

◆ THE DERBY CITY NSCIA NEWSLETTER ◆

JULY 2010

The Derby City Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association Network- Serving Kentuckiana.

Message From the President

Dear Members & Friends-

OUR KINGFISH DINNER IS JULY 19TH. SEE DETAILS BELOW.

There will NOT be a meeting in August.



COME JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL KINGFISH DINNER

**MONDAY, JULY 19, 6:00 P.M.
3021 UPPER RIVER ROAD
LOUISVILLE, KY**

THE CHAPTER WILL PROVIDE MEALS FOR DUES-PAYING MEMBERS. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE NOT INCLUDED.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!!

The following articles are from the Internet—ed.

MICE HAIR COULD REPAIR INJURED SPINAL CORD

The ground-breaking discovery, unveiled at the World Congress on Hair Research in Cairns on Friday may give a glimmer of hope to those who cannot walk, the *Cairns Post* reports.

U.S. and Japanese researchers have found a new source of stem cells in the hair follicles of mice. The stem cells, discovered by chance by scientists at the research lab Anticancer, based in San Diego, have been found to repair nerve and spinal cord injury in mice, allowing them to walk again.

Similar cells from human hair also had the same effect on mice, potentially demonstrating the same treatment could be applied to humans suffering spinal cord injuries.

Researchers stumbled on the discovery while examining the skin of mice, attempting to trace cancer cells. Anticancer president Robert Hoffman, who is also a president at the University of California's medical center, said when the cells were placed in the severed nerves of a mouse, it was found to eventually rejoin and regain its function.

In a remarkable video shown at the conference, a mouse with its spinal cord severed was seen running about after it had been treated with the hair follicle stem cells.

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Refrigerator Calendar

2010

JULY

- 5th
Mon** **Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting
1:00; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.**
- 19th
Mon** **Derby City Chapter-National Spinal Cord Injury Association-Annual Summer Dinner-
6:00p.m. at Kingfish Restaurant on Zorn Ave in Louisville. Meal provided by Chapter
for dues-paying members. Please call David Allgood to confirm your attendance at
(502) 588-8574.**
- 26th
Mon** **Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 3:15 p.m.
Spalding University; 845 S. Third Street; Louisville.**
- 27th-30th
Sun-Wed** **Spina Bifida Association National Conference, “Leading the Way to the Future”;
Hyatt Regency Hotel , Cincinnati, Ohio. To register or to find out more please visit the
website at www.sbaa.org.**

AUGUST

- 2nd
Mon** **Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting
1:00; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room**
- 16th
Mon** **Derby City Chapter National Spinal Cord Injury Association
There will NOT be a meeting in August.**
- 23rd
Mon** **Metro disability Coalition Meeting; 3:15 p.m.
Spalding University; 845 S. Third Street; Louisville.**

For More Information Call
David Allgood at 502-588-8574

Derby City Area Chapter
of the
National Spinal Cord Injury Association

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The Derby City Area Chapter of the N.S.C.I.A. is a membership organization for individuals with spinal cord injuries, their families, and health professionals. Founded in 1984 as a Charter Member of the N.S.C.I.A., it was incorporated under IRS Section 501 (c) 3 as a not for profit organization. The Board of Directors consists of the Officers, Past President and the Board Members At Large.

OFFICERS

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**NSCIA DERBY CITY CHAPTER
NEWSLETTER STAFF**

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Contributor- David Allgood

Visit Our Website at
www.DerbyCitySpinalCord.org

**The Derby City Area Chapter Newsletter is brought to
you through the generous support of Frazier
Rehab Institute**

**'FOR EVERYTHING I'VE LOST, I'VE GAINED
SO MUCH MORE'**

By Joe Ciavaglia

Men account for the vast majority of people with spinal cord injury-related paralysis. Most are in their prime reproductive years.

Glen Dick didn't see himself married with kids. Just finding a date is hard when you're paralyzed from the chest down, no matter how good looking you are.

Then Glen met Monica, a corporate career woman who says she broke up with guys for wearing the wrong shoes.

A year later, they married. The New Britain couple knew they wanted to expand their family with a child. And at 35, they weren't getting any younger.

They beat the odds once when they found each other. But creating a baby together, that seemed impossible.

But it's not, fertility experts say. People with spinal cord injury-related paralysis can - and do - conceive children. But it can be a long, emotionally difficult and expensive process with no guarantees. Men, more so than women, also can find it harder to achieve biological parenthood.

Approximately 12,000 spinal cord injuries occur in the U.S. each year, according to the National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. As of last year, about 262,000 U.S. residents were living with spinal cord injuries. Men account for the vast majority - about 81 percent - of people with spinal cord injury-related paralysis. Most are in their prime reproductive years, ages 16 to 40, and were unmarried when they were injured, according to the center.

That's what happened with Glen Dick. On Fourth of July weekend in 1995, Glen, a 25-year-old new college graduate, met some friends in Dewey Beach, Del., for dinner at a bayside restaurant. During the evening, a few of the guys went to a nearby dock and started horsing around in shallow water.

One stuck out his hand to Glen, as though he wanted to be pulled out. Instead, Glen was yanked in. His head hit the bottom; his neck broke. He has been in a wheelchair ever since.

Glen spent the next decade slowly seeking normalcy in his new limited life, where home health aides performed the most personal tasks for him. Meanwhile, he focused on the little things he could still do himself and celebrated accomplishments like moving his arms enough to feed himself, brush his teeth and use a computer.

(Continued On Page Four)

FOR EVERYTHING I'VE LOST

Within the first year after the accident, he learned to drive again, returned to work as a landscape architect and volunteered at a local elementary school. Eventually, the school district offered him a full-time job working as a special education assistant.

But one goal still eluded him: finding love.

"That was one that was just out of reach," he said. He dated only one woman after the accident, but didn't give up when that didn't work out. He turned to the Internet.

Meanwhile, Monica had been Internet dating for two years. She had many dates, first and only ones. She was picky. She was also a mid-30-something, stressed out, miserable workaholic director of marketing for Tastykake.

One night, she took a break while working late at the office and scrolled through some dating profiles. If a guy's picture caught her eye, she'd then read what they wrote about themselves.

The photo of Glen Dick, a blue-eyed, all-American type, got her attention. A real cutie. She sent him an introduction.

Four months later, Monica was working late again when she checked the dating website to see if anyone caught her eye. Someone did - Glen again. Only this time, Monica was annoyed. He ignored her first message. So she fired off a "snotty" one.

Glen had seen the first message. But when he read Monica's profile, he thought she was definitely out of his league - a career woman who loves traveling.

"She's going to look at me as an anchor," he thought.

The second message, he responded to. He apologized for not replying earlier, but said he'd been laying low. His Internet dating experience had been rather disastrous. He then revealed the one thing he left off his dating profile: He used a wheelchair.

Now Monica had a big decision. Did she delete him? Or did she respond? She had never talked to anyone in a wheelchair before.

From his profile, he seemed like someone she'd like to get to know better.

Physical appearances didn't matter to him. He appreciated the small details and had an amazingly positive attitude. Maybe they'd become friends. They exchanged e-mails, then phone calls. Within three weeks, they decided to meet.

Monica impressed Glen by researching everything she could find online about spinal cord injuries and quadriplegia. "It was fascinating to me," she said. "Not a turnoff at all."

Two weeks after that first date, Glen and Monica say they knew they'd get married. They announced their engagement on Valentine's Day 2005. They married seven months later.

Monica never had a great yearning for motherhood, until she found Glen. She wanted to have his kids.

"I wanted to give him that gift."

But could Glen father a child? In 2007, the couple decided to find out.

"Naively, we thought that being we are two healthy and fertile individuals, it would come easily," Glen said. "Just a matter of connecting X with Y."

But the couple faced a double-fertility dilemma: Monica's age, then 38; and Glen's injury.

Women's fertility naturally declines after age 30, and fertility problems are common in men following a spinal cord-related injury, according to medical studies. Most men with spinal cord injuries experience erectile and ejaculatory dysfunction and poor semen quality. They usually can produce a normal number of sperm, but most are not active.

For decades, in vitro fertilization was the only option - other than natural conception, which is rare - for men such as Glen to achieve biological fatherhood. Medically assisted ejaculation was used to obtain a semen sample, which was then used to inseminate a woman.

Insemination requires a few hundred thousand to 1 million active sperm to fertilize an egg, and success rates are significantly reduced with low sperm counts or less active sperm, said Dr. Stephen Somkuti, medical director of Abington Reproductive Medicine's IVF Program, where the Dicks sought fertility treatment.

A relatively new IVF treatment has "leveled the playing field" for men with semen problems, Somkuti said. With the procedure, doctors extract sperm from the testicles and, using microscopic technology, insert a single sperm directly into an egg to fertilize it.

FOR EVERYTHING I'VE LOST, CONT'D

But after two years that included seven failed insemination and two failed in vitro fertilization attempts, Glen and Monica Dick agreed that their 10th attempt, again using IVF and direct egg fertilization, would be their last. "We knew that we had a strong enough relationship that if we were not blessed with children, we would still have a wonderful life together," Glen said.

In March 2009, they learned their wonderful life together would include a child.

Daughter Elaina was born Dec. 4, 2009. Glen took natural childbirth classes with Monica and he coached her through labor and delivery.

"Sometimes, I shake my head and can't believe how fortunate I am," Glen said. "I've got everything I've dreamt of - how many people can say that? People may see me out in public and say, that poor man. It's actually quite the opposite. For everything I've lost, I've gained so much more."

Not that fatherhood from a wheelchair is easy. But it has been an adventure. Elaina took naps in a papoose he wore on his chest. Now, she can sit on his lap in the wheelchair and he'll wrap one arm around her, as long as Monica is nearby. At bedtime, Monica holds a book so Glen can read to Elaina as she sits on his lap.

"She already knows how to drive my chair," he added.

Yes, his physical interaction with his daughter is limited. He can't pick her up and comfort her when she's crying. He can't dress her, bathe her or put her in the crib. He can't change diapers, though he jokes it's the one chore he isn't all that upset he can't do.

"I watch a lot, so I can feel part of the process. It can be tough at times, but I simply can't allow myself to be sad at what I can't do," he said. "I knew if I ever had children, there would be those heart-wrenching moments of wanting to do something I can't. I just have to take them one at a time."

Glen is confident that as Elaina gets older, they'll do more activities together. For now, what he can give her is his time and attention.

(Continued Under For Sale)

FOR SALE ***

2004 Buick Rendezvous CX, Gold Sport Utility 4D, AWD; 52,953 mi; seats 5—rear compartment contains Sonic scooter Bruno lift; new battery; numerous special features. \$8,800. Call Bryan Fantoni at 502-644-4446 or email at Bryan.Fantoni@mozlaw.com.

Easy Stand Glider 600; like new—barely used; allows transfer, stand and glider movement of legs. Paid \$6,000. Will sell for \$3,000. Call Shirley at 502/228-1271.

93" E150; EZ Lock WC System Elec. w/Quantum 600 wc/swivel captain's chairs/3-way power driver's seat/remote start burglar alarm/front-rear air/power wc lift/new upholstery. \$11,000, negotiable. **(502) 543-5948/(502) 773-2337.**

****If assistance is needed to pay for any of the above items, contact Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation at 1-800-327-5287 for information on loans at 5% interest to qualified individuals.*

***Cookbooks for Sale:** Recipes compiled by Chapter members; \$10:00. Call David @ 585-8574.

***Video tapes for sale.** Various topics related to spinal cord injuries. Call David Allgood or Buddy Lawson.

♦ **SCI -Shirts for sale.** S, M, L, XL. David—589-6620.

**FOR EVERYTHING I'VE LOST, CONT'D**

"Children need time more than anything," he said, "more than being a coach or throwing a ball with them or taking them to an amusement park."

Today the family marks its first Father's Day together. Monica, who never saw herself as a mother, is now an at-home mom who can't imagine life without their daughter.

"The fact that she is here because we fell in love doesn't escape me," she said. "I love to watch her dad and her interact."

So much so that the couple is ready to try for baby No. 2.

"Maybe we'll be lucky enough to have one naturally this time," Glen said.

You are cordially invited to join us!

The Derby City Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association consists of people with spinal cord injuries and similar physical conditions, their family members, friends, and professionals or other interested parties.

We meet:

WHEN- Third Monday of every month from 6:30 to 9:00 PM

*WHERE- Frazier Rehab Institute, 10th floor Dining Room
220 Abraham Flexner Way, Louisville, KY 40202*

If you wish to be a member, donor, and/or be on the mailing list of the Derby City Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association please complete and mail the following form to the address below

National Spinal Cord Injury Association

Derby City Chapter

Membership & Organization Sponsorship Form

Name: Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr. _____ Date _____
 Address: _____ Apt.# _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Business (if any): _____
 Home Phone: () _____ Work Phone: () _____
 Date of Birth _____
 Para: _____ Quad _____ Hemiplegic: _____
 Level of Disability _____ Other Disability _____
 Able-Bodied (yes/no): _____
 New Member: _____ Renewal _____ Newsletter Subscription
 (only \$12): _____

Special Interests /Hobbies/Sports: _____

Membership is open to all individuals and sponsorship to all organizations interested in spinal cord injury.

Mark Type of TAX DEDUCTIBLE Individual Membership or Organization Donor Category Desired***

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| _____ Regular-\$12 | _____ Bronze Organization-\$100-249 |
| _____ Sponsor-\$25 | _____ Silver Organization-\$250-499 |
| _____ Patron \$50 | _____ Gold Organization- \$500-999 |
| _____ Benefactor-\$100 | _____ Platinum Organization-\$1000-2499 |
| _____ Permanent- \$1000/lifetime** | _____ Diamond Organization-\$2500 Or Over. |

Please make checks payable to: **NSCIA Derby City Chapter**

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