the technological Flintstones convinced me to ditch my flip phone, and so began the journey into the deep dark valley that was smart phones. I read and researched everything I could find about the ability of smart phones to work *only* by voice, and the emergent winner was the Motorola Droid Turbo. My excitement quickly waned when I learned that this was a “one and done” device. After one voice command, that's it – you could instruct it no further. With sad resignation I gave the phone to my wife and went back to my tried-and-true flip phone. That lasted about one more year until the flip phone died, which left me no choice. I took over the droid and my wife went on to a shiny new version of manic hardware. On the positive side, I could stream music which was a major upgrade. My trustee droid lasted about



seven years before it would no longer accept OS updates, so once again I began to research the latest and greatest. This time however, things appeared to be different. There were articles about a particular fruit phone of the Apple variety. Its initial Voice Control feature was an early stab at true accessibility for the motor challenged amongst us. In 2020 however that feature was upgraded in iOS 13 and was purported to be like “Dragon functionality for the phone.” It was too good to be true, I thought. Besides that, iOS 13 appeared to be available only in the higher end, more expensive phones. But then I found the iPhone SE 2020. It didn’t have as many or the fanciest of cameras, but those features would have been lost on me. It did have iOS 13, so I excitedly ordered this new wunderfone. I have not been disappointed.

After the initial set up (which is always a blast!) and a few hours of playing around with it, I can send and receive texts for the first time in 15 years! I can not only stream music, I can also set up my favorites on various musical platforms. Additionally, I can fully surf the web, send/receive/emails and explore all the apps on my screen. I quickly discovered apps are like channels on your cable/satellite or streaming TV platform – many are of dubious value! I can initiate calls with Siri, but alas cannot terminate them unless I am wearing a headphone connected to a sip and puff device. (The one missing feature of true voice control on an iPhone) I had the same issue making and receiving calls while in bed until very recently. In the last few months both Verizon and AT&T have come out with a feature which allows you to make outgoing calls and receive incoming calls all by voice using your smart speaker. (Or smartwatch) Now, I need to find that family member and see if they need some lessons on the latest technology!

“I just love my new apple!”



**THANK YOU BUSINESS PARTNERS:**



**CONTACT US TODAY to become a partner/sponsor of our Foundation.**  
Help us make a difference in the life of someone from our industry who is living with a life altering disability.

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