

Centers *for* Dialysis Care

WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Bobbie
Piraso

Cover art by: Bobbie “Picasso” Stafford

*“You need to listen,
and you have to do the work
in order to get there.”*

Ken Demchik

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Letter from Gary Robinson, President & CEO



Happy New Year!

We hope your holidays were filled with joy, connection and time with loved ones. As we step into a fresh year, we're wishing you health and happiness in 2026.

To help you start the year feeling your best, this edition of our newsletter is packed with tips and stories to keep you strong and safe, especially during the winter months.

Inside, you'll find:

Patient Spotlights: Meet two inspiring members of our community, Ken Demchik and Ken Long.

Winter Safety Tips: Practical advice for navigating Northeast Ohio's unpredictable winter weather.

Dialysis Matters: Why every minute of your treatment counts, and how staying for the full session supports your health.

Plus, enjoy seasonal recipes, art, and a look back at Cleveland MOTTEP's milestone anniversary celebration.

We are deeply grateful for your trust and for allowing us to share your stories. If you need support or have questions about staying safe this winter, please reach out to your care team at Centers for Dialysis Care. We're here for you... every step of the way.

Wishing you health and safety,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gary Robinson



"Starry Night" – Betty Slick

PATIENT SPOTLIGHT:

Ken Demchik

From dialysis to transplant.

In 2019, after complications from hernia surgery, Ken began dialysis at the age of 59. Ken Demchik's journey has not been easy. He's gone through many obstacles and overcome them with determination, hard work and courage. His story is one of inspiration and success.

Ken transferred to Centers for Dialysis Care in Middleburg Heights to receive his treatments. Initially, doctors were hopeful that his decline in kidney function was temporary and he would regain function. When he received the news that his condition was permanent, he learned the only way off dialysis was to join the transplant waitlist and obtain a donor kidney.

Ken was devastated but began the transplant process. It was then that he learned about multiple other health conditions.

Over the next four years, he had triple bypass surgery, carotid artery surgery, multiple stays in intensive care and underwent rehabilitation. Ken was determined to do everything needed to get a transplant.

"I listened to what Dr. Patel and the staff at the Middleburg Heights unit told me; the renal diet was brutal for me, but I worked at it and did what I was supposed to do."

Ken never missed a treatment, whether in the hospital or at Centers for Dialysis Care. He made his way through the worst weather because he knew he needed his treatment. A challenging part of dialysis for Ken was that he never knew how he was going to feel after treatment. Although he continued to hold a job throughout his time on dialysis, some days he was exhausted. He worked for many small businesses; his passion is the food business.

In June 2023, Ken received his first call for a possible kidney. Unfortunately, that time didn't work out. Ken said, "It was not my turn yet."

Finally, in September 2023, he received the call – a kidney was available for him. He remembers bouncing off the walls and wondering, "Is this really happening?!" He went to the hospital, did the blood work and waited for the staff to come back and tell him "YOU ARE A GO!" And so, it was. Ken got his transplant!

Ken shares that receiving the transplant is only half of it: "I still need to do the work to keep it." Ken takes all his post-transplant medications and gets his monthly blood work done. He noticed that the process and medications caused some weight gain, so he started exercising more.

He enjoys walking at the recreation center and is very proud that he is walking 1.5 miles in 28 minutes. For someone who is 65 years old and has gone through everything he has, this is truly an amazing pace – faster than most people in his age group. His goal is to reach two miles by the end of 2025!

Ken's journey, though challenging, has been a success, which he credits to following the advice he now gives to others: "You need to listen, and you have to do the work in order to get there."





Cleveland MOTTEP Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Commemorating decades of service, education and community impact.

We are beyond excited to announce that this year, the Cleveland Minority Organ Tissue Transplant Education Program (MOTTEP) celebrated 30 incredible years of service, education, and community impact. Cleveland MOTTEP celebrated with our supporters and community supporters at the 2nd Chance at Life Celebration Brunch on Saturday, September 13th, 2025.

Cleveland MOTTEP is pleased to be celebrating 30 years of being a trusted resource for minority organ, eye and tissue donation education and resources and supporting healthier lifestyles in Greater Cleveland. Three decades since our founding, our core guiding principle remains the same:

“To increase the number of registered organ, eye and tissue donors in the Greater Cleveland minority community through health education and promotion.”

The fundraiser commemorated our anniversary and honored two special people: Dr. Charles Modlin and Dr. Itunu Owoyemi. Furthermore, we are excited to report that we raised over \$23,000 for the fundraiser. These proceeds will allow us to continue our signature programs, such as our Youth Summit and Empowering the Future Program as well as maintain exceptional staff and a professional approach to organ, eye and tissue donation education.





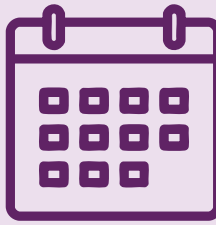
Cold & Ice, Not Very Nice!

How to stay safe in the colder months and prevent trips and falls.

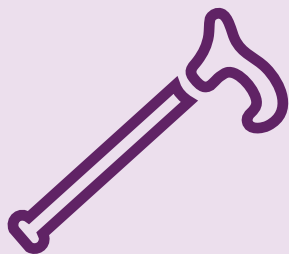
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that about 1 million U.S. adults are injured due to slips and falls each year, with the injury rate increasing significantly as the winter weather arrives. A nasty fall might prevent you from getting to a necessary dialysis treatment.

**Take your time:**

Walk slowly and pay attention to your steps to maintain balance.

**Reschedule treatment:**

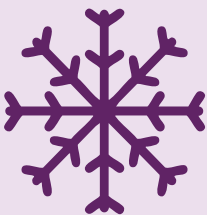
Always prioritize safety. If you cannot make it to treatment due to weather, you should reschedule your treatment.

**Use assistance:**

Always use handrails, your walker or cane when out and about in winter weather. If the snow is coming down too fast for plows to keep up, ask for someone to walk you to your or your caregiver's car after treatment.

**Watch out for wet floors:**

When entering your dialysis facility, wipe your feet to prevent snow and ice from tracking onto the floors in the lobby, which could cause slippery conditions. Be extra cautious when you see the yellow wet floor signs.

**Take preventative measures:**

Clear icy sidewalks and driveways or have someone help you. Wear anti-slip footwear and salt the path from your door if you know bad weather is coming.

**Step carefully:**

Try to avoid walking on icy patches. And remember that hazards, including ice and uneven ground, can hide under snow and slush. Take short, flat steps — like penguins do!

If you have any questions about staying safe during the winter months, please don't hesitate to contact your patient care team. Safety always comes first.

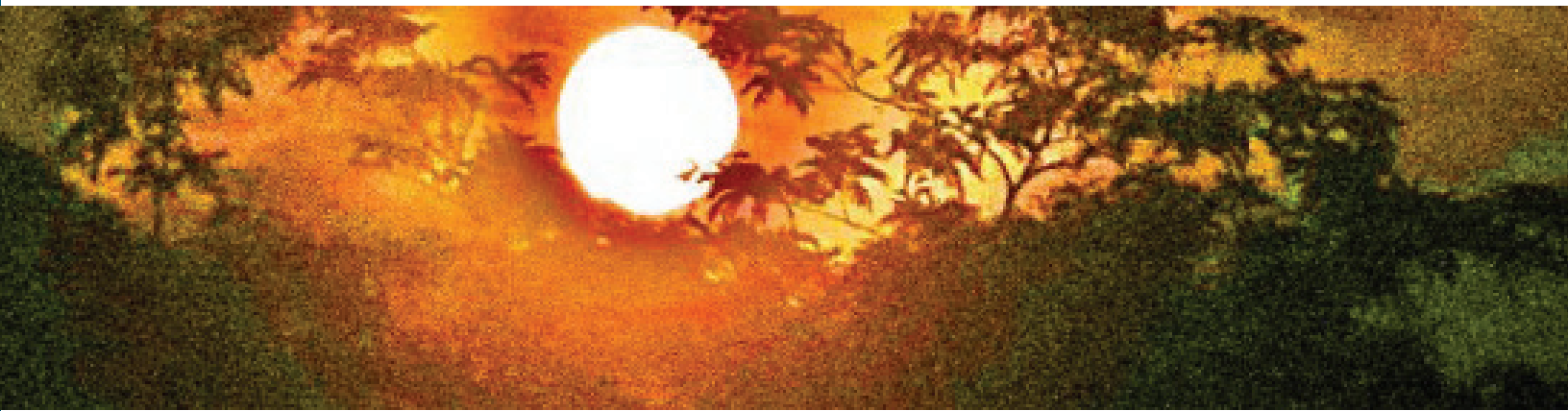
PATIENT SPOTLIGHT:

Ken Long

Turning a passion into a career.

What started as a hobby for Ken Long has now turned into a small business. Ken has been doing photography and digital photography for over 10 years, and he enjoys creating art as a form of relaxation, mindfulness and expression. And now, he gets to do it as a job!

Ken Long is a patient at Centers for Dialysis Care Fairview and began dialysis in May 2022.



Every Minute Counts!

Do not miss or shorten your dialysis treatments.

Kidneys work around the clock for 10,080 minutes every week! Dialysis does the work of your kidneys for 720 minutes every week (based on a 4-hour treatment). It is important to come to every scheduled dialysis treatment and to stay the full time.

Why? Missed treatments can cause:

- Cramping and low blood pressure
- Worsening of anemia and bone disease
- Cardiac complications
- Fluid overload
- Feeling weak and tired
- Shortness of breath
- Swelling in the ankles or stomach
- More hospital visits

Need to miss a treatment?

If you know ahead of time you are going to need to miss a treatment, plan with your dialysis center to reschedule that treatment. Please call the dialysis unit when you are unable to keep your appointment and they may be able to reschedule your treatment.

If you shorten treatment by:	In a year you will lose:*
10 minutes	1,560 minutes
15 minutes	2,340 minutes
20 minutes	3,120 minutes
30 minutes	4,680 minutes

*Based on a schedule of 4 hours, 3 days a week

Cranberry-Apricot Cobbler

Ingredients

- 4 cups apricot pie filling
- 1 package fresh cranberries
- 1 box lemon cake mix
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 cup butter
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans (optional)

Directions

1. Combine pie filling and cranberries in a 13x9x2 baking dish.
2. Mix well and spread evenly.
3. In a food processor or medium mixing bowl with a mixer, combine lemon cake mix, cinnamon, nutmeg, and butter. If desired, add pecans and mix in well.
4. Spread the cake mixture over the fruit mixture and bake in a preheated oven at 350 degrees between 45-60 minutes (until the cobbler is bubbly in the center and the topping is golden).
5. Serve warm or cold with non-dairy whipped topping.
6. Enjoy!



Macaroni and Cheese

Ingredients

- 1 cup rotini pasta, uncooked (or pasta of your choosing)
- 6 ounces of reduced-fat cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup low-fat milk
- 1 garlic clove
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Directions

1. Cook pasta according to box instructions, omitting salt.
2. In a saucepan on low heat, melt butter. Add garlic and simmer for one minute.
3. Add cream cheese and stir until melted. Add 1/2 cup milk and whisk to make sauce. Add more milk to the desired consistency.
4. Simmer the sauce on low to medium heat, being careful not to burn it.
5. Add a few sprinkles of the red pepper flakes and black pepper to taste.
6. Mix the sauce with the cooked pasta.
7. Enjoy!

More kidney-friendly recipes can be found at [CDCare.org/recipes](https://www.cdcare.org/recipes).







Winter **Word Search**



R	L	S	E	N	Y	B	F	Q	S	A	H
X	E	R	K	C	M	O	P	D	N	J	I
S	C	T	V	A	O	S	K	I	O	G	T
W	E	D	N	K	T	A	H	Z	W	L	O
O	C	C	X	I	F	I	T	P	M	A	Z
L	O	J	I	R	W	T	N	Y	A	B	S
E	L	W	E	P	I	L	S	G	N	T	S
B	D	E	V	C	F	M	R	E	O	L	E
N	Z	S	E	T	A	K	S	O	E	G	T
E	T	U	D	K	P	S	B	D	Y	N	I
R	S	N	O	W	B	A	L	L	C	U	H
F	I	L	S	A	R	U	N	Y	I	B	W

BELOW
BOOTS
COAT
COLD
FREEZE

ICE
ICY
SKATES
SKATING
SKI
SLED

SLIP
SNOWBALL
SNOWMEN
WHITE
WINTER

Centers for Dialysis Care Locations






In-Center Care

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Beachwood | 7. Heather Hill | 13. Shaker Hts. |
| 2. Canfield | 8. Jefferson | 14. Warrensville Hts. |
| 3. East | 9. Mentor | 15. West |
| 4. Euclid | 10. Middleburg Hts. | |
| 5. Fairview Park | 11. Oakwood | |
| 6. Garfield Hts. | 12. Painesville | |

Home Care

- | |
|---------------------|
| 4. Euclid |
| 10. Middleburg Hts. |
| 5. Westside |
| 17. Beachwood |
| 16. Youngstown |

Connect With Us

- | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------------------|
|  | Website: | CDCare.org |
|  | Facebook: | @centersfordialysisohio |
|  | LinkedIn: | Centers for Dialysis Care |

Have an idea for the newsletter?
Contact Heidi Ross at
hross@cdcare.org or
(216) 229-1100 ext. 298.

Word Search Puzzle Answers



Centers for Dialysis Care's Vision

To be the provider of choice as the most trusted community partner for high-quality, patient-centered kidney health services.

Centers *for* Dialysis Care

CDCare.org

