

# VOLUNTEER

## news



March  
2020

A Newsletter for the Shepherd Auxiliary & Volunteers

### Volunteer Spotlight: Stan Sands

Stan Sands was born in Sherman, Texas, with an older sister and a twin brother. It wasn't long before the family moved to Atlanta where he has spent most of his years. His mother was a full-time homemaker, and his father retired as the chairman and CEO of Gold Kist.

Stan struggled sometimes during his elementary school years, but was eventually evaluated at Emory University and diagnosed with dyslexia. Looking back, Stan realizes there was a silver lining to having a learning disability – he learned to compensate by developing strong social skills that served him well throughout his career and personal life. Attending Lakeside High School in Atlanta, at 17 he met the girl (Donna) that would one day become his wife. They later married, had a son and daughter, and now both enjoy their grandchildren!

After high school, Stan enrolled in UGA where he was president of his fraternity and earned his degree in marketing with a minor in economics. While in school, he worked the Saturday night late shift at Georgia Baptist Hospital (now Atlanta Medical Center) in the blood chemistry lab, and really enjoyed the unique environment of a hospital. After graduation he went to work for Scientific Atlanta, working for them in London for a time. After 20 years, he left the company from the position of senior VP of sales.

His next career move was to get involved in the world of startups, where he supported the launching of Micro Muse and became their Executive VP until the company was sold to IBM. Stan tried retirement, but after six months, he realized he was bored and wanted a new challenge. He went to work for Rupert Murdoch's News Corp and became the executive VP of North America until the company was sold to Cisco. After taking a few months off, Stan committed himself to his last chapter of full-time work before complete retirement by applying his experience and skills at Samsung.

Stan had heard of Shepherd Center most of his life, but after retirement, his family friend Duncan Beard invited Stan to shadow him feeding breakfast to spinal cord injury inpatients. Afterward, Stan also chose to become a regular breakfast feeder here. He had no problem being comfortable in our hospital with everyone. "I love it – it gives me a great deal of satisfaction," Stan shares. "It's purposeful and fills a need. Plus, I've never been to a place where every employee says, 'Good morning!'" Stan enjoys teasing our patients about how he is trying to get some nutrition in them before they are "worked over" by the therapists. He knows that each inpatient will be working very hard in therapy shortly after they eat their breakfast. He's found that some moments with an individual patient can really affect him. "They will tell me they don't know how or where their journey of recovery is going to end, but that Shepherd has given them hope. Shepherd has given them hope that when they apply themselves to therapy, they will have a better, more independent life which will also benefit their families." One particular patient who Stan fed really made a big impression on him. "She was totally focused on life going forward without looking back. I've never seen anyone in my life that positive!"

Stan's support of Shepherd Center has taken on multiple dimensions over the last several years, including serving on our Board of Trustees. Both his wife Donna and his daughter Katherine Deere support Shepherd through their involvement in Women Shaping Shepherd. We thank Duncan Beard for guiding this family towards Shepherd Center where their commitments are having an impact. Stan continues to brighten the morning of patients he feeds while also contributing to Board decisions that will guide us into a successful future. We thank you, Stan, for investing your time and energy in Shepherd Center!



**Above:** Stan Sands enjoys connecting with patients while volunteering as a Meal Feeder at Shepherd Center.



# from the AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Dear Auxiliary members,

February was full of LOVE – lots of love for the patients and their families! Thank you to the Sunshine Committee for spreading their love with candy bars! Lois Puckett and her devoted bakers and sellers raised over \$1,500 from the Valentine's Day Bake Sale. Absolutely amazing! The always popular patient and family Bingo event was another success! We had a great turnout, and everyone left a winner. Special thanks to Jeannie Worlock and Karen Martin for securing the prizes and the food, and thanks to all those that brought food. It was a great team effort!

March will bring drier weather hopefully, more events for Auxiliary members and more opportunities to enrich the lives of our patients and their families. It's why we're here!

With a grateful heart,

*Anne*

Anne Worrell

anne.p.worrell@gmail.com



## Mailing Committee

Join Us!  
Tuesday, March 17  
10 a.m.  
7th floor atrium

## Sunshine Committee



Come spread  
LUCK with the  
Sunshine Committee!

Saturday, March 14  
10 a.m.

6th floor classrooms

Please contact Karen Martin at  
kjmartin80@bellsouth.net or  
Jeannie Worlock at wsingingj@aol.com  
with any questions.



**Left and below:** The Valentine's Day Bake Sale was a huge success with a variety of tasty baked goods and with a lovely doggy kissing booth.



## Save The Date

The Annual Auxiliary Luncheon will take place on Thursday, April 23.

Invitations will go out  
this month.  
Please RSVP.  
We hope to see you  
there!



## New Research at Shepherd Center Aims to Reduce Caregiver Burden, Improve Continuity of Care for Acquired Brain Injury

*Written By Amanda Crowe, MA, MPH*

As part of its ongoing mission to improve the standard of care for people with acquired brain injury (ABI), Shepherd Center has launched a new research study to identify the most effective ways to help family members and other caregivers cope with the challenges of caring for people with brain injuries once they transition from the inpatient rehabilitation setting back to their home environment.

After leaving the hospital, people with brain injuries still face an array of physical, cognitive and psychological challenges, such as dizziness, pain, weakness, loss of memory and concentration, depression, irritability and anxiety, all of which can impede recovery. Previous research has shown – and experts agree – that having a reliable and engaged caregiver is one of the most important factors in optimizing ABI recovery.

But caring for someone with an ABI requires a tremendous amount of time and energy, and without proper support or relief, caregivers may fall into a pattern of self-neglect and succumb to anger, depression, feelings of isolation, resentment and even illness. Studies have shown that failing to adequately support caregivers can lead to poorer outcomes for people with ABIs and their family members. “Caregivers are often ill-equipped to meet challenges that arise when a person with an ABI moves from inpatient rehabilitation to the home,” says Mike Jones, Ph.D., vice president of clinical research and assistive technology at Shepherd Center, and founding director of the Center’s Virginia C. Crawford Research Institute. “Many rehabilitation centers that treat people recovering from ABIs are still struggling to find the most effective methods to support caregivers and help extend positive outcomes.”

As part of a three-year grant, Dr. Jones and his team will provide the first head-to-head comparison of two programs designed to support caregivers of people with ABI following discharge. The first program, Building Better Caregivers, was developed by Kate Lorig, Dr.P.H., and colleagues at Stanford University and provides group support facilitated by peer mentors. These peer mentors are volunteers who have been through the recovery process before and who can counsel new caregivers on how to cope with the many difficulties of taking care of people with ABIs. They will receive in-depth training and orientation to help them be effective sources of support. The second program, Problem Solving Training, provides individualized support by a clinician, usually a rehabilitation or family counselor. Both programs consist of six sessions, which can be attended in person or by phone/Skype.

Previous research has shown both programs can benefit people with ABI and their caregivers, but to date, there is no data showing the relative strengths and limitations of these programs, or which is the more effective method for different subgroups of patients and families. To address this knowledge gap, researchers at Shepherd Center will compare the impact of these programs on: 1) caregiver burden and depression, 2) caregivers’ level of “self-efficacy” (confidence in their ability to provide and sustain care to their loved ones), and 3) healthcare utilization (e.g., the number of return hospital or doctor’s office visits during the first six months post-discharge). Dr. Jones notes that this initiative builds on Shepherd Center’s previous work with people with spinal cord injuries, which clearly demonstrated the benefits of peer-to-peer support.

Dr. Jones stresses that caregiver burden should be pre-emptively addressed soon after the injury. He and his team plan to identify what types of interventions can support family needs during the acute and post-acute stages of recovery – well before the patient is discharged to go home. “We hope to find ways to intervene early to avoid or reduce the significant caregiver stress and burden that can lead to adverse outcomes for these individuals and their families,” Dr. Jones says.

The study is funded by a \$600,000 grant recently awarded to Shepherd Center by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), and aligns with its efforts to improve the economic, social and health-related well-being of family caregivers of people with disabilities.



**Above:** Mike Jones, Ph.D., is vice president of clinical research and assistive technology at Shepherd Center.

# spotlight

THANK YOU



**Above:** The Atlanta Girls School hosted an ice cream social for our patients and families.



**Above (l-r):** Silke Cliatt and family friend Jenny Humphreys donated beautiful hand-made quilts for our patients.



**Above:** The Junior League of Atlanta's choral group, the Peach Pipes, lifted the spirits of patients and staff with their beautiful music.



**Left (l-r):** Jonathan Kimbell of CareMaster serves Kristin and Nora Chartier at a brunch hosted by the company.



**Left (l-r):** Holiday Inn & Suites and Towne Place Suites Buckhead employees James Clements and Pernell Britton served Paul Fleming at a brunch sponsored by the hotel.



## Shepherd Center

2020 Peachtree Road, NW  
Atlanta, GA 30309-1465  
404-352-2020 [shepherd.org](http://shepherd.org)

# VOLUNTEER news

Sarah Batts, Executive Director, Shepherd Center Foundation  
Alex Seblatnigg, Director, Volunteer Services & Internal Engagement  
Alaina Case, Volunteer Services Coordinator  
Gale Eckstein, Family Support Services Coordinator  
Newsletter Co-editors: Alaina Case and Gale Eckstein

Membership in the Shepherd Center Auxiliary, Peach Corps, and Junior Committee is open to all volunteers. Members provide ongoing fundraising and volunteer support to Shepherd Center. For more information on becoming a member of one of these groups, contact Alex Seblatnigg at (404) 350-7315 or visit [www.shepherd.org](http://www.shepherd.org).

Shepherd Center's mission is to help people with a temporary or permanent disability caused by injury or disease rebuild their lives with hope, independence, and dignity, advocating for their full inclusion in all aspects of community life while promoting safety and injury prevention.