



The ALS Association Greater New York Chapter

Monthly Update

Serving Greater New York and Northern and Central New Jersey
42 Broadway, Suite 1724, New York, NY 10004, 212-619-1400 f: 212-619-7409 www.als-nyc.org

December Support Groups

SUFFOLK COUNTY, NY

December 1, 2009 6:00-8:00 PM
(1st Tuesday of every month)
Stony Brook University, Dept. of Neurology
179 North Belle Meade Rd, E. Setauket
(631) 444-1970
Topic: Pot Luck Holiday Celebration
Facilitator: Theresa Imperato, RN - (631) 444-4623

NASSAU COUNTY, NY

December 6, 2009 2:00-4:00 PM
(1st Sunday of every month)
North Shore's Central General Hospital
888 Old Country Road, Plainview
Downstairs Meeting Room; (516) 719-3000
Topic: Pot Luck Holiday Celebration
Facilitators: Theresa Imperato, RN - (631) 444-4623
Jody Wiesel, PhD - (917) 699-9751

MANHATTAN, NY

December 15, 2009 6:00-8:00 PM
(3rd Tuesday of every month)
Phillips Ambulatory Care Center (Beth Israel)
10 Union Square East (Bet. 14th & 15th St.)
2nd Floor, Conference Room #1
Topic: Holiday Celebration
Facilitator: Jody Wiesel, PhD - (917) 699-9751

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ

December 12, 2009 1:00-3:00 PM
(This is a change from our regular schedule.)
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital
Medical Education Building, Rm 108A
180 Somerset Street, Follow signs to meeting.
Topic: Holiday Celebration
Facilitators: Debbie Schlossberg, LMSW
(732) 710-8832
Mary Ann Mertz, RN

For more information about our Support Groups go to the Patient Services section at: www.als-nyc.org or call 212-619-1400.

CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

While the holiday season is a great opportunity to enjoy yourself and appreciate friends and family, it can also be extremely stress inducing and exhausting. When planning for the holidays, it's important to take a step back and re-examine past holidays in order to avoid the usual stressors of over-scheduling, over-eating and over-spending.



Make a list of stressors you would like to eliminate or reduce, activities or items you would like to add to this year's celebrations, and things you can do to bring more peace to the season. After reviewing the list, share it with friends and family so they can contribute to finding simple ways to put the list into action.

Accept that there are some things you might have done in past years that aren't as simple to do this year. Utilize the internet and do a majority of your holiday shopping online. If you register at www.igive.com a percentage of each of your purchases will go to The ALS Association Greater New York Chapter. Most websites offer gift wrapping options and your gifts can be delivered right to your (or their) door. Don't feel pressured to accept invitations to every holiday party. It's OK to say no especially if it's for the sake of your well-being. Allow yourself to take a step away from celebrating in order to rest and stay as close to your regular routine as possible.

Use this season to start new holiday traditions with your friends and family. Rather than traveling to see family and friends, invite them to your home in order to avoid the exhaustion and confusion that comes with travel. Instead of taking on all the responsibility of cooking, decorating and setting up for the holidays, invite your guests to contribute by coming earlier and bringing a refreshment each. Don't hesitate to ask for help if needed.

Most importantly, enjoy yourself. Communicate with the people you are spending the holidays with so this season can be relaxing, peaceful and fun. Don't put pressure on yourself to keep up or achieve perfection. Live in the moment and have a Happy Holiday.

CHAPTER TO HOLD FREE TELECONFERENCE EXPLAINING VETERAN'S BENEFITS FOR PALS & THEIR SURVIVING SPOUSES.

Tuesday, December 15, 2009 (Register by 12/11/09)

To help people understand the VA Benefits for Veteran PALS and their surviving spouses, we have arranged for Brenda Rivera from the Paralyzed Veterans Association, to hold a FREE teleconference on VA Benefits. She will discuss the benefits and then open conference to participants' questions. We will also be accepting questions in advance to be addressed during the call.

Call Christine Dunn at 212-720-3044 or by email at dunn@als-nyc.org to register. Instructions to call in will be provided at time of registration.



The NY Chapter has a Lending Library available to all PALS.
We have DVDs of movies & TV shows and books on CD or audio tape to lend.
Please contact Christine Dunn at the Chapter office or e/mail dunn@als-nyc.org.





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Focus On: Walk to Defeat ALS Focus On: J.J.'s Clan



Our family became aware of ALS 18 years ago, when my grandfather, Joe Corso (aka JJ) was suffering from pain in his leg. After many doctor visits, he was given the diagnosis of Lou Gehrig's disease. One of the first reactions he had was "I never played baseball!" During the seven years that he suffered from ALS we watched this very strong, vital man, who had spent his entire life taking care of his family, now have to become totally dependant on us.

As he slowly began to lose the use of his legs and arms, we were all amazed at how brave and happy he remained with his life. As his family, we were heartbroken watching this person who had spent his entire life taking care of six children--a man who also stepped in and played the role of a father to his grandchildren when they lost their own father--fight this battle. But never during this

time did he ask "Why Me?" He was always determined to walk again and hoped to live till 100. During his illness he continued to be optimistic, he loved to go out to lunch and was always asking someone to take him out. He loved his motorized wheelchair, even though you had to get out of his way when he was driving it - he was a menace! He was the love of our lives and we miss him every day.

The last days of his life were spent waiting for the birth of his great-granddaughter Emma. He knew she was born but the next day he lost his fight and left us for good. It is that very same great-granddaughter that has spent the last 3 years Walking to Defeat ALS in Saddle Brook, NJ. She had always heard of Papa Joe and

when she saw the opportunity to make people aware she jumped at the chance.

We started a family team called JJ's Clan and the first year had a team of 22 walkers. Our first year we created t-shirts by using a collage of JJ's photos and each one showed the great smile that was always on his face. We reached out to family and friends as well as business contacts and for the last 3 years have raised over \$5,000 a year! Emma has continued to raise awareness by putting cans on the counter of many businesses, as well as trying to get the student council in her school to sell baseballs. She has also written letters to every one of her teachers asking for their support.

We will continue to support the efforts of the ALS Association in the years to come.

2009 Walks To Defeat ALS: It's Still Not Too Late To Donate!

We're nearing our goal for the year and we can still use your help. Did you know that you can still donate to any of the Walk to Defeat ALS teams until 2010? Go to our website at www.als-ny.org and click on our Walk to Defeat ALS banner to donate. Contact us at 212-619-1400 or email walk@als-ny.org if you have any questions.

As you know, the need for patient services programs for those stricken with ALS is ever present and we continue to help fund important ALS research. Together we will reach our goal. Together we will help families with ALS. Thank you for helping make this year's Walks to Defeat ALS so successful.