



# UI TIMES

## Quarter Two 2020



Hello Readers,

“When it rains look for rainbows, when it’s dark look for stars.”

During these challenging times, may we center ourselves by practicing gratitude. We present to you our second newsletter of 2020 with content from our UI locations. This edition is complete with life stories and experiences shared by our clients on their practice of resilience. We hope that their stories are as inspiring to you as they are to us during this unprecedented time.

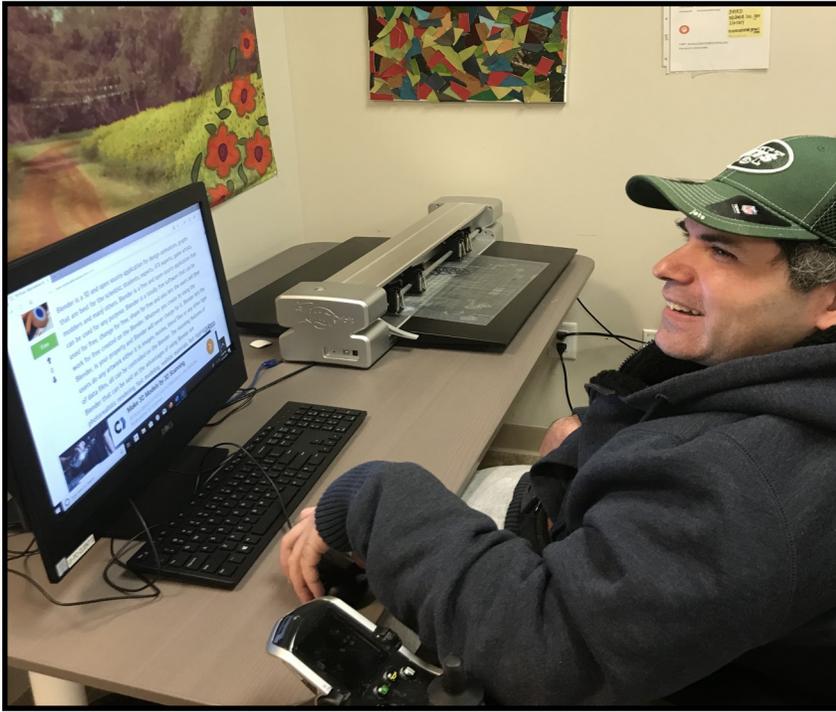
A huge thank you to all our contributors!

**Above:** Patrick painting a pretty landscape in his group home.

**Below:** Just because we aren’t physically together doesn’t mean we can’t grow together. A therapist and client have been taking care of and growing these plants for weeks during their virtual therapy sessions. Which word would you like to “grow”?

- Newsletter Committee





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Our message from the Editor:

“I want to thank my housemates and the friends I have made at Universal Institute because without their guidance and your READERSHIP there would be no sense to continue these editions in the midst of the current situation.

In this issue we focused on April as a season of rebirth, we feel that we could use some motivation these days.

Thank you for supporting this endeavor and remember that with any new problem there are solutions. Be mindful of the possibilities and be resourceful. Stay home as much as possible and take care of yourself.

The world as we see it has changed throughout this process. Now that most residents are asked to stay home, we can take time to appreciate some of the smaller things in life —like watching a good show, listening to some music, reading a book, and looking out at nature.

We will come out of this stronger and more resilient than ever. We will get through this together. We hope we can provide support by sharing interesting and relatable content for you to enjoy even from the comfort of your own home.”

Truthfully,

UI Newsletter Editor—Sean

# Amazing Faith

By: Scott

My name is Scott and my passion is playing the guitar. In college I played classical guitar and graduated from Montclair State with a degree in music. I played at weddings and events and taught guitar lessons to individuals at the Music Den. Since my injury in 2006 I have only picked up the guitar a handful of times.

Now, I am consistently playing once a week for one hour during my occupational therapy treatment sessions. In July of 2019 I received an adaptive guitar strummer from a philanthropic company called "Can Assist" based out of the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada. I received the strummer after filling out an application for an assistive device and writing a letter with the help of my Occupational Therapist, Erika Yurcin. The letter explained how my head injury affected my right arm, thus impeding my ability to independently strum the guitar and preventing me from engaging in my passion. Erika and I then collaborated with the Can Assist team for 4-5 months to help them construct a device specifically for me and my guitar.

The device allows me to strum the guitar using a foot pedal while playing the chords with my left hand. Although I know my way around a guitar and have had plenty of experience with playing music, learning how to use the adaptive strummer was a whole new avenue. Learning the foot pedal as well as coordinating between the foot movements and playing the chords were the hardest parts. So far, I can play the songs "Amazing Grace", "How Great Thou Art", and "Spirit in the Sky". I am currently working on being able to play, "Cold Shot" and "Running on Faith". In August I played "Amazing Grace" in the Universal talent show. It was the first time I've played a show since receiving the strummer and since before my injury in 2006. After playing I felt relieved, elated, and happy.

My goal for the future is to be able to take the guitar strummer home and play independently. For now I will keep working on playing more songs and getting more comfortable with using the foot pedal. This road is not easy and this experience has been both good and very tough at times but the end result is worth it.



Livingston, NJ

## IMMUNE CELLS REWORK, REPAIR BRAIN WHILE WE SLEEP

Summary by Brian

New research reveals that sleep is even more important than we thought. The brain is able to do most of its repair work while we're asleep. Some illnesses that sleep helps the brain battle are; autism, schizophrenia, dementia, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. This is viable for the clients at Therapeutic Rehabilitation because the brain repairs itself even after a stroke or TBI.

How many hours of sleep did your mother tell you to get per night? The fact of the matter proves that your mother was right. Science argues that many good things happen in our brains while we sleep - learning and memories are preserved, and waste is eliminated. New research shows that essential immune cells called microglia go to work while we sleep. They play a vital role in revamping the bonds between nerve cells, adversely targeting infection, and fixing damage. These microglia become active while we sleep.

Microglia is utilized as the brain's emergency attack force. They search the brain and spinal cord aggressively to polish off infections or devour up waste from dead cell tissue. So, do what your mother told you and get more shut-eye.



Michigan

# Survivor

By: Laura

The popular reality television show “Survivor” pitches contestants against [the elements] for the chance to win a million dollar cash prize. While participating in the game show, contestants must survive in the harsh and grueling conditions of nature without the aid of modern technologies. Upon completion of their participation on the show, the participants may return home to their comfy lifestyles, and need not expose themselves to such [trauma] inducing living conditions imposed by a staged game show. However, for some people, [we] may never experience the relief felt by returning home to such comforts. The traumas, limitations, and dire conditions imposed on [us] by [unfortunate acts of fate] serve as a [daily] [struggle] that must be overcome to accomplish simple acts [that most people take for granted]. My name is Laura, I have been at Universal for 16 years and continue to receive PT, OT and Cognitive therapy services. I would like to tell you my story, as well as what it takes for me to survive one day at a time.

In 1999, I was misdiagnosed when I was pregnant. I had a condition called pre-eclampsia (i.e., a condition that can cause your blood pressure to rise and put one at risk for brain injury) which my doctor missed. I should have had the baby by C-section. However, the doctor let me have my baby full term. Although I experienced headaches and other symptoms, doctors thought nothing of it. Doctors did not recognize my condition. Fast forward - I ended up in a coma for 57 days. On day 57, I woke up at that point, my entire life changed.

So what’s next? Despite my very atypical circumstances, I feel as though my answer to life’s question is much more common to the general public. I must do whatever it takes to provide my children with some type of normalcy and comfort. I feel that the biggest difference between me and most people is that for me I must literally navigate the emotional and physical tolls that present themselves with every task I attempt to complete. How often people must take for granted the ability to do things as simple as becoming seated on the toilet seat on their own. Or being able to freely use your dominant hand, which has become disabled in my case, to perform daily functions as you always have. Or of not having to live in constant fear of being trapped in the house without the ability of being mobile in the event of an emergency such as a fire. Needless to say, but adjusting to life as a disabled wife and mother has not been easy. And yet each day I continue to strive to be a little bit better than the person I was yesterday.

If there is a silver lining to this story it is that I have learned how to have hope and to never give up. As dreadful as my story may sound, it has strengthened the bonds between my family, and brought me friends that I never would have met. I have had the fortune of meeting and speaking with fellow survivors, and working with wonderful people from organizations, such as the Brain Injury Association. I have also acquired a deeper appreciation for life’s little pleasures, and learned to take it one day at a time. The journey has not been easy, but once I was able to come to terms with my condition, then I was able to start my healing process. I think learning to acknowledge your physical and mental limitations is one of the hardest components to healing, but that it is also the most beneficial. Without acknowledging your immediate circumstances you cannot begin to heal what is dragging you down. So while I choose to acknowledge the limitations of my handicap condition, I also choose to not accept that my handicap defines who I am. Therefore I will continue to go to my therapies every day, and continue to amaze my doctors with my progress. If it can be done, then it will be done. I am not giving up, and I will not give up!

Laura, thank you for sharing your story. Your determination, your optimistic approach to life, and your resiliency is something that each of us can learn from you. You continue to amaze and inspire us every day!

- Newsletter Committee



Livingston, NJ

# How We Face Challenges

There are plenty of challenges faced every day. They may be easily dealt with OR extremely stressful. In this fast-paced moving world, there is a lot of competition with moving forward. It is a challenge to stay positive, determined, and always focused. We, here at Therapeutic Rehabilitation, are pleased to share our strengths, accomplishments, and goals with others.

As we enter a new decade, **2020**, we realize we are bonded together through this life with ambition, goals, and desires, and beautiful pathways of different lifestyles. We are granted options to choose what is best for our families as well as for ourselves. They may go as far as entering college, becoming a lawyer, or being a nurse.

Doing better after an injury is a challenge. It is like being on a roller coaster. I have noticed some awesome changes in myself, and I appreciate the lady that I have become. You have got to do better for yourself and prove to yourself and God that all achievements are possible.

It is a challenge to stay positive, focused, and determined. I have also met others like myself who have challenges and are very happy with their lives. Knowing that we have deficits is okay! We are God's children. Being in situations with new ideas and changes has been a great honor for me.

From experience, I can tell you that stressful events will challenge your patience. When you are giving it your all, you have got to recover, and attend your therapies, and not be interrupted with problems that you have no time to worry about. For goodness sake, be an advocate for yourself and trust in God. I remain calm in order to continue my daily routine. I have learned to not worry, but pray.

In conclusion, in regards to my journey with challenges, it is our destiny to expect the unexpected. However, **remember**, always strive for positivity for what you are trying to achieve. Work hard and work well!

**YOU ARE IMPORTANT AND WHAT YOU SAY MATTERS.**

Article by Tasha (*Troy, MI*)

## What's on the menu?

### Ingredients

9 h 15 m 8 servings 472 cal

- 1 onion, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces
- 4 cups water
- 1 (4 pound) corned beef brisket with spice packet
- 1/2 head cabbage, coarsely chopped



Above: Traditional St. Patty's Day Recipe

### Directions

Prep – 15 min Cook – 9 hours Ready In – 9 hours and 15 min.

1. Place the carrots, potatoes, and onion into the bottom of a slow cooker, pour in the water, and place the brisket on top of the vegetables. Sprinkle on the spices from the packet, cover, and set the cooker on High.
2. Cook the brisket for about 8 hours. An hour before serving, stir in the cabbage and cook for 1 more hour.

### Nutrition Facts

Per Serving: 472 calories; 19.6 g fat; 49.5 g carbohydrates; 23.6 g protein; 99 mg cholesterol; 1281 mg sodium.



## JT's Tropical Smoothie Café Review

For this review I chose the Sunrise Sunset Smoothie from the Tropical Smoothie Cafe. With the first sip of this beautifully orange colored smoothie I tasted the refreshing flavor of the tropics. The notes of strawberry, pineapple, mango and orange juice just marinated my taste buds with refreshment. The 360 calories in this beverage provide a good source of fiber and protein along with beneficial carbohydrates that will help propel you through your day.

Tropical Smoothie Cafe offers a complete menu of food selections so if you want to order a complete meal you will be able to. Your local Tropical Smoothie Cafe location will probably be busy during lunch hours so I encourage you to download the Tropical Smoothie app to place your order ahead of time. All you will have to do is arrive and pick up your food from the order ahead spot on the counter. If you cannot make it out to Tropical Smoothie, they have partnered with Door Dash so that you can order on the Door Dash app, and they will deliver your food to you.

So, take it from me and check out your local Tropical Smoothie Cafe and try the Sunrise Sunset smoothie. Trust me, you will not be disappointed.

Until next time JT Awesome Review fans just remember;

**“PEOPLE WHO LOVE TO EAT ARE ALWAYS THE BEST PEOPLE. - JULIA CHILD”**

Hi JT,

Thank you for the great review! We have a Smoothie café close to our location in Livingston. I have not been there yet so I am very excited to try it. Thanks for providing the dietary info. Good to know this would be a healthy option. Thanks for the article. We look forward to the next one.

- Sean (*Livingston, NJ*)



# Universal does Martial Arts

Every Tuesday I go to Mountain Martial Arts in Old Bridge for a karate class with 6 friends. My Sensei, Mark Kapel teaches the class GoJu Ryu, which is a karate style that comes from Okinawa Japan. During class, we speak in Japanese and I am now able to count to 10. The clients that attend karate class all have a TBI and we have different areas that we are working on. Some have ataxia, poor balance, decreased strength & endurance, hemiparesis, poor coordination, and memory loss. We are learning strikes, blocks and kicks. We practice using bags, Bo staffs, chishis, shields and breaking boards. The Karate class helps us with strength, endurance, balance and coordination. It also helps with focus, concentration and memory. -By Jeffrey



This is so cool! It's great that the class works on a lot of different stuff. I'd love to try a class one day. Thanks for sharing, Jeffrey!

- John

*Long Branch, NJ*

## Community Events Recap

**Right:** Greg and Steve working on projects for an upcoming art show.



**Below:** John and Eric participating in a collage making workshop.



**Below:** Pedaiah and Willie got front row seats to the "Trip through the Gallery" show at the Liberty Science Center's new planetarium.



**Right:** Eric testing his vision in the sensory center at the Liberty Science Center.

*Livingston, NJ*

# Sports Talk

## The Astros' Stole Signs

According to the New York Times, the Houston Astros baseball team was involved in a three-year scandal for sign stealing. This Houston Astros team went on to win the 2017 World Series. The team was fined \$5 million dollars and forced to fire their manager, A.J. Hinch and General Manager, Jeff Luhnow, in January of 2020. Both of these managers have also been suspended for one year by MLB's Commissioner, Robert D. Manfred. Manfred was criticized for not punishing individual players and not vacating the 2017 World Series title from Houston.

The Houston Astros, who beat the Los Angeles Dodgers in seven deciding World Series games, were not stripped of their World Series Trophy. "Once you go down that road of changing what happens on the field, I just don't know how you decide where you stop," Manfred said.

The Houston Astros batters listened for a loud drum sound from the stands to indicate what pitch was coming. With this knowledge, the Astros' batters had a significant advantage and they saw their batting averages increase. As a former baseball player in high school, this is unacceptable behavior at any level, and I consider it to be 100% cheating.

Article by Brian



Hi Brian,

It's nice to meet another sports fan. Loved your article. I agree and feel the same way. No one should steal signs, period. It ruins the sportsmanship of the game. I am happy that the manager and general manager both got fired by I believe much more should have been done. Great read!

- John (Livingston, N.J)

## 2019 World Series Review

2019 World Series – Washington Nationals take all 7 games to beat the Houston Astros to win their 1<sup>st</sup> MLB title of all time. The Washington Nationals successfully take full advantage of winning the Major League Baseball title on their first trip to the World Series. This 115<sup>th</sup> World Series meant something to most Detroiters because unfortunately Justin Verlander lost Games 2 and 6. Justin Verlander was an old Detroit Tiger for twelve years. Steven Strasburg, a pitcher for the Washington Nationals that won Game 2 and Game 6, won the World Series MVP. This was the first and only time that the visiting road team won all the games played. It has never been done before in the history of sports. That made the road teams a perfect 7-0, the first time that's happened in a Fall Classic. Justin Verlander is 0-8 in the World Series, but he is the post season strike king.

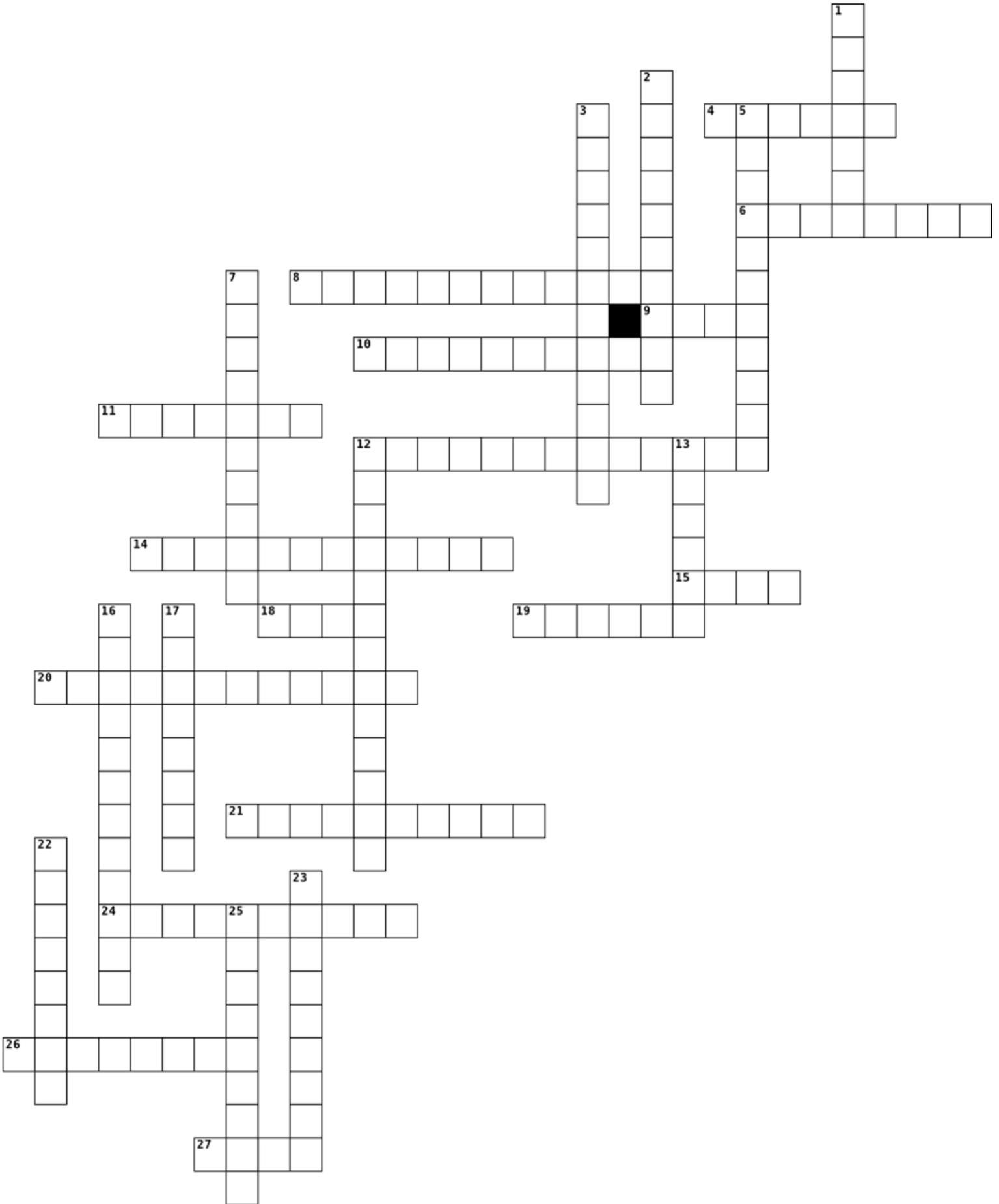
Recapping the games for the Washington Nationals, Game one was won by Max Scherzer in a tight 5 to 4 finish. This was the only game in the entire seven games that was a one run baseball game. Game two was won by Washington Nationals pitcher, Stephen Strasburg. The Houston Astros fought back by winning Game three by a score of 4 to 1.

Houston kept their winning ways going by winning Game four 8 to 1 and Game five 7 to 1. Houston was finally up three games to two over the Washington Nationals. It also turns out that Washington Nationals' pitcher, Stephen Strasburg won game 6 to tie up the series at three games apiece. Finally, Game Seven happened. Game Seven was in Houston. It became a blowout. The Washington Nationals won 6 to 2, giving the Washington Nationals- their 1st Major League Baseball title ever!!



Article by Brian (Michigan)

# Will's Wonderful Crossword



My name is Will, and I am a client at TRU Design and Marketing. Being here has given me the option to make myself better and learn new skills. Doing this crossword puzzle is TRUly a unique way to think outside of the box. I created a crossword using information found in the previous newsletter to make the clues and answers. You have to read each article from the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter newsletter to obtain the answers for the crossword puzzle.

### Across

4. Who decorated the Christmas tree for the front lobby of Livingston?
6. Which location had their third annual Halloween party?
8. This is what people in Michigan call themselves?
9. Which location does majority of our artwork for Etsy come from?
10. Who founded Universal Institute?
11. A group from Long Branch went to the Giant's game; who did they play?
12. What is the name of our Etsy shop?
14. What television show was a group in Livingston dressed as?
15. Who is the front desk assistant in the human resources department?
18. Who is showcasing the wreath on the newsletter?
19. Who agreed that the Oh My Pie shake sounded like a good choice?
20. What costume was the Royal Oak staff dressed as for Halloween?
21. What location did a roller coaster Halloween costume?
24. Which location staff performed The Twelve days of Christmas?
26. What location is the cUIrated Gallery at?
27. Who is the editor of the newsletter cover?

### Down

1. Who was the winner of the best ugly sweater contest?
2. What location had a holiday photo booth?
3. This food item was a nice crunchy batter and cost \$6.99
5. How many years old is Universal Institute turning?
7. What restaurant did J.T. review?
12. With the code EMP30 how much do you save on Etsy?
13. What color is most prominent on the cover?
16. What flavor shake was mentioned in the Shake Shack review?
17. What artwork by Jean and Eric was featured at the cUIrated Gallery show?
22. In what state can the weather be unpredictable?
23. What candy was used in the Halloween guessing game?
25. What location had a French Fries costume?

Hi Will,

What a great idea! I enjoy seeing puzzles and word searches in the newsletter because it's a fun activity to complete in between reads especially during a time where everyone is home. Thank you for this fun addition

- Sean (Livingston, NJ)



Our enrichment team continues to collaborate to provide our clients with fun, fulfilling and therapeutic activities through telehealth. Our team has successfully launched the following themed group sessions for any client interested in attending: Yoga, Tai Chi, Rock n Roll, Cardio, Meditation, Aerobics, Music, Reading and Support groups.

Shout out to Stephanie, Lauren, Rachel, Casey, Shawna, Alyson, and Jessica for getting this virtual enrichment program started!

# Telehealth Services

## Virtual Reality Hot Air Balloon

To give everyone a better idea of computer activities, two members of UI in Livingston, John and Elanda, had the opportunity to explore a virtual reality tour of a hot air balloon ride. They discussed with each other the best pros and cons to think about for those who are interested in this kind of virtual reality activity.



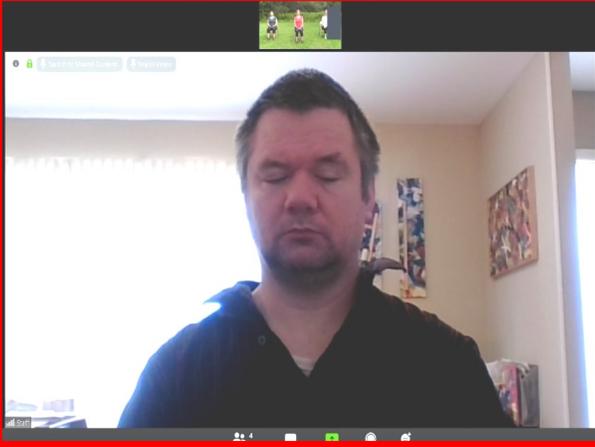
### Pros

- Fun
- Interesting
- Actual Ride not wheelchair accessible
- People can have a new experience that they have never had before
- Can be for everyone
- Encourages you to try something new
- You can do this activity with your friends, family, and/or caretakers
- Laptop/computer version is free

### Cons

- May not be the best option for people who are scared of heights
  - Might be boring for thrill-seekers
1. Not actually doing it, which makes it less exciting
  2. Makes you wonder what it's really like

# Sessions in Action



**Above:** John excels in meditation group.



**Right:** Gina caught in the middle of a dance move during her weekly cardio group.



**Left:** Bruce, Tito & Greg showing off their form during their guided Tai Chi group led by Rachel (Fitness Trainer). The session focuses on balance, mobility, and concentration.

# Let's work together!

## What are some activities we can do at home?

- “Read a good book.”
- “Online games, virtual tours of museums, concerts, and beaches.”
- “Listen to music.”
- “Listen to the surroundings— meditate.”
- “Start a garden. Grow your own flowers and vegetables.”
- “Organize your room and space.”

## What are some tips to help people stay positive?

- “Remember you are not the only one going through this experience.”
- “This is not going to last forever.”
- “Start a journal to express yourself.”



**Above:** Lisa painting a landscape in her group home using materials dropped off by our art therapist.



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**Thank you for reading!**

**A huge thank you to all our contributors for making this newsletter possible. We appreciate your support and look forward to collaborating more in our future editions.**

**- Newsletter Committee**