

# TBI UP-DATE

FEBRUARY 2018

## KNOXVILLE AREA BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

### March Meeting:

The Knoxville Area Brain Injury Support Group will meet at the Ronald McDonald House in the Annex on **Monday, March 5, 2018** at 6 PM for a Chili Supper. This is being provided for the residents of the Ronald McDonald House in Knoxville in recognition of March is *Brain Injury Awareness Month* as a community outreach.

The address is 1705 West Clinch Avenue Knoxville, TN 37916. If you are interested in participating in this activity, call Patty Cruze at (865) 331-1499. Volunteers are still needed to bring the following items:

Chili	Crackers
Corn Chips	Bowls
Napkins	Cups
Soft Drinks	Shredded Cheese
Desserts	Drinks

Those who are providing chili will need to arrive by 5:30 P.M. at the Ronald McDonald House. The Chili Supper will begin around 6:00 P.M. This will take place in the Ronald McDonald House Annex, which has an accessible entrance and parking in the front entrance off 17<sup>th</sup> Street. Parking is available in the rear of the building.

The guest speaker will be Woodrow Lucas, Executive Director of the Brain Injury Association of Tennessee in Nashville. He will have information on the TBI Survivor, Family and Caregiver Event which will be held in Nashville on Friday, March 16, 2018 (see page 2 for more information). Woodrow Lucas will also be discussing the Writing Project that the Brain Injury Association of Tennessee is working on as a state-wide project in Tennessee. An example of a writing submission from this area is located on page 3 of this Newsletter.

### April & May 2018 KABISG Meetings:

The Knoxville Area Brain Injury Support Group (KABISG) normally meets on the first Monday of the month (unless a Holiday). The meeting is held at 7:00 P.M. in the Five East Classroom at Patricia Neal Rehabilitation Center at Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center. Parking is available in the Admission / Discharge Parking area located on Laurel Avenue from 6:30 – 7:00 P.M. The parking gate will close promptly at 7:00 P.M. From the lobby, take blue elevators to 5<sup>th</sup> floor and room is across the hall. *More questions:* call Patty Cruze at (865) 331-1499.

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## **STATE BRAIN INJURY WORKSHOP**

The Tennessee Traumatic Brain Injury Program will be having the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual TBI Survivor, Family and Caregiver Event on Friday, March 16, 2018. This event will be held in Nashville at the Metro Nashville Police Department West Precinct in the Community Room. The address is 5500 Charlotte Pike in Nashville, Tennessee. This event will be from 9:30 A.M. until 2:30 P.M. There will be free parking and lunch will be provided for the attendees.

The event is FREE to attend; however, registration is required. Brochures are available in printed form and electronically. The brochures will be available at the Ronald McDonald House Chili Supper on Monday, March 5, 2018. For additional questions, contact Jean Doster with the Tennessee Department of Health / Traumatic Brain Injury Program at 1-800-882-0611.

Anyone who has an interest in individuals with brain injuries are invited to participate. Individuals with brain injuries, their family members, caregivers, and service providers will all benefit from attending.

The Keynote Speaker, Dr. Kay Potetz, is a motivational speaker. Her topic will be "Laughing Matters". Other presentations include "Brain Injury Across the Lifespan" by Wendy Ellmo and Sarah King will discuss "Police Interactions: Know Your Rights". There will also be a Panel Discussion to include an individual with a brain injury, a parent, and a professional.

There will also be exhibits from agencies who have services for individuals with traumatic brain injuries and their family members.

Registration is available by completing the Registration Form on the brochure. The following information is requested: Name, full address, telephone number, and e-mail address (if available). That information can be sent by e-mail to: [Jean.Doster@tn.gov](mailto:Jean.Doster@tn.gov) or mailed to her at the following address:

Traumatic Brain Injury Program  
Family Health & Wellness  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor, AJT  
710 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Registration is also available on-line at:

[Bit.ly/2F6jMTp](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/29th-annual-tbi-survivor-family-and-caregiver-event-tickets-42467868538)

Or

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/29th-annual-tbi-survivor-family-and-caregiver-event-tickets-42467868538>

After registration on-line, a confirmation should be received.

Thanks to the following programs this event is being offered to individuals in Tennessee to attend at no cost:

Tennessee Department of Health /  
Traumatic Brain Injury Program

Brain Injury Association of Tennessee

Disability Rights TN. (formerly  
Disability Law and Advocacy Center of  
Tennessee)

# TBI PANCAKES

Written by Bob Millard

Store brand pancake mix costs 99 cents.

Instructions: Pour the powder in a bowl, add liquid, stir, pour batter into heated skillet.

This sounds nearly as fool-proof as the recipe for Instant Water - just add water.

Thanks to a series of clobbering concussions over my lifetime, no set of sequential steps is that easy for me. I need a lot of information; i.e, 1) inhale, 2) exhale, 3) repeat. It's humiliating.

I've lost good-paying jobs because I can't learn or retain proprietary software well. Built around copy-crammed pages of unfamiliar forms, abstract specialty terms, ambiguous language written with the presumption that everybody knows things not mentioned in the documentation. To **Stop**, you click **Start**. There is nothing intuitive about any of it.

Employers took me for lazy, a goof, disorganized, slow on the uptake and needing too much help. No one thought that I was dumb, which made my firing all the more a judgment on my character.

Until last year, I wondered if maybe it was true, but these things were symptoms of an underlying disability I hadn't heard of; none of them fit my sense of self.

There had, nevertheless, been some nagging problems going back to college and a pair of nearly-fatal vehicle accidents. My head was busted open and swollen up like a black and blue basketball, but doctors didn't mention traumatic brain injury.

"College boy, eh? Not a vital organ," they'd say. "Stitch him up and send him home."

After the second one, I had to drop out for a semester.

But, let's get back to pancakes.

I learned pancaking from my Mom, who used to tell us she cooked "by ear". She used the beater / blender to prepare a half-gallon of batter in a big bowl. The single man's packet says, "Don't beat too much, it makes your pancakes tough." How much is "too much," I wondered. Define "tough".

Different brands of pancake powder use different amounts of water. Add more for thinner, less for thicker. For fluffier pancakes, use half milk and half water, or add an egg, or don't. Thinner, thicker, fluffier than what? To the plus side, I learned by experience the skillet is hot enough for pancakes when the Teflon starts boiling off.

Second-guessing begets stress; stress begets obsessive re-reading of instructions, which begets obsessive re-reading of instructions, again, begetting visual field lockup, intensifying stress until I'm reading sentences right-to-left, darting eyes decoding a word here, another there. I forget how much liquid I put in.

I keep a packet of pancake mix around, studiously ignoring it in avoidance and denial. My small bottle of Mrs. Buttersworth gathers dust. About every six months, I'll wake up glorious in optimism and try again.

Now that I know about my TBI, I am trying to get help. Perhaps some day, I'll invite you over for pancakes. Knock on wood, but don't hold your breath quite yet.

*This article has been submitted to the Brain Injury Association of Tennessee for the Writing Project.*

## **EVENTS OF INTEREST**

Adaptive Climbing with Catalyst Sports

March 3, 2018 from 10 A.M. - NOON

River Sports Outfitters – 2918 Sutherland Avenue in Knoxville

Cost: \$5.00

Seizures and Brain Injury 101 – Free training in Nashville - March 2, 2018

Contact: Pam Bryan at (615) 512-2601

Chattanooga Area Brain Injury Association Conference – March 21, 2018

Contact Lisa Morgan at (423) 634-1572

### **This publication is funded through a grant from the Tennessee Department of Health / Traumatic Brain Injury Program**

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Brain Injury Community Services Coordination

Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center

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