

**INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE:**

Page 2
**Free Equipment
Rental Program**

Page 3
**Peer Mentoring
Support Groups**

Page 4
**Upcoming
Events**

**Annual Social
Event Recap**

Page 5
**Annual Bowling
Event**

Page 6
**Connect The
Dots 4 Life**

Page 7
Be An Advocate

Page 8
**Take Survey
Amazon Smile**

NEW LOOK!

As we embarked on the year long celebration of our 10th Anniversary as a non-profit organization, we thought it was a good time to update our look and “re-brand” ourselves as a whole. Enjoy our new updated logo and newsletter! Since the inception of SCIA of IA, we have challenged ourselves to continually improve each event we host, program we offer, and resource we share with each of you.

At a national level - there has been some confusion of having two different associations (National Spinal Cord Injury Association and United Spinal Association) combined into one. The decision has been made to unify the messaging and fold NSCIA completely into United Spinal Association. Therefore, SCIA of IA will now be a state chapter of United Spinal Association. The name change does not really change a thing, but it does make us stronger as an association and affiliated chapters; sharing resources and ideas both at a national level and between states.

You still have the option of being a nation member, as well as a state affiliate member, just as before. We strongly suggest you become a member of United Spinal, giving you even more resources and opportunities.

More national info can be found at www.unitedspinal.org



**Spinal Cord Injury
Association of Iowa**

SCIA of IA Board of Directors

**Back Row: Marcie Becker,
Jacki Trierweiler, Joyce
Ellens, Kimbra Korte
Front Row: Jenn Wolff,
Angie Hulsebus, Scott
Turczynski, Tim Ascherl,
Audrey DeCarlo**



FREE Equipment Rental Program



Spinal Cord Injury Association of Iowa has a free Equipment Rental Program! SCIA of Iowa purchases equipment for our members to rent. We encourage our members to help us fulfill part of our mission to promote active & healthy lifestyles.

Recreational Available for Free Rental:

**Bowling Ball Pusher
Handle Grip Bowling Balls - 6 pound & 8 pound options
Adapted Golf Cart - with swivel seat
Adapted Golf Clubs
Handcycles (3 options) - 2, Top End Upright 7 speed & 1, Top End XLT Lay Back 27 speed
Accessible Pinball Machine**

Free Rental Process:

- Step 1:** Choose which piece(s) of equipment you want to rent.
- Step 2:** Contact Tim at 515-309-0727
- Step 3:** Provide credit card information and photo ID so that we know who the equipment is going to. Your credit card will only be charged if you do not return the equipment, or return it in damaged condition.
- Step 4:** Determine pick up and drop off arrangements.
- Step 5:** Enjoy your FREE recreational opportunity!

Peer Mentoring: Is There Interest in Iowa? Are you interested in volunteering?

SCIA of Iowa Board of Directors are currently debating the establishment of a formal peer mentoring program through our association. The goal of this program is synonymous with our newly revised mission; "...connecting individuals impacted by or living with spinal cord injury/disease/disorder. Members empower each other to access active and health lifestyles..." This program would increase our ability to serve the newly injured and become part of their support network.

At this time, we are looking for people throughout the state of Iowa who are interested in becoming a peer mentor. If interest exists, SCIA of Iowa would sponsor a formal training program within the year 2015. Training is estimated to take 1 full day and likely conducted on weekend date. SCIA of Iowa also anticipates reimbursing peer mentors for the mileage and expenses associated with this program.

If you are interested in being involved with a peer mentoring program, please email Angie at sciaofiowa@hotmail.com or call 515-554-9759.

Please contact us, even if you're only slightly interested. We can likely use whatever time or help you have to offer. If there is enough interest, we may be able to host one in Des Moines and one in Waterloo.



Support Groups in Iowa

- ◇ Quad Cities SCI Support Group meets monthly at Genesis Medical Center or at a place in the community. Social and educational events are offered. See website for upcoming events.: www.genesishealth.com/services/phys_med/spinal. Please contact Molly Muhl OTR/L, CBIS with questions at 563-421-1480.
- ◇ Cedar Valley Rollers Support Group meets at 6:30 pm at Becks in Cedar Falls/Waterloo area. Call Jenn for more details at 319-290-9402 (or if you have transportation issues).

If you know of any other support groups, in Iowa for individuals with spinal cord injury/disease/disorder, or their family members, or for caregivers; please provide this information to us via email at sciaofiowa@hotmail.com

Upcoming Events

February 7th 2015: Annual Bowling Event at 12:15 pm. Premiere Bowling & Entertainment in Pleasant Hill, Iowa. Join us for a game of bowling, pizza and fun for the whole family! See page 5 for all the details.

March 21st 2015: Board Retreat Meeting from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm, at First Church of Christ in Ankeny Iowa.

March 21st 2015: Ms. Wheelchair Iowa Competition 2015 will be held in Iowa City, Iowa. Seeking contestants and sponsors. Contact Judy Hoit today with all questions on how to apply or sponsor. Phone: 319-351-8375. Email: accnowjh@aol.com

March 28th 2015: Eastern Iowa Adapted Cycling Clinic will be held at Kirkwood Community College Michael J Gould Recreation Center in Cedar Rapids Iowa. This indoor event is on Saturday March 28th 2015, from 10 am to 2 pm. Some activities include tennis, archery, basketball, and handcycles. Contact Megan Andresen for more details via phone, 515-369-7331.

Annual Social Event Recap

Last November we had a good turn out for our Annual Social Event! It was held at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC), on the Ankeny Campus. We catered in from Fazoli's restaurant. DMACC donated the meeting room space to us at no cost!



BOWLING EVENT



Location:

Premiere Bowling & Entertainment
655 NE 56th Street, Suite 100
Pleasant Hill, Iowa 50327-2174
Ph: 515-263-1700

Cost: FREE

(First game is free. Each additional game will cost you \$2.50 per game.)

When:

Saturday, February 7, 2015
12:30 PM

- ◇ Equipment will be available for adapted bowling
- ◇ Families and friends are welcome to participate
- ◇ Door Prizes will be given
- ◇ Pizza and soda will be provided for lunch (donations accepted)

RSVP by February 5th

Email: sciaofiowa@hotmail.com
Call or Text: Angie at 515-554-9759

Sponsored By:



Connect the Dots 4 Life

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to **Connect the Dots 4 Life**. Our goal through this planning process is to provide realistic solutions for your economic landscape and to provide quality introductions to individuals and/or organizations that identify, sustain, or advance the quality of life of the protected individual(s) in your life.

Our History

The concept of **Connect the Dots 4 Life** originated in the late 1990s when health issues warranted Dennis to close his successful business and focus on his health. In 2004, his brother Darren was diagnosed with *Spastic Paraplegias*. With the advancement of his condition, Darren required extensive physical and occupational therapy, as well as education and information on Medicaid, Social Security Disability, and other programs. Dennis provided the connections to these services and assisted Darren in the process of understanding and applying for Medicaid and Social Security Disability, which included advising him through the appeal process.

Dennis joined Mass Mutual Financial Group in 2007, focusing on financial planning for individuals with special needs and/or disabilities. He received advanced training in estate planning, tax, financial concepts, as well the dynamics of working with individuals with special needs and/or disabilities and their families. Incorporating what he believed to be a tremendous asset, Dennis continued to refine the Life Care planning process by introducing individuals/families to organizations and people who added value to the lives of individuals with special needs and/or disabilities. By 2011, a network of quality organizations and people were formed and **Connect the Dots 4 Life** was born.

Our Core Philosophy

If you are a parent or family member of an individual with a special need and/or disability, our philosophy is very simple. We believe in assuring that the quality of life you are providing to your loved one will be continued when you can no longer provide them that care or want assistance in providing such care.

If you are an individual who has incurred a disability and/or special need, our philosophy is to identify, sustain, and/or increase the quality of life for you by identifying and quantifying that dollars to be used for those resources and to plan for the provision of those resources. It's about the *efficiency* and *identification* of the dollars that you are spending coupled with the unique element of *your* Individual or family situation.



At **Connect the Dots 4 Life**, we understand and strive to meet each of our client's goals and financial needs. First we get to know you on a personal level, and then we work to understand your situation by looking at your specific financial

picture to help you meet those needs today, tomorrow, and when you are gone. Our Life Care planning process has allowed us to respond to the financial needs of our clients with an array of planning options, while providing realistic solutions in an efficient and effective manner. In the end, our clients get personal results that are consistent, strategic, and coordinated.

At **Connect the Dots 4 Life**, the planning process does not end; clients receive annual reviews to assure that their individual plan is on course to meet their financial goals and objectives. Our commitment to quality products, services, and introductions delivered in a timely and professional manner continues as our number one priority.

Article Written By Dennis Burns.



Dennis Burns
Connect the Dots 4 Life
Founder\CEO
4401 Westown Parkway
Suite 300
West Des Moines, IA 50266
Office (515) 267-2676
Cell (515) 371-6768
Fax (515) 225-7446
dburns@connectthedots4life.com
www.connectthedots4life
www.facebook.com/connectthedots4life

Want to advocate?

Join the Grassroots Action Group!

There have been a lot of changes at United Spinal Association and with UsersFirst. This is Jenn Wolff, Manager of UsersFirst, and I'm happy to report that the grassroots advocacy effort continues and is officially part of the Advocacy Center on the website (www.unitedspinal.org/action-center/). We have a new network of people in about 28 states who are actively communicating with their legislators and building relationships with staffers – both at the local and national level.

Our first campaign, getting Complex Rehab Technology (making sure insurance policies allow people to get the equipment they need) attached to a larger bill in Congress and getting it voted on. While that didn't happen in 2014, the efforts of our Grassroots Action Network helped gain 8 more co-sponsors, which is about as many as a day of Capitol Hill visits gets. It was a big success and gives us hope for next year. Several Congressional offices think that the CRT bill will get attached to the “doc fix” Medicare bill this spring.



Getting legislation passed takes on average 7 years. It takes time and perseverance. The more United Spinal members get involved, with Grassroots Action Network, the stronger the message to Congress. The message that we are not going to accept status quo; and that we deserve the same access to housing, saving money, transportation, employment and quality of life as anyone else. Advocacy is an empowering experience. Talking to leaders and sharing YOUR story is what helps our legislators understand how current policies affect us and why they need to change.

UsersFirst is also helping the University of Pittsburg develop a life coach app for wheelchair users and we will be looking for volunteers to test the app and give feedback. If you want to help with any part of the advocacy effort, please let me know! Jenn Wolff jwolff@unitedspinal.org



Spinal Cord Injury
Association of Iowa

**Spinal Cord Injury Association of
Iowa, Inc.**

Spinal Cord Injury Association of Iowa, Inc
3936 NW Urbandale Dr

Urbandale, IA 50322

Phone: 515-309-0727

E-mail: sciaofiowa@hotmail.com

Website: www.spinalcordiowa.org

Spinal Cord Injury Association of Iowa (SCIA of IA) is a non-profit organization connecting individuals impacted by or living with spinal cord injury/disease/disorder. Members empower each other to access active and health lifestyles.

We Want to Hear Your Opinion! Take this Survey!

Want to help us make the SCI of IA even better? As part of the celebration of our 10th year, we want to make sure we are meeting your needs. Please fill out the survey at this link

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VSC2B8P>

So far, we've had 13 people complete the set of questions and we thank them for their input. The more information we have, the better programming we can provide for you.

Thank you for being members!



Amazon Smile:

A Charitable Giving Program

THANK YOU to each of you who chose to shop Smile.Amazon and donated to SCIA of IA!

If you shop on Amazon.com we request you shop at smile.amazon.com instead (everything is the same including prices, shipping, wish lists, etc.). Amazon donates 0.5% to a charity of your choice. Select National Spinal Cord Injury Association located in Urbandale, Iowa to donate to Spinal Cord Injury Association of Iowa. (There are multiple locations to choose from under NSCIA.) This is an excellent way for our organization to receive funds that enable us to provide free services to people living in Iowa with spinal cord injury.



You shop. Amazon gives.