

POLIO DEJA VIEW

April - May 2010

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*A Newsletter for the
Central Virginia
Post-Polio
Support Group*

*Mary Ann Haske,
Editor*

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April 10th Meeting

2:00 pm at Children's Hospital, 2924 Brook Road, Richmond
(Remember to come at 1:30 for refreshments and social time! Cookies provided – bring your own beverage.)
NOTE: This is the 2nd Saturday of April

An Afternoon of Dialogue with Kenn Shirley

Kenn is currently working on his Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling at VCU. Kenn will share his personal experience of growing up in a household with an older sister who had polio when she was three and he was one. He will then ask you to share with him your experiences with your families.
(This program was not presented in Feb. due to snow.)

May 1st Meeting

2:00 pm at Children's Hospital, 2924 Brook Road, Richmond
(Remember to come at 1:30 for refreshments and social time! Cookies provided – bring your own beverage.)
We will have **The Woody Morris Memorial Brown Bag Auction** to benefit the Social Committee. Please bring an item – white elephant, gag-gift or otherwise – in a brown bag with a short clue attached to the bag about the contents. Our favorite auctioneer, Dave Van Aken, will preside. This is always a lot of fun for those attending!

Mid Month
Lunches

Thursday, April 15th
We will have lunch at 11:30 at Capriccio's Italian Restaurant,
9127 West Broad St in TJ Maxx Shopping Center
(David's Bridal is there also.)
Their website is www.capricciosrestaurantva.com
Call Carol Kennedy (740-6833) or Barbara Bancroft (204-1688)
by April 12th for a reservation.

Thursday, May 20th
Mimi's Café at 11275 W. Broad St. in Glen Allen
will be the site of our May lunch. We will meet at 11:30.
For more precise directions you can
go to their website at www.mimiscafe.com
Call Carol Kennedy (740-6833) or Barbara Bancroft (204-1688)
by May 17th for a reservation.

Did you know?...

...Rx Information from Jenny

CHANGES

It is with deep regret that I am reporting to you that Jenny Aveson will no longer be writing a column for us. She recently began a new job and will be devoting all her time to learning and getting used to her new job requirements. Jenny, we all appreciate the time and care you gave to our group. Your generosity in answering questions and being with us at retreats was so kind of you. Thank you so very much. Good luck with your new job!

Sincerely,

*Mary Ann Haske
and all the CVPPSG Members*



The Dignity of the Disabled

Several weeks ago a local theologian and educator was the guest preacher in my church. He is an orator and an excellent speaker. During the processional hymn in which the choir and clergy walk slowly down the long center aisle of my church, this preacher was robed appropriately, but was walking unsteadily with a cane. To climb the three steps to our chancel he secured his balance by holding on to the side of the pulpit. Later in the service he held on to the ornate polished wooden railings in climbing the six or eight steps to the pulpit. Once in the pulpit, he seemed very secure as he had a large podium on which to lean. Multiple Sclerosis is his personal adversary. Perhaps others in the congregation were not as keenly focused on these little triumphs of his physically moving from the reception area of our church sanctuary to the pulpit. I was aware of his little triumphs because I deal with similar "little triumphs" every day. Many of you probably share the same feeling or experience. This preacher could have elected to enter the chancel of my church from the side and avoided the whole processional. He chose not to do that. How often do we choose not to do something just because it might be easier?

The rest of the story is continued on page 4

CENTRAL VIRGINIA POST-POLIO SUPPORT GROUP

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Carol Kennedy, President | (804) 740-6833 | Ckennedy1619@aol.com |
| Henry Holland, First Vice President | (804) 288-8295 | Henry4FDR@aol.com |
| Frances Thomas, Second Vice President | (804) 550-7590 | .CHTSAFETY@aol.com |
| Linda VanAken, Treasurer | (804) 778-7891 | ChatNLinda@aol.com |
| Judith Moffitt, Secretary | (804) 754-1067 | Jmoffitt7114@aol.com |
| Bev Lordi, Social Committee | (804) 569-4232 | .baclordi@aol.com |

If you would like to talk with someone about Post-Polio Syndrome, you are welcome to contact the above members. If you send an e-mail, please refer to APPS@ in the subject heading.

We would love to have any of our members write an article for our newsletter. It can be about your lifestyle adjustments, comments on post-polio or any subject, humorous or serious, that we may all benefit from.

Please send articles for or comments about our newsletter, as well as changes, additions or deletions for the newsletter mailing list to:

Mary Ann Haske, Newsletter Editor
2956 Hathaway Rd, Richmond, VA 23225
or contact me at: (804) 323-9453 or mahaske@hotmail.com

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily constitute an endorsement or approval of the Central Virginia Post Polio Support Group.

Please note: Our articles may be used exactly as written provided credit is given for each article used.



Cont'd from page 3

The Dignity of the Disabled

We probably do this more frequently than we realize. One of my lasting perceptions of this preacher's physical pilgrimage to the pulpit was that the whole experience evoked indescribable dignity.

How often do the disabled and particularly polio survivors live their lives with dignity while daily achieving little triumphs? I suspect that we don't talk or give much thought to this concept of dignity. Among those who attend our support group meetings, I often observe this dignity among our members. Most of us are unaware that this dignity may exist.

President Franklin Roosevelt communicated dignity in his public life despite his efforts to hide his disability. Historically it is sometimes difficult to find details of how FDR moved from one place to another when he was exposed to public view. One such example occurred in August 1941 during his summit meeting with Winston Churchill at sea off the coast of Newfoundland. This was a secret and highly classified meeting that occurred just four months before the USA entered World War II. On Sunday, August 10, a combined worship service was held on the English ship Prince of Wales.* The initial meetings of this first summit had been held on the USS Augusta, which was FDR's ship of travel. FDR was present for the worship service, which had been organized by Churchill. How did he get from the USS Augusta to the Prince of Wales? I found some description in a book by Theodore A Wilson.

"The leading destroyer, USS McDougal, her bow level with the Augusta's main deck and Prince of Wales's stern carried Roosevelt to the great British warship. The president was hatless and wore a blue double-breasted suit. Holding a cane in his right hand and aided by Elliott (his son) on his left, he crossed a narrow gangway from Augusta to the destroyer, there to receive the salute of a Marine honor guard and band. McDougal then made a "Chinese landing" (bow to stern) on Prince of Wales. FDR walked slowly along a starboard gangway to the deck, where he was received aboard with full honors. Fifteen hundred or so men, including approximately 250 United States sailors and Marines, stood at rigid attention for the two national anthems. Roosevelt moved the length of the ship to his place of honor on the quarterdeck. The prime minister, dressed in the uniform of the Royal Yacht Squadron, watched stolidly, although he may have been as surprised and moved by this display of determination as were several of his aides. Captain Yool recalled that "many of us in England had thought that the President was unable to walk at all...One got the impression of great courage and strength of character as he slowly approached the assembled company. It was obvious to everybody that he was making a tremendous effort and that he was determined to walk along that deck even if it killed him." This may have been the longest walk FDR had attempted since being stricken with polio."

Certainly this moment displayed the dignity of a disabled President and Commander-in-chief. Many of those who witnessed this event would perish when the Prince of Wales was attacked and sunk in the Pacific four months later.

Many of us may be unconscious of our own dignity in living with a nearly life long disability. Whether it be walking or rolling across a room or sidewalk, climbing a few steps, getting out of a chair and trying to stand, or just trying to communicate, we may all go about these simple activities with a quiet and unpretentious dignity. With the new realities of Post-Polio Syndrome, even greater challenges and a higher dignity surrounds us.

References: The First Summit by Theodore A. Wilson, University Press of Kansas, 1991, Pages: 97-98

*Note: The scripture verses that Churchill selected for the worship service were Joshua 1:1-9. Churchill chose these verses with Roosevelt in mind.

(This is a repeat from several years ago.)

What did I do when Ray couldn't take me on his trips??

Editor's Note:

Another article from Linda – now a little about Linda herself. Linda lives in Colo. Springs, CO for the last 18 years, coming from So. Calif. My husband and I facilitated a PPS group for 6 1/2 years in Colorado Springs, and I loved to educate people about our choices to make things better as our bodies change.

(The following article is reprinted from the March/April issue, Vol. 16 #5, of the Florida East Coast Post-Polio Support Group.)

What did I do when Ray couldn't take me on his trips??

I've been on many trips to El Salvador, Mexico and one trip to Kabul, Afghanistan in our 8 year humanitarian adventure taking volunteers and used wheelchairs to disabled people. Ray also went to countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia, and Vietnam many times. Their needs were the same everywhere. I feel very blessed to have seen been able to touch so many lives when I could walk with braces and crutches.

I remember one story I was a part of in Kabul at Maywan Hospital. The young man wore a white turban and came in on the ground with no legs but very strong arms using blocks under his hands to lift his body. One of our team fitted him with a wheelchair and a "pet", a wooden cart operated like a hand cycle. They made a seat belt so he wouldn't fall off the seat. In the back of the cart was a small cargo area the man could use to store things to

sell, so he could support himself or his family. We couldn't talk but his very big smile said more than words could have. The smile is the only reward we receive for the time we spend, but that is thanks enough. I will always remember his smile.

There were many times when I couldn't go with Ray, either because of lack of money or he hadn't been able to check out the country in advance to see how it would work for me.

Over 8 years I learned to be alone here in Colorado Springs, while Ray was in other countries leading the teams of volunteers. The hardest time I spent alone was when he was gone for 5 weeks and had to piggyback, (for financial reasons) his engineering job for Amsterdam 2000 for Billy Graham and then on to Pakistan to lead a 20 member team of volunteers to do a wheelchair distribution.

I discovered Jeannette Oake's 8 book series, "Love comes Softly". These stories helped me to keep my mind focused and at peace most of the 5 weeks while Ray was gone.

I never fell once in all the trips Ray was away, and only fell when he was here. I guess God knew I'd be in deep weeds without his help. I now use a scooter which is my replacement for a car the last 25 years. When it's a nice day, I go to the store, bank, and library, where I can be out among people.

When Ray comes home, we have much to talk about, and he has many pictures. When he's was gone again, I made Creative Memory albums from the pictures and stories he'd shared. I've also taken all my Shriner's pictures and

newspaper articles that were written about me when I was young and put them in albums. My twin brother didn't contract polio. In the early 1950's, the local newspaper in South San Francisco, loved to do stories and pictures about me and my brother, since the braces on my legs presented a contrast.

For the last 10 years I have also kept in contact with many shut-in older ladies. I'm their telephone buddy a couple times a month. I love older people because my grandma helped raised me and would share her stories of her family and childhood with me. Also, their stories encouraged and gave me hope as many are believers and have a strong faith in God.

Traveling to these different countries was a real learning experience but remaining at home and learning to be content (most of the time) has helped me get to 2010 with grace and patience. I am now in an electric wheel chair permanently, and can't travel anymore, but I have learned how to be content by visiting with my old lady friends by phone, reading and cooking with Ray, and enjoying his company while he works from our home. And talking with my daughter's family (5 grandchildren in Upstate New York) brings joy.

My life is indeed full.

The Story of the Lost Pendleton Blanket...FROM YOUR EDITOR

As some of you may already know, I have been on L.I., NY for the last several months helping to care for the significant other of my daughter, Sue. Neil has GBS, otherwise known as "French Polio" and was totally paralyzed. Recovery is very slow.

At any rate, Sue and I went into NYC a few weeks ago to see "West Side Story". It was that week of absolute bitter cold. I had in the car a beautiful red Pendleton plaid blanket. Now I see on the internet that one can purchase on sale one just like mine for about \$55.00. However, this blanket had belonged to my in-laws and had had an exciting life. It attended high-school Thanksgiving games in the old Oriole stadium in Baltimore back in the 50's. (Way before Camden Yards.) Once I was in the wheelchair, I used it in the cold and even when I was in NYC way back in the blizzard of '03. So, I pulled it out of the car when we parked and put it over my lap.

There is just one problem. Sue had been standing out in the cold talking to the parking attendant and then she guarded

my ramp as I exited and she looked pretty chilled. So, I did not take time to wrap the blanket around me like I usually do. We started up 9th Ave. and the wind was brutal. I felt like I had just stepped out of a painting of a crowd of people walking with their heads down to avoid the wind. I had my purse slung over my left arm and the purse resting on the blanket and my left hand holding my hat on. The right hand was busy with the joy stick. After a few blocks, I ground to a halt. There was NO CURB CUT!

I told Sue to keep walking and I would double back, cross the street and catch up with her. I put my speed on 3 (the one I am supposed to use when I have races with my grandchildren) and flew down the block and crossed the street. As I was flying toward Sue, I suddenly felt a huge chill on my legs. I looked down and the blanket was gone. I back tracked, yet again, and could not find the blanket. Did the fringe get caught and pull the blanket off? Did the wind lift the blanket out of my lap? I don't know what happened. I do know that I am puzzled by my feelings about this event. At first I was irritated

about the curb cut. Then, I was irritated with myself. When I am at home and more in control, I ask people not to exit the van until I am situated. This instance seemed to have something to do with not wanting to "inconvenience" my daughter because of my disability. I think that I am still trying to keep up with the able bodied. I did not take time to really take care of myself. I am rather shocked because I thought I was beyond that. Apparently, old actions don't die as fast as I thought. I guess I need to look at that reaction. On the lighter side, I have to decide if I'll just use a \$10.00 fleece from now on or spring for another Pendleton blanket. I think I must also be feeling guilty for losing "the family heirloom".

(Post-Script - I recently went out on the porch to get the mail for my daughter. There was a package. When Sue came home, she said it was for me. There inside was a lovely Pendleton blanket just like the one that blew away. I'll have to think up some fun things for this blanket to attend so this one will contain many nice memories, just like the old one.)

Believe Me, I Don't Have the Power...

A while back, I wrote about my desire for a nice snow storm. It has been storming ever since. I am up in NY getting the Deja View together and looking out at lots of snow. Don't blame me. I did not jinx anything. I just thought one little storm would be nice!

Early Notification of June 5, 2010 Meeting

Annual Spring Banquet

The Luncheon will be held on Saturday the 5th of June
at the Grape Vine Restaurant,
11055 Three Chopt Rd., Richmond, VA 23233.
The phone number is 804-440-9100.

Time: 12:00 Noon – 3:00 PM

We will order from the menu and individual checks will be given.
Our Post-Polio Group is pleased to announce that it is paying \$10.00 of each meal.

Please respond no later than May 26, 2010 to make your reservation.

Call Barbara Bancroft, 204-1688 or Carol Kennedy, 740-6833

Please plan on joining us for this annual social event. Barbara or Carol will be happy to answer questions about the luncheon or restaurant. We hope to see you at this festive occasion.

(Directions: Take I 64 West from Richmond. Exit at Exit 180 A which is Gaskins Road South (this is the 2nd Gaskins Rd. Exit). Turn right at the first traffic light which is Three Chopt Rd. Drive 9/10 of a mile on Three Chopt Rd. to the traffic light and the restaurant is on your left. Turn left on Church Rd. to enter the parking lot.

(Parking: There is ample parking in the lot. There is a ramp from the parking lot to the sidewalk at the left corner of the front of the building. You can enter the building from either the front or the back door.)

Save the Dates

- Regular Meeting, April 10, 2010 (Note 2nd. Sat.)
 - Mid-Month Lunch, April 15, 2010
- Regular Meeting, May 1, 2010 (Brown Bag Auction)
 - Mid-Month Lunch, May 20, 2010
 - Annual Banquet, June 5, 2010
 - No Meeting in July
 - Regular Meeting, August 7, 2010

(Now go IMMEDIATELY and put these dates on your calendar and make note of 2nd. Sat., Brown Bag Auction, etc.)


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Toll Free: 877-990-1100
FAX: 804-744-1626
E-mail: stairsbgone@aol.com