Letter from the Editor

Hello everyone,

I feel like offering our standard opener… How is this a new year already, but I won’t… wait… I just did! That said… here we are in 2013 starting out another year with Type I Diabetes. My goals this year are to learn, to listen and to find inspiration. Hopefully by this time next year I will have made some progress in the listening department.

The other day, my son was frustrated with how hard managing diabetes is for him. I was not helpful when I said, “It isn’t hard… just challenging….”. He looked at me like I wasn’t hearing him at all. In truth, I was not. He was telling me that diabetes can just be hard. I didn’t want him to think that way. When I reflect on the moment, I really just needed to validate his feelings and let him be for a bit. Thankfully, help came for him from the stories of folks who do not let diabetes ever stop them.

I feel fortunate to be able to share these stories with you. One of the young men is someone we have watched grow up. The other man is someone who inspires us on every level to live life fully… no matter what. We attended an event with each of them and I know my kids, but son especially, are looking at diabetes in a different way.

I hope you enjoy this interview with Brandon Russell and will join us in following him as he rides with the All Type I Cycling Team Novo Nordisk. We will share our interview with Sean Buzby, professional snowboarder and founder of Riding On Insulin, in the next newsletter.

Take care,

Andy, Renea, Elizabeth, Katarina, Jonathan, and Zariah Zosel

SPRING 2013

A newsletter for kids with diabetes and their families

How is it Sweet?

Letter from the Editor

Interview with Branden Russell—Pro-Rider with Team Novo Nordisk from Ravensdale, WA

Q: What inspires you to take care of your diabetes?
BR: Family. For me there is nothing that inspires me more to live a healthy life then my family, and my future family as well. I want to be alive and healthy to see my parents and brothers grow old, my niece and future nieces and nephews grow up, and even someday a family and kids of my own.

Q: What inspires you to take risks?
BR: I’ve always liked trying new things. I try to live by the philosophy that you don’t try new things then you will never know what you enjoy or truly want out of your life. It also doesn’t hurt that I am a very ADO person so it doesn’t take much to get me distracted and off on a new project/adventure.

Q: When were you diagnosed with Type I?
BR: I was diagnosed in May of 2009.

Q: What is your job?
BR: I am currently using a Tubeless Insulin Pump, A Continuous Glucose Monitor, Insulin, and lots and lots of test strips.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers about your life and your story?
BR: Two days after being diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes I competed in the Washington State Track meet and ran my fastest ever 400 meter time. From that day on I knew that this disease did not have to ruin or even change my dreams. If you can take one thing away from my life, I hope that it would be that with good control and hard work you can still pursue your dreams and be just as good or better than a person without diabetes.

http://www.teamnovonordisk.com/

Diabetes & Me

At the Diabetes and Me workshop in February five of our teenagers (11-14) had a chance to talk with each other about living with diabetes. A lot of ground was covered… everything from favorite TV shows to what helps each of them stay motivated about their diabetes.

Below are a few of their responses:

● Think you have more experience than the kids who don’t have diabetes.
● To stay in good health? When I have level glucose I feel better. Like a million bucks. Happy and energized.
● If I don’t take caution with myself, I will suffer. Only a few steps and I’m good to go!
● To try and keep my body healthy.
● I believe God is going to do something big with my diabetes. So I think about what God is going to do with my life in my future.
● My friends keep helping me move forward!
● Try to just think in the future. If we can all work hard to make a cure!
Our Experience — Gabby Messina

When first meeting my daughter, Gabby Messina, age 14, some get the impression that she is reserved due to her understated and quiet nature and think she does not have experiences to share. On the contrary, Gabby is a very vibrant impressive young lady. Having helped manage her T1D diabetes since she was diagnosed at the age of seven, I have watched how diabetes has had minimal impact on her desire to live a full life. When asked where she finds her inspiration and how this helps her live with diabetes, here’s what Gabby had to say:

“Inspiration is what drives people forward, helps them create something beautiful, or to fight through difficulties that seem impossible. It can come from the simplest of things: reading a good book, a walk in the park, the sun shining for the first time in what seems like years. Part of what makes me go are the activities I enjoy and fill my life with. I focus on them instead of my diabetes. I stay busy enough that I do not have time to dwell on my issues. To be at my best, I have to manage my condition well enough so that I can concentrate on what I am doing without worrying about my blood sugar or feeling ill. Maintaining control allows me to do practically whatever activities I choose. I don’t want to be restricted in any way, and am constantly trying new things. Here are two examples where I have found one thing leads to another and created some great life experiences:

• A family walk in early fall around Green Lake led me to rally a group of friends (also age 13) to design and build a boat for the 2012 Seafair Milk Carton Derby. Even though none of us had ever been to a derby or seen a boat made of milk cartons, we thought it would be fun to build our own and compete. Over the course of nine months, we collected more than 300 cartons, had numerous planning and design meetings, sawed, nailed, glued, stapled, taped, painted, and screwed the pieces together, building an eight by eleven foot rocket shaped boat called the Milky Way. Our flag read “Denny’s is Out of This World.” At the contest there were many styles and lots of creativity and we wondered if our boat would even float. Three of us prepared to row across Green Lake. I made sure to keep sugars with me in case I went low. We had a stupendous time, but best of all, we won the prize for Second Best Theme Boat from Denny’s. This goes to show that diabetes aside, hard work always pays off.

• I began playing French horn four years ago. In order to get better, I have been having private lessons and joined BYSO (Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra). All the conductors, coaches, and other members understand if I need to stop for a minute or two and eat. The experience is entertaining and enriching, and I develop new skills at every rehearsal. This has motivated me to participate in a twenty member horn choir, Solo and Ensemble contests, and perform at recitals. Through these activities, I have not only become a better musician, I have made new friends that share my interests.

Some of my passions require more intense management, one of them is traveling. I have been lucky enough to vacation overseas several times. Assembling all the supplies can take weeks, or even months of preparation (thanks Mom). Managing my sugars is a constant challenge. However, I have found learning about new cultures in places like Spain, Italy, Greece and China well worth the effort.

Diabetes has even created opportunities. Once in elementary and again in middle school, I led two of Washington State’s most successful School Walks for the ADA. Besides raising awareness and money for a great cause, they have helped to improve my leadership skills.

Thirty, even ten years ago, T1D was much harder to manage with constant pricks and injections. But now the technology is so great that I need to do much less to keep myself in control. My caregiver, Joanie Warner has suggested a program that works well for me. I wear a Dexcom G3 and Omnipod Pump, and test a few times a day. I push some buttons, then I’m done. I still go high or low, or occasionally a pod will malfunction, but these are small nuisances. Everyone asks me if my blood sugars tests are painful. Even though it is possible, they do not hurt because of my calluses. I think the real reason is the advancements of test strips requiring less blood and much smaller needles.

I figure, no matter how difficult this condition is to live with, there is always someone who has far greater struggles. We all have our own troubles; it is how we choose to view them that creates the difference. Either make the most out of the situation, or sit there and mope. In my opinion, moping accomplishes nothing. If anything, it makes you feel worse. I have learned that all problems are only as bad as you allow them to be. Diabetes doesn’t stop me, it just pushes me to be better.

What is the harm in being positive, or finding the good in things? I think that many people search for what is wrong before they recognize the details that are right. There is no reason to dwell on the negative; sadness is contagious, but so is happiness and inspiration. Choosing to look on the bright side makes life more fulfilling and exciting, presents more opportunities, and in general, the people around you more joyful too.”

Team Focus

Staff Inspiration

How do you find inspiration and how does this inspiration drive you to help kids with diabetes?

Heba Issam, MD

My inspiration comes from parents who work very hard to control their kids’ diabetes and are diligent about checking blood sugars frequently and following our recommendations. It is rewarding and inspires me to work very hard myself to provide all of my patients with the best care that they deserve.

Sarah Pullium, LICSW, MPH

I get inspiration to work in diabetes from the patients themselves. They are so inventive and creative in taking care of their diabetes, despite very busy lives, and regardless of whether they are a toddler, or kindergartner, or high school student. I see some who struggle, and some who are at ease, but I am never bored in hearing about the daily adventures with diabetes. What bravery! What pluck! All my best ideas for helping patients with their diabetes came from other kids and families. I hope I would do as well if I were the one managing diabetes!

Welcome

Jessica Kopy joined Seattle Children’s in August 2012 as a social worker with the Endocrine/Diabetes Department. Jessica received her Master’s in Social Work from the University of Washington and a BA in psychology from the University of Puget Sound. Prior to graduate school, Jessica worked with pre-schoolers at Childhaven, an early intervention program in Seattle, and spent a year living in the Netherlands where she had the opportunity to learn some Dutch and travel throughout Europe. While working on her master’s degree Jessica completed an internship with the Pulmonary Department at Seattle Children’s and also worked with adults in community mental health.

Jessica is originally from Portland, Oregon but has called Seattle home on and off for nearly seven years. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her husband, family, and friends as well as hiking, camping, traveling, biking and reading. Jessica is thrilled to have joined the Endocrine/Diabetes department and is enjoying her work with pediatric patients and their families at SfCH. She is also looking forward to spending some time at Camp Sealth this upcoming summer!

We Will Miss You

Harvey Chiu

Our admired colleague Dr. Chiu has begun the next phase of his career in Los Angeles, California. We will miss him and wish him all the best.

Indu Pandalai

Many thanks to Indu Pandalai for her dedication to the Parents of L’KIDDS these past two years. Also, many thanks to Carrie Engstrom for her continued commitment to these gatherings.
Upcoming events include:

**ConnecT1D**
A program that promotes sustained lifestyle changes through interactive nutrition education and physical activity for kids and teens ages 8-14. Please contact your local YMCA for more information: act@seattleymca.org

**ACT (Actively Changing Together)**

**Advanced Pump Class & Insulin Dose Adjustment Class**
Ask for the class schedules at your next clinic appointment.

**Parent Designated Adult (PDA) Classes**
A 3 hour class for adult volunteers who have agreed to help your child with diabetes-related tasks during school. The class is taught by a Certified Diabetes Educator. Often, the PDA’s are school staff or other parent volunteers. To register, please call Anne Moersen at 206-987-5037. Classes fill up quickly!

**Diabetes and Me**
A fun and informal workshop for 11-14 year olds living with Type 1 diabetes that focuses on how to cope with diabetes. This workshop is for children/teens only, April 19th, July 22nd, or November 2nd (10am – 1pm) Please contact adrien.brooks@seattlechildrens.org for more info and/or to register.

**Teen Talk, Everett Clinic**
For parents of youth ages 13 to 18 struggling with their diabetes management. Held at Providence Hospital, Pavilion for Women and Children. For more information please contact: sarah.pulliam@seattlechildrens.org

**L’Kids–Little Kids with Insulin Dependent Diabetes**
You are invited to join in as we share with each other what it is like parenting young children living with diabetes. Refreshments and childcare are provided. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Seattle Campus**
Support gatherings are held at Seattle Children’s Hospital from 10am-12pm. For more information on dates, please contact Carrie Engstrom at 206-774-9482.

**Everett Clinic**
Saturdays, every other month. Held at Providence Hospital, Pavilion for Women and Children. For more info please contact: sarah.pulliam@seattlechildrens.org

**ConnectT1D**
Bringing children, teens, young adults, and parents who are impacted by T1 diabetes together through events, programs, social networking, education opportunities and supportive activities.

Upcoming events include:
- Teen activities
- Fall Family Camp (date to be announced)
- Parents nights out (Seattle and Everett)

**ADA Diabetes Expo**
Saturday, April 13th, 2013
Washington State Convention Center
For more information: www.diabetes.org/seattleexpo

**ADA Tour de Cure**
Saturday, May 11th, 2013
Marymoor Park, Redmond, WA
For more information: www.diabetes.org/seattletoudercure

**ADA Family Retreat**
Saturday, June 15th, 2013. To be held at Lindeman Pavilion.
For more information, please contact: jplatts@diabetes.org

**ADA Teen Leadership Council**
Run by young adults between the ages of 13-18 years who are passionate about diabetes awareness in the community.
For more information, please contact: jplatts@diabetes.org

**ADA Camp Sealth**
Sponsored by the ADA, camp dates this year run from July 31st to August 5th, 2013. Registration is now open and camp is filling up fast. Scholarships are available. For more information, please contact: jplatts@diabetes.org or visit www.diabetes.org/adacampsealth

**JDRF Beat the Bridge to Beat Diabetes**
Sunday, May 19th 2013 at Husky Stadium
Beat the Bridge includes an 8k run and wheelchair race, 4-mile walk, 1-mile fun run, and a diaper derby for toddlers. All proceeds benefit type 1 diabetes research. For more information, please visit: www.jdrfnorthwest.org

**POKED Newsletter - Parents of Kids Experiencing Diabetes**
Information regarding diabetes related events, research and living with diabetes for all ages. For more information, please email: poked.wad@gmail.com

**Nutrition and Diet**

**Nutrition Inspiration**
I feel that volunteering at Camp Sealth this summer was an inspiring experience for me. It was wonderful seeing the campers have a fun time with different activities, catching up with old friends, and meeting new friends. I enjoyed the teachable moments when helping campers count carbohydrates. It was also great working with other dieticians and dietetic interns to plan the snacks and count carbohydrates for the meals. One of the cooks also let us try her new gluten free deserts. I enjoyed sampling the recipes. I shared a few laughs with some of the boys who wore the same clothes for a few days. It was fun watching the girls give them some fashion advice. I had the opportunity to work with the campers when the counselor was on break. It was great participating in the activities and feeling like part of the camp. Of course, the staff I worked with was amazing. It was nice getting to know new people and sharing stories.

**What’s faster than a speeding locomotive and able to leap through cyber space in a single bound?**
This newsletter sent electronically! If you would like to start receiving this newsletter by email, please send your email address Information to: annemarie.moersen@seattlechildrens.org. We will continue to send the newsletter by US mail unless otherwise notified.

Comments can be directed to either: Andrew & Renea Zosel: reneazosel@gmail.com or Gail Watts: gail.watts@seattlechildrens.org