



Superman to the rescue

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(Photo: Kat Duesterhaus)

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Molly's House awarded \$10,000 for spinal cord respite care from the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

Molly's House in Stuart has received a \$10,000 Spinal Cord Respite Grant from the nationally recognized Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation to serve Treasure Coast and Palm Beach families with members who have spinal cord injuries.

The grant allows Molly's House to expand its existing Caregiver Respite Program to include families where a member has paralysis due to spinal cord injuries, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, and ALS. The grant will pay for home health or nursing care for that family member, while other funds raised will allow the caregiver to spend four days and three nights at Molly's House, a Victorian bed-and-breakfast style healthcare hospitality house in downtown Stuart. Local nonprofits and businesses regularly donate spa treatments, theater tickets, salon services, and other treats for caregivers.

"Our experience in providing respites for the past five years has shown us the sacrificial love and care these caregivers give to their families," said Bill West, CEO of Molly's House. "We see them come to Molly's House stressed and exhausted. A much-needed break allows them to rest, relax and return to their duties with renewed energy and enthusiasm. This will be especially true for families where there is a spinal cord injury."

Molly's House will collaborate with medical and neurological programs which serve local individuals with spinal cord injuries in Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River, and Palm Beach counties to identify families who would benefit from the Reeve Spinal Cord Respite program. One of those partners will be Center for Neuro Recovery in North Palm Beach. The center provides certified exercise physiologists to assist people with a wide range of neurological conditions and disorders to maximize their strength, function, and independence.

Kevin Mullin, center coordinator and certified peer mentor for the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, urged West to apply for the Reeve grant after touring Molly's House.

"I'm looking forward to the ongoing relationship as we move forward. Respite provides comfort and care for the family member of the person with a neurological condition. It's a necessity," Mullin said.

Molly's House, founded in 1996, is primarily known for accommodating patients and their families during medical crises at local medical facilities, helping to keep those families together in comfort and supportive surroundings at a trying time in their lives. Since 2012, Molly's House also has provided a Caregiver Respite Program, funded by generous foundations and individual donations.

Center for Neuro Recovery, located in Palm Beach, offers cutting-edge technological solutions and exercises to its neurological population. As the only facility in Florida to offer robotic-assisted gait-training, Center for Neuro Recovery is well-equipped to take its clients from mobility impairments to increased physical activity and fitness. Center for Neuro Recovery's Comprehensive Activity-Based Strength Training program helps each client's strength, independence and reductions in secondary complications. The program steadily improves the overall health and well-being of each client, which in turn maximizes functionality. As a post-discharge care facility, Center for Neuro Recovery does not offer trauma-level care, but does partner with a host of facilities in the area that do offer these services.

The Reeve Foundation, which was led by the late actor Christopher Reeve and his late wife Dana, is a national leader in education and advocacy for people with spinal cord injuries. The Foundation provides a free Paralysis Resource Center with personal and community educational products and programs, a peer and family support program, a lending library, and information specialists who are available online or by phone.

For more information about the local Reeve Spinal Cord Respite Program at Molly's House or its general Caregiver Respite Program, call 772-223-6659.