

# Turtle Soup

NORTH SHORE STROKE RECOVERY CENTRE

Editor: Hana Sykora

Photographer: Sue Carabetta , Karen Mah

March/April 2020

## Where Did the Time Go?

It is very difficult to make this a short story. Ten years later I know how lucky I am to be here and be the best I can possibly be.

It took my family 4 hours to find me and I was passed out. I was unconscious for five days and the doctors took 3 days to bring my blood pressure under 200! I was in hospital for two and a half months, came home to a new apartment (no stairs) that my siblings arranged and set up entirely.

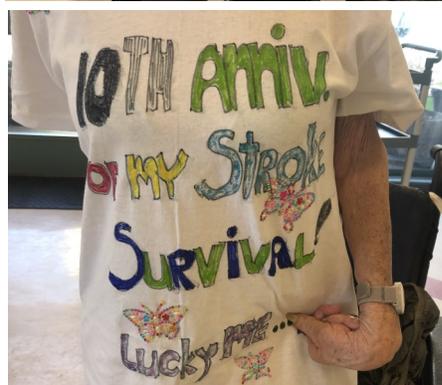
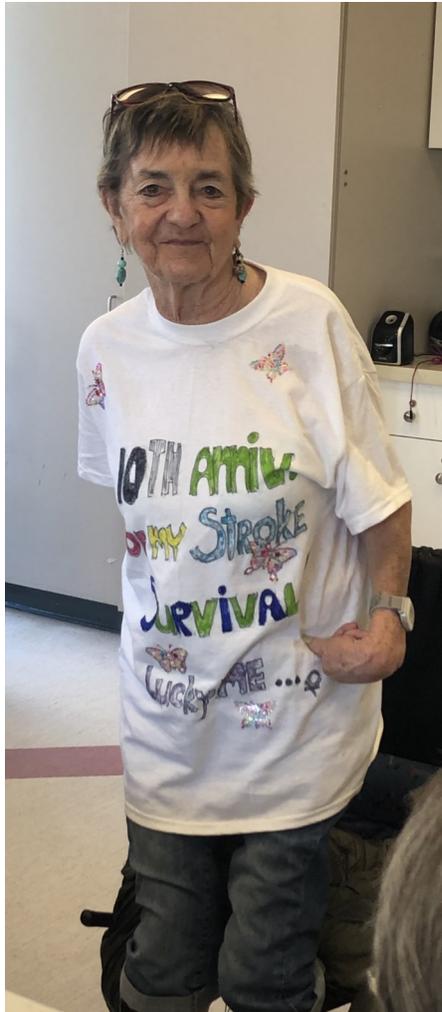
In the first four years I broke one bone a year trying to relearn how to walk. I broke my pelvis twice, my hip and my shoulder one per year. I have the use of one side of my body, fortunately my right side as I am right handed.

The mountains we have to climb are like Mount Everest each day. I am lucky to be tenacious and stubborn so I have always kept a positive attitude in my situation. I am sure my attitude has been lifesaving!!

In April 2019, I had my scooter fall on me (all 300 lbs of it!) and found out I broke fourteen bones; all my ribs, my shoulder and my collar bone. It was 4 months recovery.

I try not to concern with people in my circumstances who just feel sorry for themselves because I think that if you don't try your best to help yourself you will not get any better and you will be miserable all alone and your health will diminish.

I ride my scooter (it's my car) every single day rain, shine, snow it's only water! It does us good to get out and smell fresh air, feel the



sun and see the new growth every spring. There are a lot of things I've done that I cannot do now but had I not been in such good condition when I had my stroke I would have passed away. I almost did.

I have a great network of friends and especially family. I rarely get depressed because to me it is a waste of time which I don't allow. I am having a hard time realizing its been 10 years since I've driven, walked on the beach, danced, played golf (which I loved and was lousy at).

I take transit on my scooter, go to the horseraces, Chinatown, Stanley Park and the casino. Park Royal and the Quay are local and available to me for my everyday outings. I have my own apartment, cook for myself and I made dinner for my neighbour for 3 years before she passed in Oct 2019. I read 3-5 books a week, I paint and draw a lot, I feel I am making the best of a very bad situation.

Remember when you feel a little low there is someone else worse off than you. Feel good about yourself and your contribution to humanity. You can make your own life as good as it can be all you have to do is try. It works I am proof (I think) of that.

Love and luck to all of us.

~ Barbie Watts





Infectious laughter, friendly and warm, this 58 year old member of the Young Survivor of Stroke group has been courageous in the face of adversity.

On April 5th, 2018 Dave had a series of three strokes over the course of four days. These major strokes

changed his life in an instant. These days Dave is physically pretty able, walking with poles though it has certainly changed his ability to play the soccer he loved. But what causes the most uncertainty for him now is his seriously impaired short term memory. Sometimes its hard to remember how he got to the Stroke Recovery Centre that day or if anyone is coming back to pick him up. Dave is a now a rich part of the fabric of the young survivor of stroke community. Every music therapy session is enlivened with Dave there.

Though it's hard for him to realize he can't remember what he shared 10 seconds before, it is something he is able to laugh about with us. Dave has a phenomenal long term memory especially of the many years he spent working in the record industry. Music therapy is a place where Dave shines, a place where he can share knowledge and the music he loves. Much laughter abounds and some poignant moments too. A couple of weeks ago he shared this thought " this group and you people are amazing, so supportive to me. It's sad that it took this stroke for me to really know how much my community means to me but I am very thankful for all of you". Without the funds and support generously donated by Music Heals we would not be able to offer this instrumental (pun intended)



service for those survivors of stroke like Dave who benefit so much from it. Thanks Music Heals—we are so grateful for you!

~ Sue Carabetta



I had a stroke on March 2, 2015. That was the scariest thing that ever happened. I opened my mouth but couldn't talk, couldn't remember what words are.

I started working with a speech therapist in April. After a few months, I missed my karate so much, I joined again (a lot of instructors and doctors thought I was crazy). I volunteered as well for the North Vancouver Stroke Recovery, Brain Recovery and Harvest Project. With everything together, that is what pushed me and motivated me keep going. I started working in June, 2017, now I work full time. I'm a Senior Personal Insurance Agent. The stroke was a hard time but has changed me as well. You realize how much you really can push yourself when you need to.

~ Kim Spracklin

**Congratulation, Kim, on your 5th anniversary!**



## Meet Angie and Betty



Angie is our new Yoga Therapist at the YSS. She is a great positive force with our members and is a mind, body & soul Wellness Advocate. Passionate about helping people create a more balanced life through yoga, personal training, group fitness, life coaching, essential oils and Emotional Freedom Technique; Angie's focus is helping people with anxiety and depression and uses the tools that helped her move out of depression and into living a happy and joyful life. She is an excellent addition to our Stroke Therapy team!! Welcome Angie!



My name is Betty. I recently retired from a long career in health care. I am very pleased to be a new volunteer with the North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre. My background includes having worked as a physiotherapist and as an occupational therapist. For the past 24 years I have worked in Richmond in a mental health outpatient service providing individual counselling and group therapy for adults and older adults with symptoms of depression and anxiety. It is a pleasure to be now working in my own community, to be able to support individuals who have been left with interesting challenges as a result of a stroke. I have lots of interests but spending time with my 7 grandchildren (all under the age of 8 years) gives me the most joy. Since none of them live locally, travelling has become an important leisure activity for me.

## Tentative Dates to Remember

### Strides for Strokes –

**Our major fundraiser of the year. Even if you can't attend, please consider pledges from family & friends.**



**When:** Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Where:** John Lawson Park, West Vancouver

**Time:** 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m.

### Annual General Meeting



**When:** Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>

**Where:** North Shore Neighbourhood House – Inman Room

**Time:** 12:45 p.m.

### June Luncheon –

**Our favourite location for our June lunch has reopened!**



**When:** Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Where:** CC's Chinese Restaurant, 5020 Capilano Road, N.V.

**Time:** 12 noon

~ *Gail Snelling*

**More details to follow.**





A quick note to all our members during this time when we are not able to meet at the Centre. Our desire is to find other creative ways to connect and support you.

Here are some of the initiatives we have begun:

- Phone call check ins and newsletter mail-out if you don't have email.
- Emails to our members who have an email with updates, jokes, mental aerobics, etc.
- Zoom online meetings for those who have internet and are able to get the zoom free app. Please email or call us if you are interested in trying to set this up. See instructions below.
- For those using zoom, there are more options available for us to gather online - check in and chat, mental aerobics, possibly music, and for some, opportunities to do online speech therapy, book clubs, iPad and memory groups. We are just in the process of developing some of these options.
- SRABC is offering twice/week chair exercise classes on zoom that will be available to our members.
- For zoom meetings: the free app can be downloaded on a telephone, tablet or computer using audio or both audio and video. There are 2 options you can use to join a zoom meeting:

⇒ **Option 1:** To download and install the Zoom Application: Go to <https://zoom.us/download> and from the Download Center, click on the Download button under "Zoom Client For Meetings". This application will automatically download when you start your first Zoom Meeting. You'll be asked to open or download zoom. Follow the prompts.

⇒ **Option 2:** Either open up Zoom or go to [zoom.us](https://zoom.us). Click "Join a meeting". After we email you a meeting day and time, you just go to this and click join a meeting and put in the code we send.

Please contact a coordinator at the emails below or phone the NSSRC at 778-340-5803 if you have any questions or concerns or just want to connect with us. Also, if you have other ideas of things we could do to connect at the present time, please share them with us.

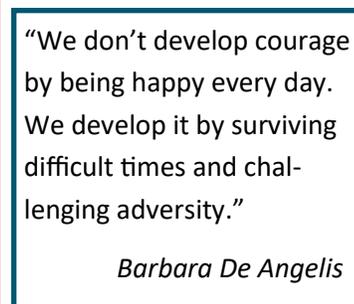
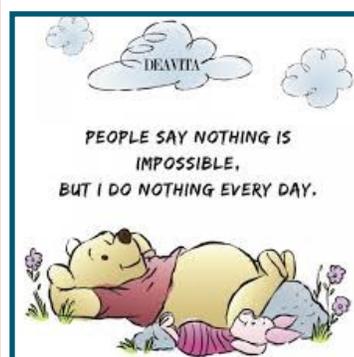
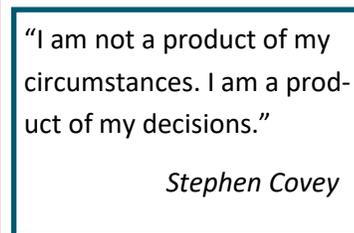
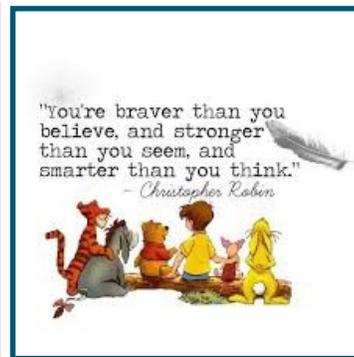
Wishing you all good health at this time.

~ Gail, Sue, Karen, Penelope, Allison and Yasmine

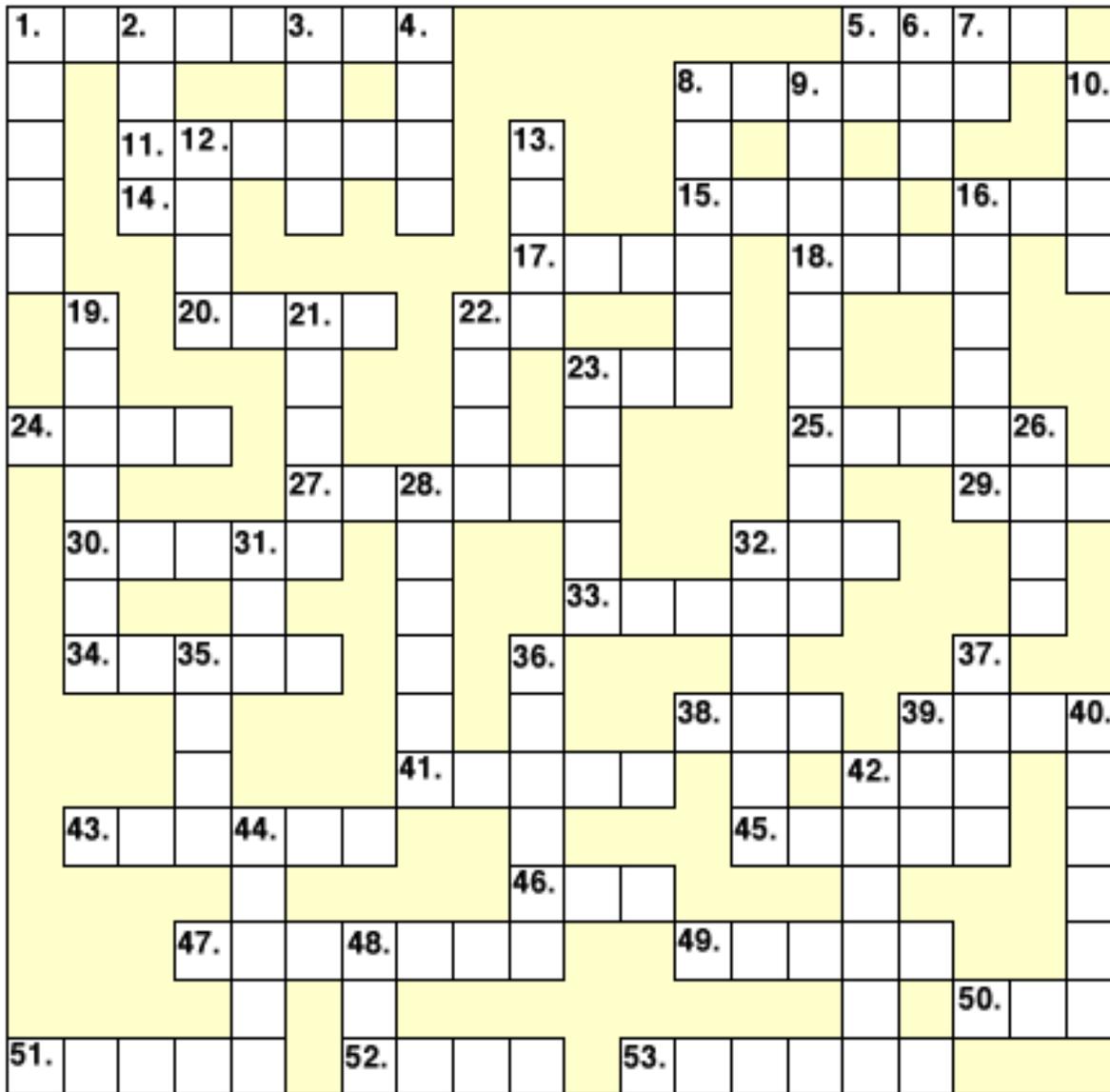
[gail@nssrc.org](mailto:gail@nssrc.org)

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[karen@nssrc.org](mailto:karen@nssrc.org)



# JUMBO CROSSWORD



**Down:**

1. Part of a flower
2. What you scratch
3. \_\_\_n' roll
4. Opposite of future
5. Hot \_\_\_ cold
6. Fox's home
7. Take \_\_\_ or leave \_\_\_
8. Easter \_\_\_\_\_
9. Easter treats
10. Jesus was buried in this
12. Speed competition
13. Spring month
16. Hare
19. Appears after the rain
21. You play these
22. Look for
23. Spring month
26. Easter flower
28. A season
31. Shake head
32. Easter colour
35. Tidy
36. Goodies
37. Beginning of leaves
39. Boy's name
40. Reach destination
42. Easter hat
44. \_\_\_ and field
48. Baby goat

**Across:**

- |   |                                      |                            |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. One bit of water falling from the clouds | 22. Opposite of she                  | 41. Spring colour          |
| 5. Garfield's dog friend                    | 23. Spring month                     | 42. Resting place          |
| 8. Confidential                             | 24. Discover                         | 43. Baby cat               |
| 11. Early spring flower                     | 25. Spring month                     | 45. Forests                |
| 14. Laughing sound                          | 27. Spring holiday                   | 46. Bath _____             |
| 15. 12:00 p.m.                              | 29. _____ top                        | 47. Easter or picnic _____ |
| 16. Outer edge                              | 30. Jelly _____                      | 49. Hides eggs             |
| 17. Be in want                              | 32. Opposite of no                   | 50. Colouring agent        |
| 18. Coca _____                              | 33. Easter bunny does this with eggs | 51. Baby chicken           |
| 20. Easter bunny hides these                | 34. Breezy                           | 52. Water bird             |
|   | 38. Ginger _____                     | 53. Passes out momentarily |
|   | 39. Musical instrument               |                            |



### Birgit Rehn

Birgit was born Sept 29, 1937 in Alvkarleby, Sweden and sadly passed away on February 18, 2020. She was proudly Canadian and Swedish. In the summer of 1966, Birgit along with her husband and her son Mats, spent a family vacation in Vancouver and decided to stay. She was a fan of hockey, tennis, football and most other sports. She enjoyed baking,

gardening, puzzles and feeding birds. ~ Mats Rehn



### Bill Krane

Jan 28th, 1949 - Feb 4th, 2020

Bill has been a member of the North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre since Jan 2019.

He was a regular participant on Mondays and Wednesdays at the centre.

**Quiet Reflections Around the Art Table**—Every Thursday at 10am, Birgit sat beside me at the art table. She was a sweet, gentle spirit with so much kindness in her heart. She would share stories about her life in Sweden, about meeting her husband while dancing and about her love for watching tennis. She had so much appreciation for her family, especially her son Mats. When she first joined the art group, she would always say “I’m not an artist, I don’t know what to do!” I started her off slowly and gave her a pre-drawn mandala to color in. After weeks of careful coloring, she was able to finish it and was so incredibly proud. Eventually, I introduced her to more projects. By the end, she had just about experimented with every art material - paint, crayons, pencils, chalk, collage, etc. Her art folder was bursting full of different creations. She always had such strong determination to finish her artwork by the end of the hour, even though she had a sore arm. One time, I told her she only had 5 minutes left and she said “ok, I better hurry, I’m going to finish it!” Somehow, she always did. By the end, we had developed a really close relationship, sitting side by side every week sharing our art and heart with each other. When the transit strike was happening or when the snow storm hit, she would say to me “I was thinking about you and was wondering if you would be able to come to work today.” Her constant care about my well-being always warmed my heart. I will definitely miss her but am so grateful I got to spend so much time with her. I will always be inspired by her heart and spirit.

~ Erica Pang, Art Therapist

Always a gentleman, kind and thankful for any help given, and an avid member of the crossword puzzle group and music therapy.

Born in Toronto Ontario, Bill had a brilliant intellect and worked as a psychology professor at SFU and most recently at UNBC. He enjoyed watching sports, going to Canucks games, movies, playing card and fine dining. His favourite trip was to Turkey.

He never lost his desire for fine dining and enjoyed going out with family, friends or the Stroke Group outings for meals. Bill loved his wife and sons dearly and was often known to refer to them when at the Stroke Centre. He also loved to follow the hockey career of his one grand-son Riley.

In his own words the best thing that ever happened to him was “meeting his wife Diane”.

Diane says Bill wanted us to know how he greatly enjoyed the groups and all the members at NSSRC.

We will miss him at the center and all of the family is close in our thoughts.

~ Sue Carabetta

## North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre

Phone: 778-340-5803 Website: [www.nssrc.org](http://www.nssrc.org)

Co-ordinators: Gail Snelling (Principal Co-ordinator), Sue Carabetta, Karen Mah

Days of Operation: **Monday: 10:00 - 2:00 p.m.** - Amica Lions Gate, 701 Keith Rd, West Vancouver

**Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday: 10:00 - 2:00p.m.** North Shore Neighbourhood House, 225 East 2nd St, North Vancouver

**Young Survivors of Stroke- Monday 10:00am-1:00pm** -Amica Edgemont Village, 3225 Highland Blvd., North Vancouver &

**Wednesday 10:30am-12:30pm**- North Shore Neighbourhood House

EDITOR'S NOTE: 1. What is in the newsletter does not necessarily reflect the opinion of NSSRC Staff or Board. It is a newsletter written by/for stroke survivors and their families. 2. Grammatical errors are not corrected by the editor unless requested. Our newsletter is part of our recovery. Restoring confidence in self expression takes precedence over grammar.