

# STONE FRAGMENTS



**March  
2010**

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# WHY BE NORMAL?

Even though I have always known that it was unlikely that I would spend my whole career at RBJC and never have to experience one month of less than phenomenal income or growth, January and February of this year still took me by surprise. For 8 years RBJC has been growing steadily and making enough money to distribute extra to both physicians and employees. However, 2010 has ended this amazing streak. In January and February of this year, as a clinic we saw over 2000 less patient visits each month than expected. That translated into some pretty big losses. So what happened? And how can we turn it around and get back on the “gravy train.”

## HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

Well, I am not sure I know all the reasons but some that seem more obvious include the fact that for many it was the beginning of a new insurance plan year. Higher deductibles and more patient responsibility in general (especially in a down economy) may have kept people from seeking elective care right away. We also had quite a few doctors out in the first few months which may have accounted for some decrease but the doctors who were here were not always full and I am told that we were not “turning people away” for lack of appointment spaces so I am discounting that theory a little.

Another contributing factor is that in October we started two new doctors who haven't had much time to get their names out there so although we staffed for them, they aren't seeing the numbers we had predicted. Again, not the whole issue but clearly a factor.

The one thing I think it WASN'T was a decision by referring doctors or patients not to come to us in favor of seeking a different orthopedic clinic for their care. I have contacted the administrators and physicians from area orthopedic groups and they report

decreased volume as well. The other thing that makes me feel that that is not where the problem lies is that our Patient Satisfaction scores remain high and I have not heard anything on the “streets” to make me think we have had a status change.

## WHAT IS THE EFFECT?

Right now, the issue is that we have a certain amount of money that we keep on hand for “rainy days” even though we haven’t ever really had any. Now that the umbrellas are out, we have had to tap into that fund and because of the rate at which we lost money in the first two months, that money will be entirely depleted by the end of March if we do not see improvement. It looks like we will not have any money for employee bonuses or doctor distributions this quarter. We cannot spend any money that is not absolutely essential to spend right now. We plan to honor commitments that we have *already* made to charity organizations but we have temporarily suspended all new sponsorships and other non-essential marketing activities. Colleen Kilfoy (our CFO) and I have combed the expenses of our practice and cut everywhere we could that *would not touch regular staff jobs or benefits*. We have stopped spending on any ancillary service that does not bring in income to the practice. We will be phasing out aquatics and chiropractics, and reducing nutrition services.

## WHAT CAN WE DO TO TURN THINGS AROUND?

We may not need to do much except put our heads down and continue to provide an excellent service. We are already seeing volume improvements in the first week of March. But in order to avoid any further fall-out from this less than stellar start to our year, we could use the assistance of the entire staff. One thing we noted as we studied our expenses was that even though February was a low patient volume month, we paid double the

overtime we usually pay. In order to help us avoid having to let any staff members go, I need everyone to be aware of overtime. Supervisor approved overtime is still OK (we prefer to have experienced employees working Saturdays and nights for coverage) but try to avoid coming in 15 minutes earlier than usual or chatting with colleagues before clocking out in the evening. If everyone avoids 15-30 minutes of overtime, we really could make up several staff salaries.

The other thing that is hard on the business right now is staff taking sick time because they just got a PTO refill. Several department managers have only had a 2 or 3 days in the past two months where their entire team was all at work. Of course, if you are really sick, stay home, but if it is a toss-up, it would be really helpful to pay you for work right now instead of paying you to stay home (that also cuts down on the overtime of others). Another thought on how clinic staff and check out can help is being EXTREMELY aware of DME and benefits. We have a lot of DME walk out the door unpaid for. Part of the reason for this is the nurse forgets to put in the charge and the check out may not see the item to catch it. Another frequent occurrence seems to be that we put a brace or fracture walker on a person before finding out that insurance doesn't cover it and the patient has no intention of paying. Just remember that when those people walk out with unpaid for boots, crutches, and braces, they are walking out with your bonus.

One thing that we are trying not to change for the time being is our Radio and TV campaign because we are hopeful that it may actually be part of a solution to our volume problem. However, if we do not start seeing the pay off of that investment soon, we will need to discontinue those as well since that kind of marketing is extremely expensive. If there are any suggestions that any of you have on other ways we could tighten our spending for a bit, please don't hesitate to contact me- every suggestion is worth considering.

## IN THE END

I really believe that this is a temporary problem. All my friends in business tell me that this is “normal.” But RBJC has never been normal and I am not interested in being anything but the exception so I will continue to let everyone know how things are going but I expect to crawl back out of “normal” as fast as we can.

-Juliet

# RBJC SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE

Judy  
Schwenke



“From the moment I spoke to Judy via email I knew she was a star. Since starting with us she has excelled in everything she does. I believe that taking care of people is a trait that you are born with and Judy is obviously one of those lucky people. She is a huge asset to my team and RBJC as a whole!”

*~Kesha Driskell~*

Judy was interviewed and hired via telephone, E-mail and fax. Judy was born and raised in North Dakota. She was moving to Texas from Montana, where she lived for 31 years. She and Dwight, her husband of 30+ years, followed their children to Texas.

RBJC needs to thank her oldest Vicki for having her migrate here to Fort Bend, also where her other two children, Brian and Kayla, live along with her 4 granddaughters, which are soon to be joined by one more granddaughter and grandson in April. It is no wonder that her kids and grandchildren are her greatest joy and accomplishment.

She loves to cook, and NOT from boxes or mixes, but from scratch. Growing up on a farm instilled this in her and taught her to appreciate doing it herself. She hosts her family every Sunday. This gives her a chance to use all those dishes she collects. She has 9 sets, everything from China to Stoneware, but her passion is bowls. She has a knack of decorating for any holidays just using the bowls. She also pulls from her degree in Horticulture and landscaping and many years of floral design.

You can find her listening to KILT 100.3 the Hudson and Harrigan show on her way to work in the mornings, as she drives to the Katy office, where she works as a surgery scheduler. One of her favorite memories is how everyone welcomed her; that for being such a large and growing company we still have a friendly atmosphere. Her favorite thing about RBJC is that everyone has a voice.

She loves to travel from the simple “get in the car and drive to a local battle site or other interesting site,” to hopping a plane to explore a US city, such as her latest trip to New Orleans. Her favorite way to travel is a cruise; she loves island hopping in the Caribbean. Her dream cruise is a Mediterranean cruise.

# Marketing Madness

In February the marketing team had a booth at the Rosenberg Health Fair. We talked to many friends and family of RBJC employees! Dr. Liang and Cari Coulter stopped by to help answer questions from several people with orthopedic and nutritional questions. The fair had a great turn-out and we look forward to attending the Health Fair again next year.

The annual Fort Bend Cares Road Trip is on March 6<sup>th</sup>, Richmond Bone & Joint is once again the presenting sponsor for this wonderful event. All proceeds donated at the event will help benefit the children in Fort Bend County. The Road Trip always has a great turn out and is so much fun, if you would like more information about the event please come by the marketing department.

The marketing department will have a booth at the Total Body Expo on March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Total Body Magazine is teaming up with "Pink Door" a nonprofit organization that helps single, divorced, or widowed women cancer survivors have a career after cancer. Over 2,500 people are expected to attend this exciting event on March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be a 5k fun run on the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup> if anyone is interested in joining the fun run please contact Lisa Pugh: [lpugh@rbjc.com](mailto:lpugh@rbjc.com).

# Healthy Living

Patient Information from the American Chiropractic Association

## Tips to Maintain Good Posture

We often hear that good posture is essential for good health. We recognize poor posture when we see it formed as a result of bad habits carried out over years and evident in many adults. But only few people have a real grasp of the importance and necessity of good posture.

### Why is good posture important?

Good posture helps us stand, walk, sit, and lie in positions that place the least strain on supporting muscles and ligaments during movement and weight-bearing activities. Correct posture:

- Helps us keep bones and joints in correct alignment so that our muscles are used correctly, decreasing the abnormal wearing of joint surfaces that could result in degenerative arthritis and joint pain.
- Reduces the stress on the ligaments holding the spinal joints together, minimizing the likelihood of injury.
- Allows muscles to work more efficiently, allowing the body to use less energy and, therefore, preventing muscle fatigue.
- Helps prevent muscle strain, overuse disorders, and even back and muscular pain.

### How do I sit properly?

- Keep your feet on the floor or on a footrest, if they don't reach the floor.
- Don't cross your legs. Your ankles should be in front of your knees.
- Keep a small gap between the back of your knees and the front of your seat.
- Your knees should be at or below the level of your hips.
- Adjust the backrest of your chair to support your low- and mid-back or use a back support.
- Relax your shoulders and keep your forearms parallel to the ground.
- Avoid sitting in the same position for long periods of time.

### How do I stand properly?

- Bear your weight primarily on the balls of your feet.
- Keep your knees slightly bent.
- Keep your feet about shoulder-width apart.
- Let your arms hang naturally down the sides of the body.
- Stand straight and tall with your shoulders pulled backward.
- Tuck your stomach in.

- Keep your head level-your earlobes should be in line with your shoulders. Do not push your head forward, backward, or to the side.
- Shift your weight from your toes to your heels, or one foot to the other, if you have to stand for a long time.

## **What is the proper lying position?**

- Find the mattress that is right for you. While a firm mattress is generally recommended, some people find that softer mattresses reduce their back pain. Your comfort is important.
- Sleep with a pillow. Special pillows are available to help with postural problems resulting from a poor sleeping position.
- Avoid sleeping on your stomach.
- Sleeping on your side or back is more often helpful for back pain.
- If you sleep on your side, place a pillow between your legs.
- If you sleep on your back, keep a pillow under your knees.

## **Can I correct my poor posture?**

In a word, yes. Remember, however, that long-standing postural problems will typically take longer to address than short-lived ones, as often the joints have adapted to your long-standing poor posture. Conscious awareness of your own posture and knowing what posture is correct will help you consciously correct yourself. With much practice, the correct posture for standing, sitting, and lying down will gradually replace your old posture. This, in turn, will help you move toward a better and healthier body position.

Your doctor of chiropractic can assist you with proper posture, including recommending exercises to strengthen your core postural muscles. She can also assist you with choosing proper postures during your activities, helping reduce your risk of injury.



*Ashley Baxter, D.C.*

# ALL SHIRTS ARE \$13.00ea- YES ALL COLORS & SIZES!

ALL SHIRT COLORS ARE OFFERED IN  
ADULT SIZES S-3XL (unless noted).

YOUTH SIZES S-L

ALL sizes are STANDARD SIZES. Samples to try on- See Cale- S-3XL



Black &  
White Ink  
(NO other  
ink color  
options)  
White ink only



The design shown on the shirt colors is large on the back, the below design is small on the front left chest.



**SPECIAL OFFER ON FIRST ORDER.  
FOR EVERY 4 T-SHIRTS YOU ORDER AND PAY FOR YOU GET 1 FREE!**

**5 FOR THE PRICE OF 4**

**THIS OFFER IS ONLY GOOD UNTIL MARCH 10TH, 2010.**

**SO GET YOUR ORDERS IN BY THEN. ALL ORDERS RECEIVED AFTER MARCH 10TH WILL BE REGULAR PRICE.**

**IF YOU HAVE ALREADY SENT AN ORDER IN PLEASE SENT IT AGAIN IF YOU PLAN ON ORDERING MORE SHIRTS. ALL ORDERS MUST BE TURNED IN TO CALE COSPER NO LATER THAN:**

**NOON FRIDAY MARCH 12TH.**

# BIRTHDAYS!!!

**M** Eugene Johnson, 3rd  
Juliet Breeze, 16th  
**A** Dr. Hildreth, 4th  
Gabriele Mingus, 18th  
**R** Carrie Altrche, 5th  
Katrina Sanford, 18th  
**C** Donna Ellis, 8th  
Dr. Mays, 18th  
**H** Dennise Saavedra , 12th  
Jennifer Cuellar, 23rd  
Dr. Rivers, 13th  
Ramiro Garza, 27th  
Leslie Reyes, 15th  
Kellie Kozik, 29th

## Anniversaries

**1 Year:**  
Richard King  
Bill McGrath

**3 Years:**  
Tara Bennett  
Darlene Hussein  
Beth McDonald  
Jennifer Sebesta  
Melinda Trevino

**4 Years**  
Cynthia Adams  
Lelet Coloma  
Reyna Pleitez  
Rosana Rivera  
Joaquin Sanchez  
Lori Woodle

**6 Years**  
Mark Gugliotti  
Eugene Johnson  
Rhonda Ratcliff

**9 Years**  
Kesha Driskell

# MARCH 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 L&L MOSELEY Sugar Land	5 Staff Meeting	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 Food Friday	13
14 	15	16	17 	18	19 Craft Friday	20 First day of Spring 
21	22	23	24	25	26 Game Friday	27
28	29	30 Ann. Lunch	31			

# April 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 	2 Clinic Closed	3 Clinic Closed
4 	5	6	7	8	9 Staff Meeting	10
11	12	13	14	15	16 Craft Friday	17
18	19	20	21 Admin. Profess. Day	22 Earth Day 	23 Game Friday	24
25	26	27 Ann. Lunch	28	29	30 Pot Luck	