



December 2015 Newsletter

MESSAGE FROM **THE CEO**

Dear Friends of the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida,

I want to extend holiday greetings to each and every one of you during this season of joy and hope! As I look back over this year there is much for which we can be joyous and thankful for, and looking forward there is hope that the New Year will bring innovative treatments for those who are living with and affected by epilepsy.

The [2015 EFOF Holiday Card](#) is now available for sale on our website and I hope you will order yours today. Every card you purchase increases awareness about epilepsy and proceeds from the sale support the important work we do each day.

With this December issue, a new feature called "Faces of Epilepsy" makes its debut. Each month we will highlight a story from one of our Epilepsy Warriors reflecting his or her personal journey in dealing with the challenges of living with epilepsy each day--people like Jay Hennessy who battles Intractable Epilepsy. I hope you will find his story and the stories of those to come both informational and inspirational.



*Warmest Holiday Regards,
Karen Basha Egozi*

*Chief Executive Officer
Epilepsy Foundation of Florida*

2015 EFOF Holiday Cards



Deck the halls (and mailboxes!) with the 2015 EFOF holiday card! These cards were custom-designed by Jonny Dale, a 14-year-old Floridian living with a rare and severe type of epilepsy called Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome.

The cards are 10 for \$22 (price includes shipping costs), and can be purchased here: <http://www.efof.org/fundraising-awareness/>.

Purple Hat Parade



The inaugural Purple Hat Parade, an awareness fundraising event for those impacted by epilepsy, was held on November 21st in Ft. Lauderdale's Esplanade Park. More than 350 participants attended and more than \$23,000 was raised to help provide much needed services for those living with epilepsy in Florida.

Parade features included vendor tents, food trucks, [Holman Honda](#) of Fort Lauderdale and [Lauderdale Infiniti](#) showcases, performances by country singer Jess Taylor, polynesian dancers and caribbean dancers, face painting, Believe Entertainment characters and guest emcee Starlet Skye with purple hat judges, Mark Griffins, Jody Westgate and Rita Case. It was a great success!

Client Yoga



EFOF launched a new program in Broward, Gainesville and Pensacola that offers free weekly yoga classes to clients. A big thank you to our statewide program sponsor, Michael Singer!

2nd Annual SJPA Chili Cook-Off



The 2nd annual Chili Cook-off, hosted by the [St. Johns Professional Alliance](#), was held on November 14th in St. Augustine, Florida to benefit the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida. The event, which featured live entertainment, food trucks, vendor tables and lots of delicious chili, raised \$10,000 and had more than 800 participants attend. Thank you to the event organizers Dawn and Jeff Sedlitz for all their hard work, dedication and passion to spreading awareness and helping individuals living with epilepsy.

Faces of Epilepsy: Jay Hennessy



After a motorcycle accident in 2010, I was diagnosed with epilepsy and two years later was told I had Intractable Epilepsy, meaning that my seizures were difficult to control with drugs and I might need surgery. My seizures were occurring on an average of 100 or more daily and all I saw was the darkest of despair.

It took five years to build an amazing support team of family, friends, community and specialized physicians to assist me on my journey. A Vagal Nerve Stimulator (VNS) implant had an immediate impact but, even then, I remained secluded at home because of the side effects of the seizure medications.

Finally, enough was enough. Life was way too beautiful to be stuck in the mud. I was taking my life back. I've always had great strengths to leverage. Epilepsy will never take those from me. So, I'm releasing the past! I'm on a chosen path building a highway for my life's journey.

Thanks to all of the volunteers who supported me and the 2nd Annual Chili Cook Off on November 14th. My heartfelt thanks goes out to you.

SUPPORT YOUR EPILEPSY FOUNDATION OF FLORIDA

The Holiday Season is the time of giving and we urge you to consider a year-end contribution to the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida so we can continue to expand our work to stop seizures, find a cure and overcome challenges created by epilepsy.

You can designate your gift to a specific location in Florida, to the fund of your choice, or make a tribute or memorial gift to someone special to you.

Please [make your donation today!](#)

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