



# Turtle Soup

NORTH SHORE STROKE RECOVERY CENTRE

Editor: Hana Sykora

Photographer(s): Gail Snelling

June 2021

## Road To Recovery



After completing my master's degree in physical education at UBC I worked for the Athletic Department as the Program Co-ordinator for the Aquatic Centre. I retired in 2017 after a fulfilling 35-year career in athletics and recreational exercise. I was working part time at the Delbrook Community Centre, post retirement, doing personal fitness training. I was enjoying doing more gardening, golf, travel, and other things you typically look forward to doing when you retire.

Then in 2019 I had an unexpected hemorrhagic stroke that changed my life drastically. After having emergency brain surgery, I was in Lions Gate Hospital for 40 days recovering. I had lost sight on my right side, I could not read or write, I was having trouble remembering things and I could not find the right words to speak. Because of my vision restriction I still cannot drive, and I have been taking speech and vestibular therapy sessions weekly for the last two years in an attempt to get back my independence and confidence for everyday living. It has been a struggle for me and my supportive family and friends. Everyone I know tells me that I am making remarkable progress, but it is not as much as I would like it to be.

Despite the pandemic I am back working part time at Delbrook. There is no personal fitness training allowed but patrons can book the gym for individual workouts, so my job is to oversee the fitness area to ensure that everyone in attendance is following the correct safety protocols.

The road to recovery from stroke is long and hard. Asking for help, staying engaged and celebrating your small day to day successes I have found is important to gaining a sense of happiness and fulfillment in your new life.

*By Leslie Grundy*



## **Jane Brandt & Max**

In June of 2016 I ventured to the West Vancouver SPCA in search of a Siamese cat to follow in the footsteps of our cat "Simba" who had recently passed away from what was considered to be a "ripe" old age for a feline.

There were two Siamese kittens available, and I just couldn't make up my mind. I invited Richard to come and have a look and help with the major decision.

When we got back to the SPCA, a new inmate had arrived - a six-week-old Tabby of exceptional size for his age and ever so cute. It was a quick and easy decision and so "mini spruce" came home with us.

However, "mini spruce" did not seem a suitable name as he wasn't a bit "tree like". Richard came up with the distinguished name of "Maximillian" which quickly became shortened to the nickname of Max.

Max is in his fifth year last April 22, 2021 and as expected is a large and beautiful boy - very friendly, affectionate and loves to be cuddled once in awhile. He is good company and keeps watch over me at night from the foot of the bed and on midnight forages in the fridge.

Since Richard's passing, Max and I have sold and moved from our home to an apartment and we have both settled in well.

## **Christian, Aase Larsen & Skippy**



Christian and his wife, Aase, have had Skippy for 6 years and he's a rescue dog from California. They take him to the dog park near the Auto Mall twice each day where they meet their friends and their dogs.



## **Dolores Sinnott & Jane**

I have a beautiful ginger cat named Jane and I love her so much. She is an SPCA rescue cat, and I have had the pleasure of her company for almost 5 years now. She'll be turning 11 this year. She loves to spend her time relaxing on my lap or the back of the sofa - watching the birds fly by.

There have always been pets of some kind. They bring so much joy and comfort to my life.



## **Mickey Holloway & Ozzy**

Ozzy is a 12-year-old Shih Tzu Bichon. He came to live with us 7 years ago when my daughter and her family moved to Squamish for work. Ozzy couldn't live with them in their trailer, so we gladly took him in. Originally, he was going to move back to Vernon with them after their job ended but it was decided that Ozzy and Mickey had a special bond, and he would continue to live with us. Ozzy has been Mickey's shadow for all these years - following her around the yard as she gardened, taking her for her much-needed daily walks, and keeping her company while I was at work. As Mickey is in care, Ozzy has his regular FaceTime evening visits with her and is planning to have a personal visit within the next few weeks. By Mickey's partner Joyce

## **Don Montgomery & Otis**

Otis is a 12-year-old Jack Russell Terrier.



## **Bill Forsythe & Tilly**

Tilly is part chihuahua and part toy poodle.





### ***Ksenija Svetelj & Sprocket***

Sprocket is a member of Ksenija Svetelj's family. He is a rescue dog from Mexico. He came with about 4 other siblings and they went to other homes. They've tried to take him swimming many times, but he just runs out. However, he likes his bath. He is very unusual, but they all love him.



### ***Mauro Chiesa, Rose-Marie & Mistral***

Mistral is a half-husky, half malamute. She is 3-week rescue, who had originated from Prince George, and we got her via the Burnaby SPCA. Mistral is

the French wind which blows from north to south, and so did she from Prince George. Looks like we have a tri-lingual dog, as she also understands Italian. Yes, she is big and getting bigger. Right now, at nine months, she is 36 kilos; the neat thing is that she does not realise that she is 36 kilos.

### ***Dorothy McKay & Bentley***



This is a picture of my son's dog, Bentley. Bentley was a very patient, well-trained Labrador Retriever, who was great with children. We all loved Bentley and he seemed to love us. He would sit still and we would dress him up. When given the cue, he would drop and eat a marshmallow which had been placed on his nose. When he passed,

my son and his family didn't get another dog, as no dog could ever replace Bentley



### ***Dennis Joseph & Zeus***



Hello, my name is Grace Gao and I am thrilled to join the NSSRC this summer! I am a speech-language pathology student from the University of British Columbia (UBC). I will be doing my practicum with Penelope in the Speech Therapy program for the next few months. I can't wait to get to know you all!

I grew up in the West End and Kerrisdale and currently live on the UBC campus. I enjoy travelling and have visited many places around Asia, Europe, Australia, and North and South America. I love animals and am hoping to foster a senior cat soon! In my free time, I like to paint, ski, and go hiking with friends.

From high school, I began volunteering and coaching for Special Olympics. Helping athletes with disabilities build confidence and become empowered to participate in activities meaningful to them inspired me to work in the helping profession. While doing my undergraduate studies at McGill University in psychology and linguistics, I volunteered with children with language impairments and in communication groups for survivors of stroke. Seeing the positive impact of speech therapy on their life participation motivated me to pursue this field. I hope to continue helping people communicate successfully and am excited to be a part of the post stroke recovery process at the NSSRC. I look forward to our time together and hearing your stories!



Zeus fits his name. We picked him up in Chilliwack in thunder and lightning. We never told this to our son and, when we returned, he chose to call him Zeus.

Thank You to the West Vancouver Foundation!



We are extremely grateful to the West Vancouver Foundation for providing us with a grant to support our NSSRC Survivor of Stroke Program. Your funding makes it possible for the NSSRC to adapt and continue to operate its programs and services supporting survivors of stroke in our community. Our ongoing mission is to maximize the quality of life of those impacted by stroke. We promote connecting with the community, and offer rehabilitative therapies, peer support and caregiver respite time.

**THANK YOU FOR HELPING US MAKE THIS POSSIBLE!**



## Strides for Strokes fundraiser cancelled

June 12th, 2021 would have been the date of our 15th Strides for Strokes at John Lawson Park in West Vancouver. This annual event is key to raising funds to support programming for survivors of stroke. Although the event is cancelled, we hope that members, friends, family and community residents will still consider making a donation to our cause. Thanks for your support!

[www.nssrc.org/donate](http://www.nssrc.org/donate)



You can also mail a cheque to NSSRC c/o 2464 Berton Place, North Vancouver, B.C. V7H 2W8 or

e-transfer to [gail@nssrc.org](mailto:gail@nssrc.org)

Check out our Facebook and Instagram pages and SHARE, COMMENT and LIKE our posts.

[www.facebook.com/northshorestrokerecoverycentre/](https://www.facebook.com/northshorestrokerecoverycentre/)

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~ Gail Snelling

## North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre

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

Co-ordinators: Gail Snelling (Executive Director), Yasmine Bia, Kathryn Seely

Speech Language Pathologists: Penelope Bacsfalvi, Allison Haas, SLP Assistant: Yasmine Bia

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.*