
◆ THE DERBY CITY NSCIA NEWSLETTER ◆

SEPTEMBER 2005

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

Message From the President

Dear Members & Friends-

In lieu of September's meeting we will have our annual picnic at Camp Crooked Creek. Please see directions below.

October's meeting will be held at 6:30 at Frazier Rehab, 4th floor dining hall.

-David Allgood

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP CROOKED CREEK

TAKE I-65 SOUTH FROM LOUISVILLE TO EXIT 112 (CLAREMONT/BARDSTOWN). TURN LEFT AT THE TOP OF THE RAMP AND GO APPROXIMATELY TWO BLOCKS UNTIL YOU SEE THE "OLD KENTUCKY SCOUT RESERVATION" SIGN ON THE RIGHT. TURN RIGHT AND FOLLOW THE ROAD UNTIL IT ENDS, THEN TURN LEFT ON TERRY ROAD, WHICH WILL LEAD YOU TO THE CAMP.

From the Courier-Journal, August 28, 2005

WHEELCHAIR NO HANDICAP FOR CLARKSVILLE POLICE CAPTAIN

By Dale Moss

His younger brother will not ask, but most everybody else has, Barry, do you walk in your dreams?

Not any more. In his dreams, Barry Ross is in a wheelchair, just as in real life.

"I don't know what that means," Ross said.

"Something silly, probably."

for years longer, in fantasies that are routine for the able-bodied. Ross finally refuses to fool himself, night or day.

It has been 15 years since a skidding tractor-trailer hit Ross' stopped police vehicle on Interstate 65. A captain in Clarksville-then and now-Ross is still adapting to his unfair reality.

"I don't think I've ever felt sorry for myself," he said.

Not that hope hurts. Ross reads of stem cell research at the University of Louisville and may be asked to be involved. He is buoyed by a paralyzed Connecticut officer who has taken a few miraculous steps.

While Ross follows the research, at 52 he doubts he will live long enough for a dramatic breakthrough. His spine is severed, partway up his back. But wouldn't it be wonderful to be wrong?

"In the back of my mind," Ross said, "I always think..."

It was 1989 and the state had earmarked money for local police to catch drunken drivers. Ross, Clarksville's community relations and youth officer, agreed to overtime patrol. He did not have to be on the road.

"I was only doing it a couple of hours that evening," he said. "I was getting ready to get off."

A van had stalled—ironically, both its occupants in wheelchairs. Ross had a large vehicle and was called to give them a lift. He was in a median turn-around lane when his vehicle was hit. The collision flipped Ross' vehicle and somehow flung him 25 feet out of the rear window even though he was wearing a seatbelt.

Rick Dickman, then the town council president, visited Ross the day after the wreck. It was hard not to be gloomy, pessimistic, nearly impossible to imagine Ross

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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.

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NSCIA
DERBY CITY CHAPTER
NEWSLETTER

Editor- Barbara Davis

Contributor- David Allgood

CLARKSVILLE SHERRIFF , CONT'D

“If Barry had wanted to quit to look out the window, we would have supported him,” Dickman said.

An officer since 1976, Ross returned instead to his old job and has handled several headquarters roles. He now is in charge of records, a duty he takes so seriously that he requests medication for pain that might slow him.

“He is in excruciating pain every day, and he chooses to go to work every day,” said Anne Ross, his wife of 30 years, who is heroic in her own right.

“A lot of people thought she was my nurse for a long time,” Ross said of his wife.

Ross returned to the force to prove to himself he could and to others that he should. Regarding the latter, Ross said, “Just me saying ‘I can do it’ wouldn’t be good enough for them.” Ross is an asset to the town and a role model to its people, Dickman said. He vigilantly keeps his qualifications current, and, despite his limits, carries his weight.

“I do all the things a police officer does,” he said. “I just have to do them sitting down.” He drives and plugs away at a degree at Indiana University Southeast. Ross bristles at kid-glove treatment, so much as having doors opened for him. Amenities are disguised in the accessible home he had to have built. The elevator can be assumed to be a closet.

Yet Ross is as good-natured now as before his injury, Dickman said. Ross wouldn’t have it any other way than to keep the conversation cotton-candy light.

“It’s the old Barry,” Dickman said. “It just happens to be Barry in a wheelchair.”

David Ross, Barry’s younger brother, is the assistant police chief in Clarksville. He is an officer at his older brother’s urging, grateful for the guidance and in awe of the determination.

“He actually probably should not be here,” Dickman said. “But for whatever reason, he is. And I’m glad.”

Barry Ross considers retirement, perhaps fairly soon. He still feels fulfilled and useful, yet the system is set up for police officers to hang it up in their 50’s.

“He’s having problems making the decision,” said Anne Ross, who encourages his retirement.

Ross likes guns and he could open a shop or work at one. He and his brother own some remote woods he could visit more often. He suggests another run for public office—he failed in a 1990’s bid for town council. And he can keep following son Michael’s career in law enforcement; Michael Ross is also an officer in Clarksville.

Barry Ross’ injury is old news. Some people remember, others guess he was shot. Ross can be taken for granted in part because he tries to be. He lives routinely the life dealt him instead of waiting obsessively for his odds to change. Explaining his dreams, his outlook, Ross said, “This is forever.”

Refrigerator Calendar

***2005**

SEPTEMBER

- 5th - Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting**
Mon 1:00-2:30 p.m.; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.
As this is a holiday, call for alternate date.
- 18th - NSCIA Derby City Area Chapter meeting 12:30 p.m. Frazier Rehab**
Mon Annual Picnic. See President's Message and Directions on page one.
- 17th - Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.; PVA Office on Goss Avenue.**
Sat Speaker to be announced; if questions, contact Terri Leasor at 589-6620 or at mdclouky.org

OCTOBER

- 3rd - Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting**
Mon 1:00-2:30 p.m.; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.
- 17th - Derby City Chapter Meeting, 4th floor activity room; 6:30 p.m.**
Sun Frazier Rehabilitation; Abraham Flexnor Way
- 15th - Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.; PVA Office on Goss Avenue.**
Sat Speaker to be announced; if questions contact Terri Leasor at 589-6620 or mdclouky.org

For More Information Call
David Allgood, 502-589-6620

From the Courier-Journal, August 22, 2005

SKIN CELLS MADE INTO STEM CELLS

Scientists for the first time have turned ordinary skin cells into what appear to be embryonic stem cells—without having to use human eggs or make new human embryos in the process, as has been required, a Harvard research team announced yesterday.

The new technique uses laboratory-grown human embryonic stem cells—such as the ones President Bush already has approved for use by federally funded researchers—to “reprogram” the genes in a person’s skin cell, turning that skin cell into an embryonic stem cell itself.

Moreover, since the new stem cells made this way were essentially rejuvenated versions of a person’s own skin cells, the DNA in those new stem cells matches the DNA of the person who provided the skin cells. In theory, that means that any tissues grown from those newly minted stem cells could be transplanted into the person to treat a disease without much risk that they would be rejected, since they would constitute an exact genetic match.

The approach, which is to be published later this week in the journal *Science*, but was made public on the journal’s web site, is still in an early stage of development. But if further studies confirm its usefulness, it could offer an end run around the heated debate that has for years over-shadowed the field of human embryonic stem cell research.

The researchers emphasize in their report that the technique is still far from finding application in medicine. Most important, they note that because it involves the fusion of a stem cell and a person’s ordinary skin cell, the process leads to the creation of a hybrid cell. While that cell has all the characteristics of a new embryonic stem cell, it contains the DNA of the person who donated the skin cell and also the DNA of the initial embryonic stem cell.

At some point before these hybrid cells are coaxed to grow into replacement parts to be transplanted into a person, that extra DNA must be extracted, the researchers write.

The team describes this task as a “substantial technical barrier” to the clinical use of stem cells made with the new technique.

Until now, the only way to turn a person’s ordinary cell into a “personalized” stem cell such as this was to turn that ordinary cell into an embryo first and later destroy the embryo to retrieve the new stem cells growing inside—a process widely known as “therapeutic cloning.”

More immediately, the new work is likely to have an impact on Capitol Hill, where the Senate is poised to vote on legislation—already passed by the House—that would loosen President Bush’s restrictions on human embryonic research. ✧

From the Courier-Journal, August 2, 2005

UofL STUDY SHOWS STEM CELLS MAY HELP WITH SPINAL CORD INJURY

By Marcus Wohlsen

Keith Becht, 43 of Floyds Knobs, Ind., was going to pick up a volleyball when he fell over a fence at a friend’s house and hit the ground face-first 21 years ago. He hasn’t walked, or had the use of his arms since. But new research into stem cells at the University of Louisville makes him think that one day he will.

Becht and several others with spinal cord injuries attended a news conference yesterday in support of a UofL study that shows that embryonic stem cells may have the potential to treat spinal cord injuries.

“The stem cell is where there’s going to be a cure,” Becht said.

Genetically engineered stem cells helped paralyzed rats move their legs again, according to the study, published last week in the *Journal of Neuroscience*.

The rats’ spinal cords, partially severed in the lab, began to heal after receiving stem cell grafts from rat embryos, the report said.

“This type of approach definitely has applicability to human injury,” said Scott Whittemore, scientific director of the University of Louisville Spinal Cord Injury Research Center and a lead researcher on the stem cell project. A new \$10 million grant from the National Institutes of Health will help UofL, Whittemore said.

The UofL study has attracted national media attention as the controversy over federal funding for human embryonic stem cell research heats up again in Congress. Clinical trials using embryonic stem cells to test new treatment on people are likely several years away, Whittemore said.

Alexander Rabchevsky, a spinal cord injury researcher at the University of Kentucky, called the UofL results, “encouraging.” Rabchevsky, 38, lost the use of his legs after a spinal cord injury 20 years ago.

(Continued On Page Five)

UOFL STEM CELL RESEARCH, CONT'D

The new study stands out from earlier research, Rabchevsky said, because it measured electrical signals traveling from the brain to the legs via spinal tissue repaired by the stem cell therapy.

The stem cells helped regenerate the spinal cord's myelin sheath, a fatty outer layer that protects nerves much like insulation around an electrical cord, the report said.

The findings also show promise for the treatment of multiple sclerosis, where the human immune system attacks myelin throughout the body, Whittemore said.

The UofL study appeared just days before Senate Majority leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., stunned many conservatives by announcing his support for greater federal funding for embryonic stem cell research.

President Bush has said he would veto any legislation that eased federal restrictions on embryonic stem cells.

Harvesting stem cells from human embryos "destroys a tiny human being," said Margie Montgomery, executive director of the Kentucky Right to Life Association.

Montgomery said she hopes UofL will researchers will shun embryos in favor of using adult stem cells.

"We want people to be cured," she said. "But we want it done in an ethical manner."

Adult stem cells may one day provide effective treatments, Whittemore said. But for now "our greatest chance for success in humans is going to be in embryonic stem cells."



Scott Whittemore, right, scientific director of the University of Louisville's Kentucky Spinal Cord Injury Research Center, spoke to David Allgood, who has a spinal cord injury, after the news conference August 1.

FOR SALE!!!!

***2003 Ford F-250 lift-equipped green/gray van;** leather seats, TV, DVD player. Playstation hookup, am-fm radio. Rick Miller, 937-2245.

***Shower Chair; 2 yrs old, negotiable; 2 RoHo cushions; low profile; \$150 each; Invacare 900 Action Power Chair; 4 yrs. Old; \$600. Call 448-5296.**

***RoHo High Profile 16x16 cushions; \$160; 589-6620.**

***Cookbooks for Sale:** Recipes compiled by Chapter members; \$10:00. Call David @ 589-6620.

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

****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 candidates.*

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO
PLACE AN AD IN FOR SALES,
CALL 589-6620. ASK FOR
BARB OR DAVID.**

