

HIGHLIGHTS

- The latest in **Functional Electrical Stimulation** Page 2.
- Meet Challenge Center's newest **Physical Therapist**. Page 2.
- Community Gym **Memberships only \$20 a month! No contracts. Call for details, 619-667-8644.**
- Read Tony Radna's amazing **story**. Page 3.
- Spots are still **available for the next session of our aquatics program.**

11th Annual Comedy Night Gala

Headliner Paula Poundstone's hilarity will be featured during the Challenge Center's 11th annual Comedy Night fundraising gala titled "Restoring Lives, Restoring Spirit" on Thursday, Sept. 25, 2008, 5:30 -10 pm, at the US Grant Hotel in downtown San Diego. Tickets are \$175 each.

The event goal is to raise more than \$100,000 for the work of the organization which provides affordable, extended, skilled physical therapy and assisted fitness programs to increase independence, improve quality of life and prevent secondary health problems for adults, seniors and children who live with severe physical disabilities.

Comedy Night is on its way to becoming a sell-out event with more than 300 philanthropists who mix and mingle during an evening that includes an elegant dinner, silent and live auctions featuring travel packages, spa and golf outings, luxury gift baskets, electronics and more, and entertainment by a world-class comedian.

Event sponsors include: EDCO Waste and Recycling Services, Grossmont Healthcare District, Nancy King, Comerica Bank, Matthews Machinery, Select Mailing Services, Alliant Insurance, Allied Waste, AMES Company, Autocar, Consolidated Fabricators, Dean Lycas, Dion International, EW Truck and Equipment, First Bank, Junior Seau Foundation, Sycuan Casino, Tarulli Tire, Inc., USA Federal Credit Union, Union Bank of California, and Westoff, Cone, Holmstedt.

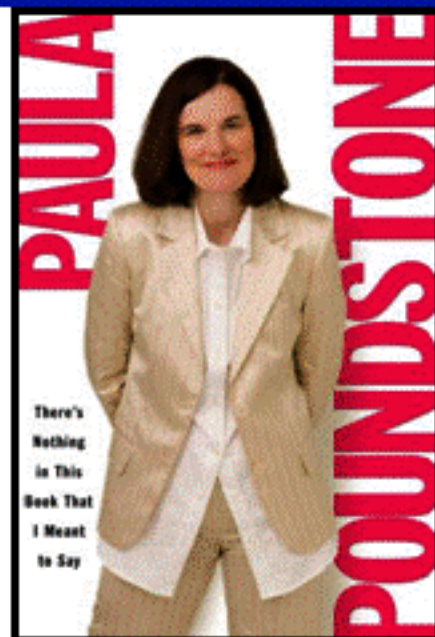
For information or tickets contact Leslie Mogul, event coordinator, at 760-533-7379.



An Evening of Laughter With Paula Poundstone!

Appearing on stage with a stool, a microphone, and a can of Diet Pepsi, PAULA POUNDSTONE is famous for her razor-sharp wit and spontaneity. The Boston Globe said, "Poundstone improvises with a crowd like a Jazz musician... swinging in unexpected directions without a plan, without a net." Paula is so quick and unassuming that audience members at her live shows often leave complaining that their cheeks hurt from laughter and debating whether the random people she talked to were "plants".

Paula Poundstone has a natural gift of comedy. Her comedy takes the personal and twists it into a quirky quip that is suddenly familiar and funny to all. You'll be on the edge of your seat, eager to hear what she says next, because, she says "I can't stop talking...everything reminds me of something." Wherever her stream of consciousness may lead, you will end up laughing.





By Eric Hollis, MS, CSCS

"If you suffer from drop foot call or talk to one of our physical therapists..."

Functional Electrical Stimulation

Medical practitioners in ancient Greece discovered that electrical impulses emitted from electric eels in clinical foot baths relieved pain and improved blood circulation. Producing up to 600 volts in a single discharge, electric eel therapy was particularly popular for treating arthritis. Throughout the centuries since, natural electrical currents have been applied to the body to relieve all sorts of different aches and pains and more recently to stimulate muscle which has lost nervous control. Called functional electrical stimulation (FES) or functional neuromuscular stimulation (FNS), this type of stimulation is widely used in the rehabilitation of patients whose illness or spinal cord injury has disrupted the natural central nervous control of some of their muscular contractions.

Normally, when we decide to move a part of the body, electrical commands from the

brain, called motor signals, are sent to the part we want to move.

FES applied near the muscle or nerve provides a substitute for a motor signal that is blocked by a damaged central nervous system.

There are numerous applications of FES such as breathing assistance, standing, bladder and bowel function, and grasping/reaching, just to name a few. One way FES is used at Challenge Center is to assist in cardiovascular exercise with our CFES cycle program. The CFES computer fires off electrical stimulation in a particular sequence through electrodes that are attached to the rider's legs. This causes the muscles to contract in a particular sequence that results in a smooth pedaling motion. Clients who otherwise wouldn't be able to pedal a cycle are able to improve their cardiovascular fitness, improve their circulation,

and increase the muscle mass in their paralyzed legs.

Another application of FES that Challenge Center was introduced to recently are two different portable devices that aid patients who are unable to raise and lower their foot and ankle (drop foot) as a result of stroke, neurological disease, brain or spinal cord injury. These devices, just a little larger than the size of an I-pod, are placed on the affected leg just below the knee and stimulate the dorsiflexor muscles to contract and raise the foot when walking. Both of these devices have dramatically improved some patients' natural walking gait. If you suffer from drop foot call or talk to one of our physical therapists today for more information and to set up a demonstration of the Ness L300 foot drop system or the WalkAide device.

Challenge Center's phone number is 619-667-8644.



WalkAid representative Jeff Weistrop, left, Tiffany Piquilloud, Challenge Center PT and Executive Director, and Carlos Valenzuela, right center, of Progressive Orthopedics, working with Mark Wiedenfield, a T-4 paraplegic who is wearing the WalkAide which helps prevent foot drop and improves his gait.

Welcome Laura Donohue!



Challenge Center is proud to welcome our newest physical therapist, Laura Donohue on staff. Laura has been a physical therapist for 10 years. Graduating from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia with a Masters in Physical Therapy in 1998, she has worked with a wide range of patients in the hospital, outpatient centers, rehabilitation centers and skilled nursing facilities. Specializing in the treatment of strokes and balance disorders makes her a perfect fit for Challenge Center. Through the use of creative and challenging treatment techniques she will work to strengthen and improve mobility and function in physical therapy clients.



Tony's Tenacity and Triumph

On March 24, 2007, Tony Radna embarked on a difficult journey. He had a simple fall, but the consequences were devastating. Tony tripped getting out of a car and hit his head on the ground. He chipped his tooth, but didn't realize any further damage. A few hours later he was in his home, sat up on the bed, and the injury escalated with a slight tilt of his head. His neck broke at C5-C6. Tony crumpled on the bed where he stayed for the next 16 hours. During that time he was able to see his reflection in the mirror, could see the phone that kept ringing within reach, but he was completely paralyzed from the neck down. Finally, a good friend came to Tony's house the next day and Tony's dog, Zeke, alerted him that something was very wrong.

Tony was immediately rushed to the hospital and underwent two emergency surgeries on his neck. After several days in ICU, he was transferred to a rehabilitation hospital. One hour after arriving at the rehab hospital, a doctor gave Tony a five-minute examination and stated that he had a complete spinal cord injury and would need 24 hour care for the rest of his life. These words hit Tony like a death sentence. He was already in tremendous physical pain, as well as intense emotional distress over loss of his physical abilities. Hearing the prognosis made him feel, "What's the point of going on?"



Tony working with Maren



Tony and Zeke

Prior to his accident, Tony was always extremely physically active. He loved to skate, body surf, snowboard, and even jump off of bridges. As for his career, he worked as a gourmet chef for 15 years in some of San Francisco's finest culinary establishments. He had his share of accidents, but he always recovered quickly. He hardly ever got sick, and he lived an extraordinarily adventure filled life.

After breaking his neck, his entire world turned upside down. He spent the next four months in intensive therapy as an inpatient. Slowly, some movement and sensation began to return to his entire body. He spent two months in a power wheelchair, and then transitioned to a manual chair. By the time he returned home, he had begun to practice walking with an adaptive walker. Every step in his recovery was an encouragement to continue striving for more physical healing and creating a new life for himself.

After leaving the rehabilitation hospital, his physical and occupational therapy went from five to three days a week. He was adamant about creating the most rigorous therapy schedule possible. Then he found Challenge Center. He was immediately welcomed into their physical therapy program, evaluated by a physical therapist and began physical therapy twice a week. Due to his limited financial resources, he was encouraged to apply for a scholarship that would supplement the cost. Over time, Tony transitioned from using the wheelchair to the walker and then to using a cane. He was able to start driving again, which gave him a tremendous sense of independence. His car, a 1977 convertible Alfa Romeo, is super fun and cool to drive! Tony feels that people see him as more, "normal" when he is in his sporty car - that people see his humanness and don't just focus on his disability.

Tony feels lucky that he found Challenge Center and loves how this amazing organization focuses on supporting each whole person. While the physical therapists work with clients to help them regain physical strength and mobility, they also encourage their clients to continue growing, striving and following their dreams. Maybe these dreams begin with wanting to stand, walk, or have more balance, but these goals are inherently connected to the desire to heal the entire self and continue thriving in life.



Gait Training

FOUNDER'S CORNER



Bill Bodry

It's a good summer for Challenge Center. At our July 14th Board meeting Bob James and Scott Allen were elected to the Board. Bob's background includes banking, development, construction and real estate appraisal. He also serves as an expert witness in real estate litigation. Bob is well known in Rotary International for his uncanny ability to accomplish philanthropic miracles. Scott is an advertising executive and graphic designer. He works with for profit and non profit companies across the country. Both of these individuals bring a wealth of connections and capabilities to Challenge Center and are known for successful accomplishments. Scott has already helped by putting us in touch with a colleague of his, Leslie Anne Mogul, of Project Work. Leslie has taken on our annual Comedy Night fundraiser and has set about making it into our most successful ever. If the rest of the year works as well as the first half, we'll end it in fine shape. Both Scott and Bob are gentlemen with heart and dedication to Challenge Center.



The Next Step in Advanced Rehabilitation

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Our Mission

The Challenge Center is committed to providing affordable, skilled physical therapy, specialized fitness and wellness programs to rehabilitate, realize the highest level of independence, and improve the quality of life for children, adults, and seniors with severe physical disabilities, as well as their families and caregivers.

Thank You To Our Wonderful Donors

The Thomas C. Ackerman Foundation
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Wells Fargo Foundation



Executive Director Tiffany Piquilloud and Challenge Center participant Mark Wiedenfeld accept a scholarship check from Randal Schober, Executive Director of the HeadNorth Foundation to support his continued Physical Therapy at Challenge Center.

Challenge Center is proud to partner with HeadNorth. The HeadNorth Foundation's mission is to provide essential support and guidance to individuals and families affected by spinal cord injury, while championing a cure for paralysis.