



Spinal Connection

Quality of life publication for Arkansans living well

www.ascc.arkansas.gov

Spinal Connection

Spinal Connection is published quarterly by the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission.

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Spinal Connection is an official publication of



Executive Director

Terra Patrom

Newsletter Editor

Adam Burnstone

ARKANSAS SPINAL CORD COMMISSIONERS

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From the Director ~ Terra Patrom

Mini-Conferences

As we move forward into a new era and a new focus, we looked to our past to find an understanding of how to improve the future. Some of you might remember that several years ago, we held mini-conferences throughout the state. These conferences were focused on the needs of clients like you - bringing education, knowledge, and resources to give clients the power to advocate for themselves, learn what resources are available in their community, or to learn about the latest equipment and technology to help lead independent lives.

We are happy to announce that we are holding two mini-conferences this Fall in Springdale and El Dorado. You can read additional details about the program for the Mini-Conferences, including the speakers and topics, in this newsletter. There is no cost to attend this conference for you, your family members, and/or caregiver. It is open to any client / consumer of ASCC services. For those of you who live in communities where these conferences are being held, if you are unsure what transportation services are available in your area, please contact your ASCC case manager. You can register to attend the conference closest to you online by going to www.spinalcord.ar.gov/conferences. If you do not have access to the Internet, please call Brad Caviness at 1-800-459-1517 or 501-296-1788. He will be pleased to assist you with registration.

For those who are outside the areas where these mini-conferences will be held, please know that we will look to hold future



Contact Information

Phone: (800) 459-1517

Email: ascc@arkansas.gov

Website: ascc.arkansas.gov

Donations

The Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission accepts tax-deductible donations to support ASCC.

Send your donation to:
AR Spinal Cord Commission
1501 North University Ave.,
Suite 470
Little Rock, AR 72207

Memorial Donations

The ASCC would like to acknowledge the following individuals for donations made to the Commission:

- Emily & Robert Abernathy
- Susan & Timothy Boe
- Rosemary J. Fox
- A. John Kelly
- Karen & Benjamin Klugh
- John Pearsell
- Leslie S. Price
- Ellen Reiley
- Southwest Power Pool
- Lisa Wiley & Southwest Power Pool IT Team
- Barbara Swesey
- Patty & Doug Lowe
- Roberta Clevenger

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mini-conferences in odd-numbered years in other areas. One might be held near you in 2019. We will return to holding our large conference during even-numbered years in the Central Arkansas area.

Healthcare professionals may attend the mini-conferences as we will have speakers discussing topics and resources relevant to working with ASCC clients. Please note, however, that these mini-conferences will not have pre-approved CEUs in order to keep the cost at a minimum. Healthcare professionals may register at the same link for a cost of \$25 (plus a small convenience fee).

I hope to see many new faces and many familiar faces at these events as we turn our focus to what is most important to us, our clients.

New Staff at ASCC

Rachael Marcum

Rachael Marcum joined our Case Management staff in the Little Rock office in August 2017. Rachael was born and raised in Arkansas and is from the Little Rock/North Little Rock area. Rachael earned her Associate degree from Pulaski Technical College in North Little Rock and is a recent graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where she obtained a Bachelor's degree in Social Work.



Rachael completed an internship at Lucie's Place, where she helped young homeless adults in Central Arkansas find safe housing, obtain job training, and receive counseling. Rachael indicated that this was extremely meaningful work to her as she enjoys helping people become autonomous by providing them with the hope and confidence they need to succeed. She stated that she would often ride the city bus or walk with the young people in order to understand more about them and their particular situation.

In her spare time, Rachael enjoys spending time with her family, whether it be a camping trip, eating out, or simply gathering in the living room for "movie night." Rachael also loves to travel and would

choose Australia as her top pick for a vacation destination. Please join us in welcoming Rachael Marcum to our ASCC family!

Ginger Robertson

Virginia “Ginger” Robertson joined our Little Rock Office staff in July 2017, assuming the position of Administrative Assistant II. Ginger is originally from the state of Mississippi and moved to the Little Rock area of Arkansas when she was a young adult. Ginger previously worked for the Department of Aging and Adult Services at DHS and has many years of work experience in an Administrative Assistant role.

Ginger was born with a visual disability leaving her totally blind and has overcome many obstacles throughout her life to become the self-sufficient individual she is today. She willingly accepts challenges within the work environment, and also possesses a strong desire to grow and to learn new things.

Ginger enjoys listening to a variety of music, as well as listening to educational programming, such as documentaries, news information, and nature programs. Please join us in welcoming Ginger Robertson to our ASCC family!



Medically Speaking

Thomas Kiser, MD

Bladder Management Is Important to Your Health

Neurogenic bladder after a spinal cord injury can be a challenge to manage well. Over my twenty years of practice, I have seen multiple methods people use to manage their bladder and found there is no one right way. In the last couple of years, I have worked with people who have developed bladder cancer, had bladder stones, or developed recurrent bladder infections, but there are people who have not had a bladder infection in years despite using an indwelling catheter or doing in/out catheters. What can you do to improve your bladder management?

Proper management of the bladder will protect your kidneys, improve your quality of life, and prevent recurrent UTI's. If you manage your bladder with good technique, are conscientious in maintaining a clean technique, and minimize use of antibiotics, you should do well. The goal is to keep bladder pressures low, avoid bladder accidents, and maintain healthy bacteria in your urine to prevent disease causing bacteria from taking up residence in your bladder.

The core tenets of good bladder management are:



1. When placing a catheter use at least a clean technique. If you are having recurrent bladder infections, you may need to step up your game and use sterile technique with either betadine, alcohol, or chloroseptic preparations.
2. Do not treat the symptoms of cloudiness, changes in urine odor, urine color, or bacteria in your urine with antibiotics. If your physician wants to treat bacteria in your urine, but you do not have symptoms of a bladder infection (i.e. fever, chills, or fatigue), this will be treating bacteria that are not causing a problem and lead to antibiotic resistance. If they insist, please have them call the Triumph call center (1-855-767-6983) and ask them to page me. I will be glad to discuss with them the appropriate use of antibiotics. There are some bacteria that form stones, which it may be appropriate to treat to eradicate them, but that is rare.
3. If you are having bladder infections more than twice a year, that is not normal and needs to be worked up by an urologist. You may have a bladder stone in your bladder and need a cystoscope, you may be having bladder retention with poor emptying, and your catheter may not be draining adequately if you are using a Foley, or you may be using improper catheterization technique.
4. Blood in your urine is also not normal and needs to be worked up. Bladder cancer is a real risk and increases with duration of spinal cord injury. It used to be thought that having a Foley catheter was the biggest risk, but recent research is suggesting that having a spinal cord injury is a risk in itself, no matter what method of bladder management you use. I suggest that if you have had a spinal cord injury for more than 10 years, but definitely by 20 years, a cystoscope evaluation of your bladder is needed because the best screening method is to visualize the bladder mucosa. By the time you see blood in the urine, cancer is usually well advanced. However, blood in the urine can also be caused by other causes (kidney stones or catheter trauma), so seek prompt attention if you notice it, but do not panic.
5. Maintaining a low pressure bladder decreases the risk of having urine reflux into your kidneys and causing kidney damage. There are several ways to lower bladder pressure:

Our sincere condolences to the friends and family of..

Carol Ellen Felix - 02/27/2016
 Carole Clark Weber - 03/19/2016
 Roosevelt Leon Nelson Jr. - 06/10/2016
 Amanda Sue King - 07/27/2016
 Beverly Ann Cross - 10/08/2016
 David Moseley - 11/11/2016
 Daniel West - 12/29/2016
 Geraldine Edmond - 01/15/2017
 Ronnie Lee Couthren - 03/12/2017
 James Terrell Jones - 03/12/2017
 Phillip L. Kehler - 03/15/2017
 Tray Chandler - 03/25/2017
 Minerva Ernestina Warman - 03/27/2017
 Erron Dewayne Broughton - 04/12/2017
 Sharon Lynn Wigham - 04/18/2017
 Ryan Ann Funderburk - 04/21/2017
 Joe Thomas Golden - 04/30/2017
 Willie Walker - 05/16/2017
 Charles Elton Creech - 05/21/2017
 Thomas L. Dutton - 05/27/2017
 James M. Kellar - 06/03/2017
 Kenneth Wayne Barnett - 06/08/2017
 Bobby Ray Quarles, Sr. - 06/13/2017
 Rita Michelle Hill - 06/13/2017
 Jerry McDonald - 06/15/2017
 Homer Clayton Walker - 06/16/2017
 Sherry Ann Baldwin - 06/23/2017
 Billy Hilliard - 06/26/2017
 Penny Sumler - 06/29/2017
 Charles Joseph Kouri - 06/29/2017
 Shajuanda Latray Augustine - 06/30/2017
 Bryce R. Humbrecht - 07/03/2017
 Anaiah Winter Yvonne Phillips - 07/07/2017
 Coy Holly - 07/10/2017
 James E. Johnson - 07/13/2017
 Ronald S. Collier - 07/15/2017
 Connie Ruth Stowers - 07/22/2017
 Willie Atkins - 07/23/2017
 Winifred Parsons - 08/03/2017
 Lynn Roe King - 08/04/2017
 Russell L. Lamons - 08/05/2017
 Jackie Jordan - 08/06/2017
 Theodore C. Lamb - 08/08/2017
 Ruth Jeanette Pettet - 08/19/2017
 Carolyn M. Langford - 08/27/2017
 Hezekiah Criss Jr. - 08/30/2017
 Javel S. Angel - 09/13/2017
 Desiray N. Barham - 09/16/2017

- ◆ anti-muscarinic medication such as oxybutynin, solifenacin or mirabegron;
- ◆ botulinum toxin injections by your urologist via a cystoscope; or
- ◆ as a last resort surgical intervention such as a supra-pubic catheter, continent stoma, bladder augmentation or urostomy.

6. The timing of urodynamic studies is much debated in the literature, but if you are using a condom catheter, Foley catheter or doing in/out catheterization, it is very important to assess bladder pressures, bladder flexibility or compliance, and bladder volumes and sensation. This can be very helpful, especially to protect the kidneys and to prevent recurrent bladder infections.

I hope this information can help as you contemplate how to best manage your bladder. If you are struggling in this area, please discuss it with your physician or call the TRIUMPH call center (1-855-767-6983) to discuss it with the nurse on call. If they are not able to answer your questions, they will forward your call to one of my residents or to me.



Have a medical question?

Experiencing issues and need immediate answers?

**TRIUMPH
Help Line**

FREE

24 / 7 Access

1-855-767-6983

**Help & Information
for Arkansans with
Spinal Cord Injury &
Healthcare Providers**



ARKANSAS SPINAL CORD COMMISSION 2017 Client Mini-Conferences



Wednesday, November 15, 2017

The Jones Center, 922 East Emma Avenue, Springdale

Tuesday, December 12, 2017

El Dorado Conference Center, 311 South Avenue, El Dorado

You are invited to attend a one-day event designed to bring you the most up-to-date information on living with a spinal cord injury or disability. The mini-conferences will be held in Springdale, for clients who live in the Northwest corner of the state, and El Dorado, for clients who live in the Southern portion of the state. This event is free for clients, family members, and caretakers. A reservation is required for seating and catering purposes. Lunch, snacks, and drinks will be provided.

Online reservations may be made by visiting <http://www.spinalcord.ar.gov/conferences>. You will receive an email confirmation after completing the reservation. If you are not able to register for the event online, please call Brad Caviness at 1-800-459-1517 to make your reservation.

Healthcare providers are welcome to attend (for a nominal \$25 fee), but there are no pre-approved continuing education hours for this event. Certificates of Attendance will be provided at the conclusion of the event for you to submit for approval to your licensing body. Lunch and snacks are included with the registration fee.

Online registrations may be completed by visiting <http://www.spinalcord.ar.gov/conferences>. You will receive an email confirmation once your registration is received.

Check in for each event begins at 8:30 a.m. Opening remarks will begin at 9:15 a.m. Breaks will take place between each presentation so attendees can visit vendor booths or get refreshments.



The Jones Center, Springdale



El Dorado Conference Center

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) Powered Systems, **Matt Courson, Restorative Therapies**

Attendees will learn about alternative adaptive recreation options, along with funding and grant options that are available.

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services - A Division of Arkansas Department of Career Education, **Marquita Gladney, MS, CRC, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (Springdale); Kensel Spivey, MA, CRC, Area Manager (El Dorado), Arkansas Rehabilitation Services**

Attendees will learn about various ARS services that are available, such as TAP, ICAN, Access, Alternative Finance Program, as well as independent living and vocational programs.

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Medical Marijuana In Arkansas, **Robert Brech, General Counsel, Arkansas Department of Health**

Attendees will learn about the new medical marijuana law, including qualifying conditions, how to apply, and additional rules and regulations.

3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Inclusion in Community Activities: Options and Resources, **Partners for Inclusive Communities**

Attendees will learn about new inclusive options for maintaining their health due to changes in accessibility options at Arkansas State Parks, trails, and other outdoor activities.

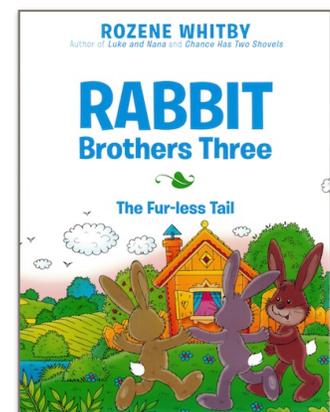
Rabbit Brothers Three: The Fur-Less Tail

Accomplished Author - Rozene Whitby



Rozene Whitby was born and raised in Wynne, Arkansas, and spent some time living in Alaska. She is the author of *Luke and Nana* and *Chance Has Two Shovels*. In 1967, Whitby was involved in a car wreck and has been a paraplegic going on 50 years now. She is a wife, mother, and grandmother.

In 1995, Whitby went back to school at East Arkansas Community College in Forrest City, AR. She graduated with an Accounting degree in 1998. Whitby's latest book, *Rabbit Brothers Three: The Fur-Less Tail*, can be found in e-book and paperback editions in various online book stores.





Spinal Connection (Fall 2017)
Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission
1501 North University, Suite 470
Little Rock, AR 72207

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Arkansas Spinal Cord Foundation Donates Accessible Van



Tonya Ellington, pictured, receives the keys to the van donated to her from the Arkansas Spinal Cord Foundation (ASCF). In the top photo, she is pictured next to ASCC Case Manager Doug Fish.

Mandy Carmack (not pictured), ASCF Vice President, made the presentation of the van to Tonya.

