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## E-NEWSLETTER

### October News

#### A United Voting Block: The Politics of Paralysis

*"Almost six million people in the United States are affected by some type of paralysis. This is a significant voting population," said Ida Cahill, President of the Sam Schmidt Paralysis Foundation. "The passing of the 2009 Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act was a tremendous stepping stone for the community. It was the contribution of a wide range of organizations and individuals ongoing support of the bill over the past several years that led up to its passing. The next challenge is to see that the bill is funded."*

*Cooperation between advocacy groups is essential to our success in influencing government decisions. As a united group, we must express our urgency to our leaders and the general public, letting them know that a cure is a physical and financial necessity. To that end, the Sam Schmidt Paralysis Foundation has joined forces with a number of advocacy groups and organizations to obtain support from the legislature and to raise awareness to the public.*

*Ida Cahill is a member of the national Paralysis Task Force, a group of the nation's preeminent scientists, health advocates, and experts from the nation's top universities, medical institutions and nonprofit care organizations. Established by the Reeve Foundation in 2004 to identify what was needed to improve the quality of life for people living with paralysis, the Task Force's first recommendation was to build a more robust and comprehensive national knowledge-base on paralysis. The Paralysis Task Force continues to advise the Reeve Foundation's Paralysis Resource Center and promote the health and well-being of people living with a spinal cord injury, mobility impairment, and paralysis by providing comprehensive information, resources and referral services.*

*Ida also sits on the national Spinal Cord Leaders Council. The Council is comprised of leaders from various organizations that advocate for and conduct research on behalf of people with paralyzing injuries and other disorders. This group promotes legislation, regulations, and policies that will have a possible effect on the quality of life. The Council routinely meets to discuss issues, legislation, regulations, and policies that will have a possible effect on the quality of life.*

*The support of the entire spinal cord community is key to the passing of important bills, such as the Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act to promote spinal cord paralysis research and to improve rehabilitation through legislation. But the successful passing of a bill is only the beginning. There is still much work ahead of all of us to keep the issue in the political forefront and see that this bill becomes adequately funded. Contact your representatives in government and let them know what is important to you. Here's the link:*

<http://www.samschmidt.org/sci/ussenatorsandrepresentatives>.

#### Messages From Our President

by Ida Cahill

#### 2010 Indy Racing League Official Wall Calendar Now Available!

We are pleased to announce the availability of the 2010 Indy Racing League® official wall calendar, "Up Close & Personal," just in time for the holidays!

United Medical Providers (UMP, Inc.) and JMKC Express, long-time sponsors of the Sam Schmidt Paralysis Foundation, have produced a 16 month, 12" x 12" photographic wall calendar, with proceeds from the sale of the calendar benefiting the Foundation.

The calendar is available on our website, [click here](#).

#### People We Know

We meet so many interesting people! This month we are highlighting two of them, Michelle Murray and John Martinson.

##### Nashville Recording Artist Michelle Murray



Sam Schmidt and Michelle Murray

After recording several CD's and opening for dozens of Country Music's biggest stars, Michelle Murray is truly becoming a star in her own right. Michelle performs live for thousands of fans and will release her fourth CD in 2010. With all this going on, it's amazing that Michelle can dedicate any time to the Sam Schmidt Paralysis Foundation. But Michelle sings at Foundation events, takes advantage of every opportunity to spread the word about the Foundation, and has even written a song especially for Sam Schmidt. To read the story

## At Long Last.... Space!

*It's hard to believe that it was just five years ago when Sam asked me to join the Sam Schmidt Paralysis Foundation. It's even harder to believe how many files, event materials, resource materials and general "stuff" a person can accumulate! Melanie and I were comfortable in our familiar surroundings but knew that in order to raise the necessary funds to find a cure for paralysis, we needed not only more space but additional people.*

The Foundation has so many wonderful friends around the country and a number of them encouraged me to expand SSPF. I particularly want to thank Sam, Vickie & Bill, Jim, Marlene & Andy, Susan & Leonard, and the entire Board who supported and had confidence in me to take the next big step for the Foundation.

*I'm happy to report the move is over!* Our new location is 230 W. Delaware Avenue, Pennington, NJ 08534; however our mailing address is unchanged: P. O. Box 3661, Princeton NJ 08543-3661. Our telephone number and email addresses are also unchanged: 317-236-9999, and [icahill@samschmidt.org](mailto:icahill@samschmidt.org).

So call, write, email – we'd love to hear from you!

## Meet Our New Staff

*It gives me great pleasure to introduce the new members of our staff.*

**Serena Jain**, Director of Special Events: Serena has 5 years of experience in event planning, and in addition to her undergraduate degree in Communications she has completed a certification program in Event Management from George Washington University. She's a wonderful addition to our staff and many of you will be hearing from her soon.

Earlier this year **Cindy Norton** became our Manager of the very popular program, Day at the Races. Cindy organized the program in Kentucky as a volunteer and did such an extraordinary job that we asked her to consider joining us. This past year Cindy and I met many inspirational and astonishing people who don't allow their paralysis to slow them down. We have some pretty amazing stories to share.

I referred to **Kay Kohlman** as my best volunteer, and when I learned she was considering taking a new position which meant she would no longer be able to volunteer we quickly asked her to consider working with us. As our Administrative Manager, Kay is responsible for our web page, social networking, email and annual newsletter, state registrations, and a myriad of other details.

**Melanie Johnstone** has stepped into her new position as Director of Operations with her usual "can do" attitude and expanding her many duties. Besides maintaining the database, accounts payable/receivable, insurance, telephone, internet, etc., she is almost literally my right hand.

and listen to a clip of this moving tribute to the daily struggle against paralysis, [click here](#). You can catch up with Michelle on her MySpace page and listen to her on the radio & in concert across the U.S.

### Wisconsin Outdoor Sportsman John Martinson



John Martinson and his trophy elk

We met John at the 2008 Stem Cell Summit in Madison, WI and again at this year's Working 2 Walk conference in Chicago. John's been a hunter for most of his life, and isn't about to let a wheelchair slow him down. This fall John bagged a 4x5 bull elk in Colorado with his Weatherby 7MM Rem Mag. Estimated at over 600 pounds, the elk will become a lot of steaks and sausage. This is his first elk, so John plans to have the head mounted as a reminder of fond memories of the trip and the new friends he made. John would like to thank [Outdoor Buddies Inc.](#) of Craig Colorado and [Adaptive Sportsmen Inc.](#) of Wisconsin, two great non-profit organizations which help provide recreational opportunities for physically challenged people.

## Upcoming Events

- **Indoor karting party & silent auction at Pole Position Raceway, Las Vegas, Sunday Nov. 1, 2009\***
  - **4th Annual Racing to Recovery Golf Tournament, Las Vegas, Monday Nov. 2, 2009\***
  - 11th Annual Racing to Recovery Gala, May 2010
  - Day at the Races and Run/Walk/Wheelathon events, 2010
- Stay tuned for more!*

**\* Visit our website for more information or to register for these events.**



Serena Jain, Melanie Johnstone, Ida Cahill on the porch of our new office.



Cindy Norton



Kay Kohlman

Our mailing address is:

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[www.samschmidt.org](http://www.samschmidt.org)

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