

GBS/CIDP Foundation International

Denver Chapter Newsletter

Issue Number 16 --- Winter, 2008

Looking Back:

Our traditional December holiday potluck created an opportunity for new members to become acquainted with veteran attendees and survivors. Everyone enjoyed an afternoon socializing and eating some delicious food.

The New Year is always a good time to reflect on past achievements and to plan goals for the coming months. Our Denver support group is going into its 8th year. The catalyst for this group and for your liaison and workers occurred in May, 2000 when our Colorado Springs liaison, Jean Archer, sent out a call to meet with all Colorado GBS survivors. The following winter a small group of Denver area GBS patients and caregivers met to become acquainted and to begin planning our first "mini-seminar." With advice and encouragement from Jean and from the Foundation, the Denver area group presented its first state-wide meeting at the Denver Marriott West in May 2001. Dr. Wendy Cline, clinical psychologist at University Hospital spoke to a large audience on coping with GBS as a life-changing event.

Since that first meeting the group and its mission has grown in many ways. We have participated in the 9News Health Fair three years in a row. We have placed literature about GBS and the Foundation in many rehabilitation centers and hospitals. Many of us have made ourselves available to speak with and visit newly diagnosed patients and patients experiencing problems in survivorship. Our yearly meetings have evolved into quarterly meetings, then monthly events, and again now quarterly meetings. We've outgrown the Lakewood Library, dispensed with hotel meetings and now meet each time at St. Anthony Central Hospital. Most importantly, we've comforted, informed, and supported many patients and families experiencing the terror and confusion we and our families once endured.

Our mission is, as it was in the beginning, to serve all people who call us for help. As the Foundation has grown and become more widely known, so have we become accessible to more people, thanks to modern technology and wide use of the Internet.

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Foundation News:

The latest issue (Winter 2007-2008) of The Communicator announces that the date of the next International Symposium will be held in the Chicago area, November 7-9, 2008. If you have never attended a GBS symposium, you should know that it's a great way to find answers to your questions and meet others who have survived GBS. Everyone has a story and each one is unique. The commonality between us all is that GBS has changed our lives and made us stronger.

In the same issue you will read a review of a recently released book written by two physicians on the Foundation Board — Dr. Gareth Parry and Dr. Joel Steinberg. Guillain-Barre Syndrome From Diagnosis to Recovery offers a detailed view of the GBS experience in layman's terms.

Your Opportunities:

If you are not on the Foundation mailing list, consider calling or e-mailing to get in the data base.

A subscription does not carry a set fee. The Foundation gratefully receives donations of any amount at any time.

Call ~ 610-667-0131, a toll free number is new this year ~ 1-866-224-3301;

Write ~ The Holly Building, 104 ½ Forrest Avenue, Narberth, PA 19072;

Fax ~ 610-667-7036; e-mail ~ info@gbsfi.com.

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Looking Ahead:

Our next meeting of the Denver area support group will be on Saturday, March 1, at 2:00pm. As usual, we will meet at St. Anthony Central Hospital, 4231 W. 16th ~ near Sheridan and Colfax. The March meeting will be held in the auditorium on the first floor ~ (the Docs have commandeered the Birch room for their lounge temporarily). If you come in the main entrance

you'll find directional signs to follow. The meetings and the refreshments are free.

We have had quite a few calls and e-mails these past weeks regarding what some survivors describe as setbacks. One of the current areas of concern and--one would hope—research is discerning the difference between recurrent residuals and CIDP. Another question in the minds of older patients: Is this aging or GBS encore? These and other questions will be explored at the meeting. Do not hesitate to bring family members or friends who may not understand this “gift that keeps on giving.”

Join us to socialize, learn, munch on cookies, and relax. Many people recently diagnosed are eager to meet others who have undergone the same sort of experiences. Here, you will meet a whole roomful of us. Your presence and input at a meeting will always help another GBS survivor and caregiver. You will have a chance to pick up handouts from previous meetings as well.

Mark your calendar for **Saturday March 1, at 2:00pm.**

A note from one of our Supporters:

On April 19, 2008, the Imperial Court of the Rocky Mountain Empire (ICRME) will hold a fund raiser for the GBS Foundation at the Four Points Sheraton Denver Southeast. More information at www.denvercourt.org or call 303-343-3490.

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All recipients of this newsletter are encouraged to provide suggestions and tips for upcoming meetings and newsletters. This is YOUR way to provide encouragement and HOPE to others. We need YOUR input so we can to continue to provide you with what you want from this group.

Please call or write us:

Ann ~ 303-438-1428 anngeob@msn.com.

Elaine ~ 303-567-2927 mtn.weaver@wildblue.net

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Relax, stay warm, and enjoy our beautiful snowy Colorado winter.
We look forward to seeing you March 1st.