

## New Life

By Toren Zobel, Participant  
*Ballston Lake, NY*

Hello all, my name is Toren Zobel. Currently, I am 29 years old and had been running thru life for the last three years without a job. Instead, I have been taking each day one at a time and volunteering the entire time, smiling as I go.

The reason for being jobless is not from being fired. Rather having had multiple seizures in quick succession which had left me laying on the floor. In result: a TBI. I was then brought to Westchester Medical in a near death situation. Since that time, I have experienced multiple seizures. Another major seizure happened post brain surgery at NYU Hospital, August 31, which left me unconscious for two and a half weeks.



Finally, after waking up and staying in hospital until Sept 31, I was then able to return to Saratoga Springs, NY. Once in Saratoga, I began a recovery course at Sunnyview Hospital to learn how to speak clearly, walk and read again.



Now I live, unemployed, with my mother & two dogs. The dogs are given care on a daily basis. After giving them their food, my mother & I are then pulled around a few blocks for their daily runs. We all know dogs walk you, instead of you walking them. My puppy is a rescued Boxer, who I have enjoyed help to heal.

I am able to enjoy working out at the local YMCA two or three times a week with

an assistant personal trainer. Each week I enjoy helping to make & bake Challah (braided bread) as well as deliver it to those who live at the local senior center.

Each week I am able to volunteer at the local library to help others learn how to use a computer and programs so that they are able to use them at home. I also work with my friend each week, who is a Financial Adviser, to keep the computer system up and running as well as his and his wife's cellular devices.

I enjoy the time working assisting my Rabbi in making a Torah (hand written five books of Moses) from the beginning. This includes preparing the deer hides to write on, which includes: fleshing, dehair and sanding.



Post surgery, I have also had a VNS (Vagal Nerve Stimulator) implanted. This is said to automatically break any potential up-coming seizures. However, there have been some major seizures that have occurred since the day that this device was implanted, yet I am still able to move forward in my recovery.

At one time, post my surgery, I was an assistant swim coach. However, I was told that a single person was to watch over me directly while in the water. So for now I am holding back until I am cleared to swim alone.

And even though I have had this massive STOP in my life, I am again able to walk, talk, swim, run, sing, and even laugh and smile, as well as compose this article.

One may think that one's life is coming to the end, however this is not the truth. One only has to think that they can do something and then they will be able to live a new life.

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## The Penguin Plunge

By Chelly Leger, Participant  
Emerald St, Keene, NH



We left at 7:30am on February 5 with our fellow plungers on a bus. On the way to Hampton Beach, we enjoyed a breakfast of bagels, doughnuts and coffee. Dr. Rath did a raffle. We arrived at the Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom at 10:00. Our team, the Frozen Sections, got tables right in front of the stage. We then posed outside ice sculptures for pictures and an interview by Channel 8 news! We saw many funny costumes, including a man dressed as a Vegas showgirl. This year our theme was Vegas.

We then went back into the Casino Ballroom to get ready for the costume parade. Leona and I wore vegas-chip necklaces and giant \$100 and \$50 bills. I wore mine as a skirt, and Leona made hers into a cape.

It was time for the Plunge! We went to the warming tents to change into our swimwear. We then stood on the beach together and had to wait for 25 minutes. We were part of wave "A", and got to run into the ocean first! I went up to my legs, Leona went in all the way. When we ran out of the water, our friend Rachel handed us towels. We were freezing, but waited to get a group picture. Finally we went back to the warming tent to get dry and warm.

After that we returned to the Casino Ballroom for lunch. We danced to the band Gazpacho who played good rock and roll. Afterward, the awards ceremony began. Miss NH handed out prizes. Plungers who participated 5 years received pens, those who plunged 10 years or more got bathrobes. Our flock, the Frozen Sections, won the award for the most money raised for Special Olympics. We all received nice key chains. We had a great time.

## State of ME Budget Shortfall

By Dan McAllister, Program Manager  
Scarborough, ME

I am sure by this time you have all heard about the serious shortfall the State of Maine is facing in its annual budget. This budget, by law, has to be balanced and the legislature is currently trying to work out a \$220 million shortfall in the Department of Human Services. The proposed budget that was submitted to the legislature by Governor Paul LePage contained substantial cuts to many of the programs and services that affect the folks that we serve here in Maine.

In addition to letter writing and distributing information via the internet, Regional Director Bill Shulz invited two representatives from the Scarborough area to the group home located at 58 Highland Ave. in Scarborough. Bill's idea was to try and give a more personal touch to the cuts that are being proposed in the budget and give the residents an opportunity to voice their concerns. It would also be an opportunity to invite guardians for a question and answer session.

At 2 PM on Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, with the aroma of fresh baked cookies filling the house, Amy Volk and Heather Sirocki, State Representatives from Scarborough, arrived to visit. All guardians and family members were invited; several came to join the event. There was an initial introduction and the representatives had a tour of the home. John Crandell was especially proud to show off his personal living space. The representatives had several questions as they had never been in a group home of this size.

After the tour the residents had an opportunity to ask the representatives questions concerning the proposed budget cuts and how they may affect them personally. Jerome Gonyer and Jeremy Stevens had prepared a series of questions which they articulated quite clearly to Amy and Heather. Michael Meade appeared quite engaged throughout the discussion. The guardians also had an opportunity to ask questions and voice their concerns regarding the proposed cuts. The meeting lasted close to 90 minutes. Folks thanked each other for coming and sharing information. There were not a lot of questions answered, as the Appropriations Committee is still working on these issues, but the concerns from both the residents and family members were heard, as well as having Amy and Heather walk away with the actual experience of seeing a small portion of the population that would be impacted by the budget cuts as proposed.

After the representatives left there was continued discussion and the group felt energized to begin writing letters to their representatives and spreading the word to others. Stay tuned.

## WE SAY GOOD-BYE TO GARY

By Sharon Cleary, QA Specialist  
*Emerald St, Keene, NH*

We gathered together to celebrate Gary Glowin's life on January 31, 2012. The celebration was a mix of great stories shared by his closest friends from LifeArt: John Castor and Becky May, his Home Provider Anita Wesley, and others who have known Gary over the past eight years. The stories were about how much Gary loved to dance, he loved Petie the golden retriever; he loved Elvis Presley and his music; he loved to draw and color; he loved butterflies; he loved to laugh and he had a wonderful smile. Most of all he loved LIFE and lived it to the fullest. In the time that I have known Gary he always wanted to be where the action is, whether it was on the dance floor; or front and center in a room full of people. Gary wanted us all to remember him in a happy way; with a smile on our face; have happy times; and bright and sunny days.



### Gary's Eulogy

By Veronica Russell, Former RRI DSP

I was blessed to know Gary the last six years of his life. The last six years I spent more hours with him than I did with any other person. It pains me that I am unable to be at this funeral with you today, but thankfully my mother is with you and will read some words that I wrote for this day.

Who was Gary Glowin? Gary Andrew Michael Glowin was a good man. He was a dancer extraordinaire, a jokester, a natural drummer and singer, an Elvis fanatic, a face contortionist, a skilled horseback rider, a karaoke star, a talented artist, a bowling champion, an animal lover, a proud American, a meticulous cleaner, a faithful believer in God, a loyal Red Sox fan, a travel enthusiast, a diligent worker, a passionate storyteller, and a remarkable friend.

Gary and I did many extraordinary things together. We cheered for the Red Sox at Fenway Park. We held turtles in the Cayman Islands. We swam with dolphins in Mexico. We drummed with locals in Jamaica. We took a gondola ride in the White Mountains. We took day cruises on Lake George, Lake Sunapee, and Lake Winnepesaukee. We vacationed at Graceland. Gary and I also did many ordinary things together. We went swimming, baked brownies, attended yoga classes, participated in the drum circle at From the Heart Studio, took many walks, celebrated birthdays, spent countless hours at LifeArt with friends, ate innumerable meals together, watched movies, read magazines, and talked to God. We enjoyed many moments together doing extraordinary and ordinary things, but if I could have one more moment with him I would just want to sit next to him, listen to him talk, and see his smile. I miss him, my dear friend.

Gary was an amazing friend of mine. He was protective, loyal, appreciative, forgiving, supportive, complimentary, interested, helpful, concerned, trusting, and generous. Above all, he always wanted me to be happy. However, the best quality of friendship that Gary had was that he was happy just to be with me. He was happy just to sit and talk about the color of the sky. I wish I could enjoy one more breath with him, and I am sure you do too. But we must say goodbye for now.

Goodbye Gary Glowin. As Elvis lived on in you, you will live on in me. You will forever occupy a very special place in my heart. Goodbye Gary- see you in heaven.

## A Soft Voice Speaks Volumes

By Theresa Guynup, Service Coordinator

*Peru, NY*

As a Service Coordinator for individuals that have suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury, one of the main objects is to always encourage them to be their own advocates, to speak their “voice” and offer opinions on how they want to live their life and view their future. I am so proud of the effort Phillip Tousignant made when he decided to write a letter to our New York State government.

New York Government Officials,

Phillip Tousignant here. I have suffered a traumatic brain injury, due to a car accident with a tractor trailer, in February, 2003. For a couple of years, I resided in a nursing home, before moving into my own apartment, in the city of Plattsburgh, New York. The traumatic brain injury (T.B.I.) waiver is the system that makes it possible for me to live independently.

Now, I’ve heard about your planned budget cuts on home and community services for individuals like myself, who utilize such services to live independently. Presently, I choose items to shop for myself. Making the list myself, with a little help from staff, allows for sight from 2 angles. If I miss something, it can be caught before getting to the store. Now, I go to the store myself, accompanied by a staff member, looking at the price, and health benefits of the food I purchase. It’s nice to have feedback, to help me make choices, perhaps seeing something that I don’t, or seeing something better.

Now, in my apartment, I make my own choices for meals. I prefer that over having the choice made for me. The T.B.I. waiver is the system that makes this possible. In a nursing home, meals are scheduled and not always a choice.

I love the ability to choose what my apartment looks like, focusing on details. I like going out to shop, or walk around, interacting with others. Shopping does that, too. Interaction with other customers, and occasionally, staff, when not distracting them.

Being free to go out in the public to shop allows me to converse with other customers and staff people. This way, I might hear about things going on, in the community. With that knowledge, it expands my confidence, in choosing what to do. Because I have staff present with me. I’m able to get around easier, and get input, in case I forgot something. This happens, considering my memory lapse.

Planning a shopping trip and going shopping are examples of things I can do, with staff assistance. I have the ability (in the community) to personalize things by doing them myself.

Given the situation, how would you react to budget cuts, if you, or someone chose to you were disabled? Would you rather live in a nursing home, and have fewer choices, or live independently, in the community, and have free choice?

Sincerely,  
Phillip Tousignant

## Helping Build Courage, Confidence and Character in New Boston Girls

By Marie MacDonald, New Boston Bulletin

Originally published August 2011

Roch and Debbie Larochelle have lived in New Boston for 10 years, moving here from Goffstown with their three daughters, Brianna, Hannah and Alison. Married 19 years, they were high school sweethearts who reunited after college. Although they both work full time and have a staggering number of volunteer and family ventures, they both have recently returned to school, Roch to earn his graduate degree and Debbie for a Certificate Program.

While pursuing their professional goals, they continue giving to their community and still manage to spend valued family time together. Roch acknowledged that they were a very busy family, but was quick to say that their family would never be able to run so smoothly if it weren't for the outstanding help from extended family. When the Larochelles had their home built, they included an in-law apartment. Debbie's parents are currently living in the apartment and provide the added help that the couple needs.

Immediately upon moving to New Boston, Debbie became involved with the Girl Scouts, an organization near and dear to her heart. She quickly volunteered to be a leader. "I was a girl scout when I was growing up and my Mom was one of my leaders," Debbie said, proudly. "I went to the highest level I could go, obtaining First Class Girl Scout (equivalent to Eagle Scout in Boy Scouts). I actually got my first management position due to my girl scout experience."

Debbie was just awarded the Girl Scout Outstanding Volunteer Award for her 10 years of service to the New Boston Girl Scout program. Her eyes just sparkled when she recalled the girls she has had in her troops and all they've done together. "It's so exciting to experience the growth and development of the girls over the years!" she said. "We've shared so many wonderful experiences – there have been sleepovers, trips to the circus and to see the Globe Trotters, a trip to NYC, hiking, line dancing dances, and Alison's favorite: a trip to Monkey Trunks (a zip line activity on Mt. Chicora). The troops did many community activities as well," Debbie continued. "The latest was a coat drive they held last year. The girls collected 525 donated coats to be given to those in need." For the past two years, Debbie has also been the New Boston town Girl Scout treasurer.

Out of the ordinary, but not that astonishing considering the "oneness" of the

Larochelle family, Roch also joined the Girl Scout team four years ago, volunteering to be Service Unit Manager for the New Boston girls. Roch admits he was prompted by Debbie to join the team, but decided that with his wife and three daughters all active in girl scouting, it was an opportunity for him to "connect". As Service Unit Manager, Roch was responsible for coordinating the New Boston Girl Scout leaders, organizing meetings and events for about 100 scouts from kindergarten age to high school, training leaders and, of course, endless paperwork.

Debbie noted that New Boston is lucky enough to have two men on their Girls Scout team. Roch as the Service Unit Manager, and Andrew French in charge of cookie sales. Debbie attributed the increased cookie sales to Mr. French's enthusiasm toward the fundraiser – he proudly named himself "The Cookie Monster."

Roch was also a member of the New Boston Road Committee for the past eight years. The Committee members are appointed by the Selectmen and work as an advisory committee to the Highway Department, providing guidance and support to the Road Agent and Selectmen on transportation issues.

Roch is a civil engineer, so he felt that he could use his expertise and experience to give back to the Town of New Boston by contributing as a member of the Road Committee. "Brandy Mitroff (NBB editor) and I have sat through many, many Planning Board meetings together that's for sure!" Roch laughed.

Debbie, who also wanted to volunteer time to New Boston Central School, but was somewhat limited due to travel with her job, volunteered to become the "label clipper" for the past six years. "My job, with the help of the family, was to clip the Campbell soup labels and box tops labels to be sent in for cash for the school," she explained. "We collected enough labels through the school-wide program to earn at least \$1,400.00 for the school each year! There was a bit of groaning from Brianna and Alison about the clipping," Debbie continued. "But even grandma helped and she has carpal tunnel!"

Debbie is also passionate about the sport of basketball. She played as a high school student and has been coaching New Boston Recreation fifth and sixth grade girls'

teams for four years. "We have some really talented athletes on our teams," said Debbie. Along with coaching New Boston Recreation, she also co-coaches the AAU New Hampshire Twister's Program. The teams officially start playing games in March and end in June.

All three of the Larochelle girls are members of AAU teams. Every weekend from March to the end of June the Larochelles are either participating or watching a total of 12 games. Exhausting? Not to them! "Having the girls active in sports has actually enriched our lives," said Roch. "We have met so many wonderful parents and athletes. It forces us as a family. We leave everything behind when we're at the games – work, home chore, phone calls, etc. It's really great!"

Although the AAU competitive season is only about four months, practice and scrimmages for both Recreation and AAU bring Debbie and her girls to the gym just about every month. "I still scrimmage with them and they haven't gotten the best of me yet!" laughed Debbie. "Right now we have quite a few players on the Mountain View and Goffstown High Basketball Teams that have gone through our program," she continued, "and they are great athletes!"

Roch is quick to voice his admiration for Debbie and the role model that she has become for their own girls and for those she has worked with either in scouting or basketball. "There's a parallel between Debbie's work and the girls in scouting and the girls in the basketball program," he shared. "It's not about winning as much as it is about development of skills confidence, hard work and character."

Currently, the family is planning their fourth annual family backpacking trip. The three-day trip will include nieces and nephews backpacking along mountain ranges and staying overnight at AMC trail huts for two nights. "My brother and I used to backpack together and then when I met Debbie, she and I began taking backpacking treks and now that the family is old enough we can all go," said Roch. "It's a unique family tradition that I hope continues."

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## Skiing for the First Time

By Jessica Cameron, Participant  
Manchester, NH

My name is Jessica A. Cameron and I am member of New England Handicapped Sports Association (NEHSA). The website is [www.nehsa.org](http://www.nehsa.org). They do winter and summer sports like skiing and kayaking with disabled people and injured veterans.



On January 16, 2012, I did something that I never had done before: ski-ride at Mount Sunapee. The ski that I used is called bi-unique, [www.superlite.org/biski.html](http://www.superlite.org/biski.html). The second time I went I used a different bi-unique ski, I sit a little higher, so my instructor could say do you want steer today? I steer by leaning to the left or right. You can see me ski-riding on YouTube at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=VILDCNvRQs8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VILDCNvRQs8).

## Please Allow Me to Introduce Myself...

By Mike Fisher, Participant  
Manchester, NH

Hello. My name is Michael Brian Fisher. I moved from Crotched Mountain to Sandown, NH on January 10. I like to be called Mike. I have a lovely wife Diane that I love. We have 2 daughters and 1 son. Their names are Jamie, Jen and Michael. My mother-in-law is Judy. She treats me like her own son. She's a great woman.

Our family pets are a dog named Callie and 2 Siamese cats named Joe and Jay. I am a Vietnam Vet. During my Navy days my position was a Boiler Technician. I served 4 years active and 1 year reserves. During those days my shipmate Nick named me Bear. One experience I remember well is when a bat came aboard ship and I caught it with a bag, put it in a box and brought it topside to release it.

I enjoy camping in the White Mountains where I go off the path provided and make my own trails. This is when I see the wildlife of the mountains. I have seen moose, bear and deer doing this. My wife and I like taking photos and have got great pictures to share.

Before my motorcycle accident, I was a machinist and worked for Raytheon. I like to draw plans and construct things out of wood. I have an idea for a game table/coffee table that I have been drawing plans for recently. I someday would like to start a small business building custom furniture/machine shop.

Books and movies about war and Westerns interest me. Occasional love stories, also. Other interests are Bingo, Monopoly, cribbage and bowling. I love to bowl and prefer 10 pin. Cooking is also a fun hobby.

**Thank you to everyone who contributes articles and pictures to the newsletter.**

Articles are due by the second Friday of each month for the following month's newsletter. The newsletter will be posted at [www.resresources.com](http://www.resresources.com) on the fourth Friday of each month.

If you do not have access to the internet and would like a copy of the newsletter mailed to you, please contact your local Residential Resources office to make arrangements.

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Debbie also will begin a tradition this year that will be shared with each of their daughters and perhaps passed on as well. Before their first daughter was born, Debbie told Roch that she thought it would be wonderful to go on a mother-daughter cruise when Brianna was 16. Little did they know, but they would be blessed with three daughters! That means three mother-daughter cruises! Debbie and Brianna will begin the tradition this August!

Love of life and dedication to community is echoed in all that the Larochelles do. With enthusiasm and dedication, they are setting an example for others to follow and making a positive difference in New Boston.