

THE JOSEPH GROH FOUNDATION

A Beacon of Hope

The Lighthouse- From our Founder Joe Groh

Welcome to the Winter-Spring edition of *The Lighthouse*! It is a great time of year in North Texas. Our temperatures in March are generally in the 70s with brief excursions into the 30s, 80s, and even 90s!

Now that our last freeze is behind us, Redbud trees, Bluebonnets, Indian Paintbrushes, and more will start to bloom in earnest, and the southerly breezes will pump lots of Mountain Cedar pollen up from Central Texas, causing everyone to grab their favorite allergy medicine!



Redbud Tree with spring blooms.



Bluebonnets and Indian Paint Brushes.

The Masters is only a month away, which can only mean one thing – The Lennox tournament for The Joseph Groh Foundation is not far away either. Speaking of golf, all our dates are set for this year; they are shown on page 2. Upper mobility is crucial to those who are paralyzed from the waist down. Read about researchers at UTD (University of Texas at Dallas) who developed a small vagus nerve stimulator and the hope it brings for enhancing this critical need.

We are on the precipice of summer, and the water is fine – so jump in... carefully! We take breathing and coughing for granted, but not those with spinal cord injuries. In *Beyond Superman*, read about the role Christopher Reeve played in the pioneering of this technology. Next, share my conversation with Sarada Divvuri, founder and host of *The Fire Inside* podcast.

Then, your *Someone You Should Know* is about Ron Rosas and the never give up spirit he brings to a devastating medical diagnosis. Finally, your favorite column (or at least mine) – *A Day in the Life*. Enjoy!



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2026 Golf with the Foundation

2026 golf tournament dates for the Foundation have been announced, see below:

Dallas – Monday, May 4
Eldorado Country Club, McKinney, Texas

Minneapolis – Monday, July 13
The Links at Northfork, Ramsey, Mn

Chicago – Thursday, September 24
Seven Bridges GC, Woodridge, Illinois

Dallas Golf Tournament



El Dorado Country Club Fairway

We're pleased to share that the 2026 Lennox Tournament for The Joseph Groh Foundation will take place at El Dorado Country Club in McKinney, conveniently situated near I-75 and Eldorado Parkway.

Established in 1981 and designed by Gary Roger Baird, this private course features scenic, tree-lined fairways, two lakes, and thoughtfully contoured greens that offer both challenge and character. The course is especially well-suited for best ball play, encouraging a strategic and enjoyable round for all teams.

Following the tournament, guests will gather for dinner along with an update on the latest Foundation news.

Visit josephgrohfoundation.org to learn more about our upcoming events.

Dallas Golf Tournament Sponsor Opportunities

Title Sponsor – \$10,000: 10 golfers, tournament naming rights, commemorative items, unlimited additional golfers (\$150 each), sponsor banner, website for 1 year, and multiple course recognitions.



Platinum Sponsor – \$5,000: 12 golfers, unlimited additional golfers (\$150 each), display table on course, recognition on sponsor banner, website for 1 year, and multiple course recognitions.

Gold Sponsor – \$2,500: 4 golfers, unlimited additional golfers (\$225 each), sponsor banner listing, website for 6 months, and course recognitions.

Silver Sponsor – \$1,500: 2 golfers, 2 additional golfers (\$250 each), sponsor banner listing, website for 3 months, and course recognitions.

Bronze Sponsor – \$1,000: 1 golfer, 3 additional golfers (\$165 each), sponsor banner listing, and course recognitions.

Dinner Sponsor – \$3,500: 8 golfers, unlimited additional golfers (\$225 each), dinner display table sign, website for 1 year, and course recognitions.

Lunch Sponsor – \$3,000: 4 golfers, unlimited additional golfers (\$225 each), lunch display table sign, website for 1 year, and course recognitions.

Keg Sponsor – \$1,500: 2 kegs at lunch, on course, and dinner, 2 golfers, 2 additional golfers (\$250 each), sponsor banner listing, website for 3 months, and course recognitions.

Award Sponsor – \$1,500: 2 golfers, 2 additional golfers (\$250 each), sponsor banner listing, website for 3 months, and course recognitions.

Hole Sponsor – \$250 per hole: Acknowledgment with signage on the course.

Implant Offers Hope to Survivors

People with spinal cord injuries have new hope thanks to a tiny neck implant paired with physical therapy. Researchers at the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) have shown that pairing a nearly dime sized vagus nerve stimulator with targeted hand and arm exercises help people with incomplete spinal cord injuries regain movement.

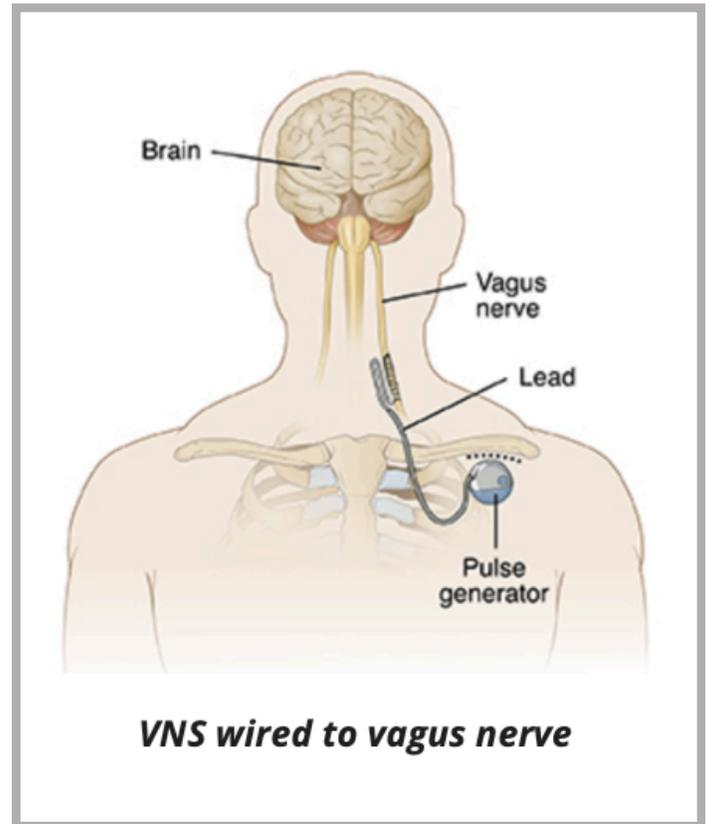
Incomplete spinal cord injuries are those where some movement and/or pain can be felt below the point of injury. Even more, it helps them do everyday activities like zipping a zipper and latching a necklace! This small implant stimulates the vagus nerve in the neck, the longest of the 12 cranial nerves that run from the brain to the large intestine. It works much like a pacemaker for the brain and was first federally approved for treating epilepsy.

Along with spinal cord injuries, it is now being considered for conditions ranging from depression and post-traumatic stress disorder to autoimmune diseases and obesity. After the device showed promising results in animal models, researchers implanted the device in 19 Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) residents between the ages of 21 and 65 who were at least one year removed from their spinal cord injury.

Each volunteer had 18 physical therapy sessions using exercises that involved wrist twisting, hand gripping and finger pinching. The group getting the vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) saw a 23% gain in movement while the control group saw none. Participants underwent a 2nd round of therapy paired with nerve stimulation, and on average saw a 393% improvement in pinch force and a 152% improvement in wrist torque.

In the future researchers want to explore whether this device can help people with spinal cord injuries improve lower limb mobility and reduce chronic pain, which affects most people with spinal cord injuries.

Information courtesy of the Dallas Morning News.



THE JOSEPH GROH 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.

LUMINARY DETAILS

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

www.josephgrohfoundation.org/luminary

Luminary Levels
Shine | Radiance | Brilliance | Beacon | Lighthouse

A photograph of a person in a wheelchair, seen from the side, moving through a brightly lit hallway. The person is wearing a dark jacket and is holding the wheelchair's handrims. The background shows a long, well-lit corridor with a polished floor and recessed ceiling lights.

Summer is Here – Jump in with Care



Proper technique for jumping into an unknown depth

When I was growing up, the local YMCA was a near constant presence in my life. That was where I hung out with friends and learned how to play ping-pong and pool. Most importantly however, that is where I learned to swim, and by 4th grade I had accelerated to their top swimmer level – that of Shark.

I learned how to use your jeans and your shirt as a makeshift flotation device. I also learned the art of the “silent swim” and how to swim underwater. Perhaps one of the most important things we learned, however, was how to enter any body of water. We were taught that if you are going into any body of water that you are unfamiliar with, that was murky or that you did not know how deep it was – never dive in!

We were taught to always jump in, but not with your legs extended. You should jump in with your legs pulled up and tucked under your chin, so that if the water was not very deep, you would likely not be injured. After you explored the depth, you were better informed how to re-enter the water.

Over the past 18 years of our Foundation, we have unfortunately worked with 3 or 4 individuals who learned this lesson the hard way. Diving into a shallow body of water and hitting your head on the bottom typically causes a high-level spinal cord injury.

If you don't have attentive people around you, it can also lead to drowning in a fairly short period of time. If you have youngsters, this is an invaluable lesson you can teach them, as the very life they save someday might be their own!

2026
LENNOX TOURNAMENT FOR
THE JOSEPH GROH FOUNDATION

May 4, 2026

El Dorado Country Club in McKinney, Texas
josephgrohfoundation.org

A promotional poster for the 2026 Lennox Tournament for The Joseph Groh Foundation. The poster features two men on a golf course. One man is wearing a red and white checkered vest over a white shirt and red pants, while the other is wearing an orange polo shirt and dark shorts. The background shows a green golf course with trees and flags in the distance. The text is overlaid on the image, with the date 'May 4, 2026' in a yellow box.

6 in 10 people worry about the financial impact of a disability, yet only **30%** own disability insurance.

Source: LIMRA and Life Happens 2013 Insurance Barometer Study

Protect your paycheck with disability insurance.

An infographic with a grey background. On the left, text states that 6 in 10 people worry about the financial impact of a disability, but only 30% own disability insurance. The source is cited as LIMRA and Life Happens 2013 Insurance Barometer Study. On the right, a green outline of a person has their arms raised, with several dollar signs floating above their head. At the bottom, a dark blue banner contains the text 'Protect your paycheck with disability insurance.'

Beyond Superman

More than 20 years after a historic surgery, a Cleveland researcher's work is still saving lives, thanks in part to the man many knew as Superman. 23 years ago, the world witnessed a quietly historic moment in spinal cord medicine. Christopher Reeve was implanted with an experimental device that would change how he breathed, how he smelled, and how he experienced the world.

The device in question was a diaphragm pacing system, which carefully calibrated the device to Reeve's breathing pattern. The implant works by sending electrical impulses to the diaphragm, causing it to contract and draw in air just the way healthy lungs do – without a traditional ventilator. It allowed Reeve to breathe independently for more than 12 hours at a time. That means he could sit in a quiet theater or speak without machine noise.

Then came the unexpected. After receiving the implant, Reeve said he could smell coffee for the first time since his injury! That device earned full FDA pre-market approval in 2023 and is now helping patients around the world.



Christopher and Dana Reeve

Dr. Anthony DiMarco, the researcher who developed that technology has turned his attention to the next urgent problem for those with spinal cord injuries – the inability to cough. More than a minor inconvenience, patients with high level spinal cord injuries experience repeated respiratory infections and pneumonia, which is the leading cause of death in this patient population. Many of you have seen Sue give me a “pressure cough” which is what has helped me avoid pneumonia.

The solution DiMarco developed involved a minimally invasive procedure which places electrodes near, but not inside the spinal cord to activate the abdominal muscles that generate a cough. The device is triggered by a handheld button used by patients. Among his first 29 patients, the rate of respiratory infections dropped by 80%. An unexpected finding was that the same abdominal muscles involved in coughing also support bowel function. A dramatic proof of concept came during Covid 19. One of DiMarco's patients' devices stopped during the pandemic and it was 2 years before he could replace it. His infection rate rose sharply, but once DiMarco replaced the device they again fell to near zero.

DiMarco and his team now have a longer-term goal – to develop a single device that handles both breathing and coughing for spinal cord patients. This is a goal that traces back to a phone call from a patient who happened to be one of the most recognizable people on the planet – but one who understood that his fame could be used for something of far greater importance to mankind!

Ron Rosas – Someone You Should Know



Ron Rosas with his wife and 4 children

A standout athlete, Ron was an integral member in the journey of one of Notre Dame's all-time underdog teams. Not on the gridiron, as you might imagine, Ron was a member of the fabled 1992 men's tennis team that experienced an unprecedented run to the NCAA men's tennis championships, going from the #10 seed to the championship match. Their success captured the nation's attention in collegiate men's tennis, especially since no northern team had ever advanced to the title match. That journey forged a lifetime bond for the members of that squad. Following college, Ron moved to Dallas to accept a job in the banking sector, and that is where he met his wife, Victoria.

He established a considerable business and philanthropic presence and was a constant sight on tennis courts, both playing and teaching. So, in December 2022, when Ron felt like something was wrong, he was not overly concerned. He tested negative for strep, the flu, and Covid and was sent home. He continued to feel worse; however, to the port where Victoria called for an ambulance. He was admitted with a severe case of pneumonia and was quickly intubated. Over the next several days, doctors and nurses fought to save his life, but his condition continued to decline.

The infection in his lungs spread to his blood and led to septic shock. In critical care, Ron was given medicine that raised his blood pressure and forced blood to his vital organs. The process saved his life, but it led to severe necrosis in his extremities.

When he awoke from his medically induced coma 16 days later, he received the news that no athlete – or anyone else – wants to hear. Both arms and both legs would have to be amputated.

Ron chose The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center for the procedure, because they specialized in reconstructive surgery, limb restoration and nerve repair for amputees. Ron had only 2 requests of the surgeon. First, he wanted a quality of life without constant pain and 2nd, he wanted to play tennis again. All 4 limbs were removed below the joint and a team of specialists in Dallas supplied the prosthesis.

Since the surgery, Ron has had a team of coaches, Notre Dame personnel, tennis pros and a supportive family help him come back from this soul crushing hardship. True to his dream, Ron is looking to play in the wheelchair division of the International Tennis Federation in the quadriplegic division.

He envisions nothing short of a championship, which would be a first. As Ron says, "I have a lot of life to live, and I want to live it all. So, you either move forward or you choose not to, and I chosen to move forward."

Ron's story is set to become a documentary film. 16 years ago, Ron gave tennis lessons to a Dallas filmmaker and established a friendship that continues through today. That filmmaker is working on a 90-minute feature documentary which is in its early stages. Someday you will be able to see this film, and it is entitled *Second Serve*.



Ron Rosas

The Fire Inside Podcast – a Conversation with Sarada Duvvuri



Sarada is a film production expert based in Los Angeles who is the creator and host of a podcast called *The Fire Inside*. She is passionate about sharing stories of resilience and purpose, and through her nonprofit called The Rise Project, she amplifies stories of resilience, purpose, and passionate community-centered healing.

She found our foundation on the Internet, and we shared a conversation that aired recently on March 10, 2026. See the link below to connect with that conversation:

[The Fire Inside Podcast with Joseph Groh](#)

A Day in the Life

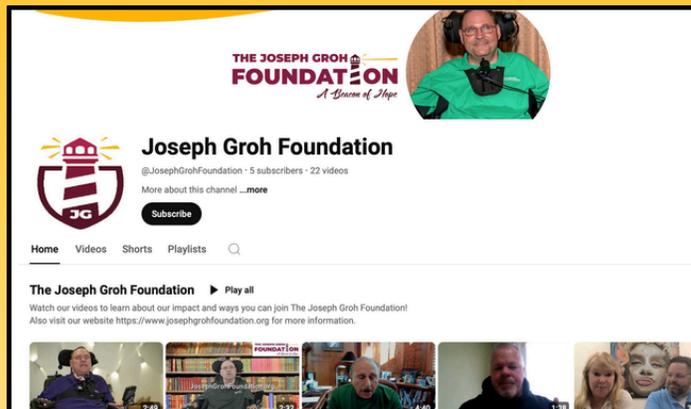
This feature is a sometimes humorous, sometimes offbeat, and sometimes irreverent look at life as seen through the eyes of a severely disabled person. Management takes no responsibility for these ramblings.

What Comes Next?

You may have seen a recent email from us about the launch of an endowment campaign. That email has its roots in the very first grant recipient. Seventeen years ago, when we started this foundation, the answer to the question of what comes next would likely have revolved around how to raise some money, then how to raise awareness for grants. A few years later, that same question would have yielded a conversation about how we could step up our fundraising because requests for grants were drastically outpacing our ability to fund them.

A few years after that, this question would have spawned a discussion about how to increase awareness of our foundation. By year 10, the first really big strategic question was asked.

“Do we want this foundation to survive us into the next generation?”



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Foundation YouTube
Channel!

A Day in the Life (Cont.)

At that time, I can't really say I was seriously committed to saying yes. I felt (and still feel) that if the Foundation does not survive me, then it would have been the best thing we could have done, and if it were to all go away, I would be satisfied that we had made a significant, positive difference in the lives of those we had been able to touch. The board was unanimous in their desire for this foundation to continue, so work began on a strategic plan to put in motion the necessary elements required to make that happen.

Over the next several years my lukewarm endorsement changed, and I joined that of the board to become a full throated supporter of generation next. By that time, 5 more years had transpired and we had largely achieved the first requirements of change. We then put together a strategic plan covering the next 6 years, which will take us through 2030.

It involves replacing founding board members with NexGen individuals who share of the founders' passion, and to date 3 of the original 7 board members have passed their batons. Perhaps the most important part of our current strategic plan (which we call Vision 30) involves me

The founding board members have all donated 100% of their time, meaning there has been no cost for their labor. I have provided about 95% of all the admin work required by the foundation since our inception, and if I were to get run over by the proverbial bus, that would be the end of the foundation. No one would be available that knows what I do on a day-to-day basis, nor would they have the time to spend on it like I have. This is most apparent when it comes to running the golf tournaments.

Following board discussion, we approached an individual who was interested in becoming our Executive Director, but unfortunately, he did not work out. We found a 2nd young gentleman out of college who expressed a desire to spend a life working in nonprofits, but after about 6 months left us for Amazon and the bright lights of Austin. Then, our board found a firm by the name of Beacon Association Management, a company which works with organizations to help them with administrative, accounting and creative needs.

We brought them on board in 2025 and began to work with them to understand our admin and creative needs with the idea that they would be in position to completely handle them by the end of 2026.

The success of this initiative is crucial if our foundation has any hopes of still being operational in (say) 2040 or 2050. It also means that for the first time, we will have to spend our donations on admin costs.

That is where our endowment campaign comes into play. Simply stated, our endowment has a short-term goal of covering all of our admin costs, and a long-term goal of covering both our admin and our fundraising costs. Once achieved, 100% of sponsorships and donations to the foundation will go toward grant recipients, while the investment income from the endowment pays the bills.



Our short-term goal is to raise \$1 million within 12 months, from which the investment income will cover our current administrative costs. Our long-term goal is to raise \$3 million by the end of 2030, and that is projected to cover both our administrative costs and our fundraising costs. What does that mean for my role in the foundation?

I will be an active participant with our foundation for as long as I am physically able. Once the admin responsibilities have been successfully transferred, I will work to increase our awareness, fundraising and grant giving within broader aspects of the construction industry, such as electrical, plumbing and general contracting in addition to, of course, HVAC.

If this intrigues or resonates with you and if you would like to have a deeper conversation, I invite you to email me at hope@josephgrohfoundation.org. With your help, we will truly emerge as The beacon of hope for those in the construction and contracting industries who are living with permanent, life altering disabilities.

Thank You

Business Partners



