

Gleanings

THE OFFICIAL NUMBER ONE NEBRASKA POST-POLIO NEWSLETTER

AUGUST

1985

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NEBRASKA POLIO SURVIVORS GROUP HAS NEW NAME

Nebraska's polio organization, formerly called P.U.R.E., has a new name. We are now the NEBRASKA POLIO SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION.

The change conforms to the decision made at the St. Louis polio conference that each state will remain autonomous.

The Nebraska Polio Survivors Association retains its affiliations with The International Network of Polio Survivors in St. Louis, Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation in Warm Springs, Georgia and Roosevelt Warm Springs Foundation in Atlanta.

Nancy Carter continues to head the organization and the address remains P.O. Box 37139, Omaha, NE 68137.

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SUPPORT GROUP ORGANIZES FOR HOLDREDGE AREA

Delores Bray has been named Nebraska Polio Survivors Association's local representative for the Holdredge area.

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SPOTLIGHT: CHURCH WITH A HEART HELPS POLIOS

Rejoice Lutheran Church at 138th & Center has been the meeting place of the Omaha group since its beginning. Three rooms are generously offered for our meetings.

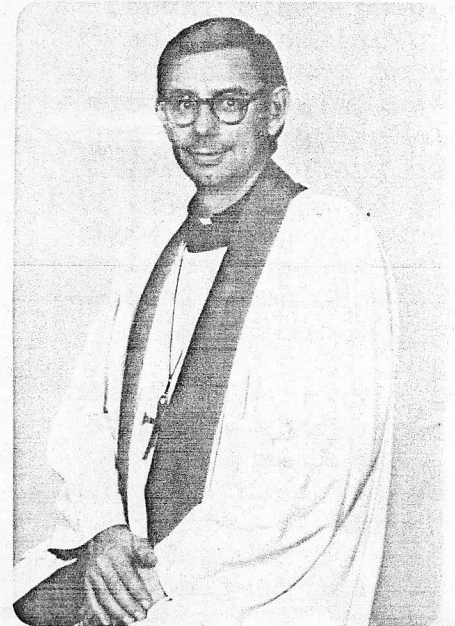
"One reason we exist is to help other people. We are firmly committed to people-oriented service activities," says the Rev. John T. Schmidt the church's pastor since 1971.

Raised in Russell, KS, Pastor Schmidt has a special interest in the late effects of polio. In 1946 his brother Harold contracted polio. As the oldest child, John decided to delay college to help out on the farm and even assist his 12-year-old brother with the Sister Kenny treatments the local doctor prescribed.

"There was no question about it," he says. "It was part of my responsibility."

Finally, at age 27, he entered college, eventually receiving his Doctor of Ministry degree from the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago.

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Pastor Schmidt
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After serving churches in Lodgepole, Chappell, North Platte, and Hershey, Pastor Schmidt brought his family to Omaha.

Under his leadership, a lot of what Rejoice Lutheran does involves advocacy and education. "Our social ministry committee works to see what community needs are to be met," says Pastor Schmidt. They have tackled such problems as child and spouse abuse, nuclear freeze, world

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LINCOLN SUPPORT GROUP
HOLDS FIRST MEETING

by Diane McEntee

Fifteen interested polio survivors and spouses shared a part of themselves at Lincoln's first monthly support group meeting June 29.

The purpose, format, and formation of committees were discussed. Current literature and publications were displayed. The highlight of the meeting consisted of fellow polio survivors sharing their past and current experiences, frustrations, fears, and methods of coping with their physical problems. There were many interesting people there!

It was generally agreed that meetings would be held the last Saturday of every month at 2 p.m. at the YWCA, 14th & N. Because of Labor Day, the August meeting will be August 24.

We look forward to providing programs of interest and to greeting familiar and new faces as well. See you in August!

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CHURCH--from page 1

hunger, and food pantries for Omaha.

Because of this church's dedication to serve the needs of the people in their community, the Nebraska Polio Survivors Association benefits. We are very thankful for their help.

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SIT & BE FIT VIDEO TAPE
DESIGNED FOR PARAPLEGICS

For those whose doctors recommend exercise (and you should always check with your polio doctor about this first), SIT & BE FIT offers a 30-minute full-conditioning video workout.

Designed for people confined to wheelchairs, ("When you REALLY can't stand to exercise!"), the program has also proved effective with amputees, people with upper respiratory conditions, and those with injured legs, knees, hips, or ankles.

The video features Karen Wilson, an Arizona kinesiologist, and two paraplegics, and costs \$39.95 plus \$3 postage.

For more information write SIT & BE FIT, 7908 E. Chaparral, Suite 105, Scottsdale, AZ 85253 or call (602) 990-9005.

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VARIOUS DEVICES FOR
HANDICAPPED NOW AT SEARS

Sears now offers the Home Health Care Catalog. It features a large variety of equipment from wheelchairs and hospital beds to men and women's fashions and grips that help weak hands hold utensils.

To check out these and many more health care aids, call the nearest Sears store and request the catalog. In Omaha the number is 399-3200.

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AN EXPERIENCE: "THOU
SHALT FLY WITHOUT WINGS"

"Ability, not disability" is the philosophy of Central Kentucky Riding for the Handicapped, Inc. An all-volunteer association founded in 1981, it had served 61 handicapped students by 1984.

Becky Howard, proprietor of Blue Grass Riding Stable at Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington and a registered nurse, is program director. Persons with all types of disabilities are accepted for the riding lessons upon doctor's permission.

A specially-built 25-foot ramp with overhead pull bar enables students to mount a saddle. One person then leads the horse, and two sidewalkers hold onto a special belt the student is wearing.

Students begin by accomplishing small ring work and finally triumph by riding alone on the trail. One young rider with cerebral palsy says, "I love it. The feeling of freedom. Just me and the horse."

Becky can be reached at Blue Grass Riding Stable Kentucky Horse Park Ironworks Road, Lexington, KY 40511 or (606) 233-4303.

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Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things, but just look at what they can do when they stick together.

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GABY'S GLIMMERINGS

by Cynthia Gabrielli Haag

It was the last day of the school year and I had just finished the final clean-up. It had been a very unhappy and difficult year with a job that was more than my body could handle.

I knew I had to resign and perhaps leave the teaching profession--a profession I had loved for so long.

I was filled with ambivalent emotions: Relief that I would no longer have to live with the pretense of strength I do not have. Grief in leaving the profession I had loved so much, and in knowing I was leaving my beloved students and would no longer be their partner in the miracle of going from non-reader to reader. And there was guilt. The guilt of leaving them when I have the God-given talent to make this miracle happen. Guilt that I hadn't done enough when there are so many more needy children.

All these emotions were spilling over and I had a big lump in my throat as I drove home. I wanted to cry as I pulled into a gas station. As I waited for my tank to be filled, a car drove up and a young girl got out to ask directions. I looked closely and thought that's got to be Amy.

Amy. She had been a seventh grader when I had worked with her five

years before. She had been a sweet, hardworking, cooperative child who struggled to read the simplest words. And now she stood there all grown up.

I called to her and when the cognition struck, her face lit up and she ran to the car and threw her arms through the window and hugged me and gave me a kiss and we laughed and cried. I got out of the car and we hugged some more and filled each other in on the last five years.

It was very moving and, as she left, I realized with the love she still felt for me that it was okay. I had done enough. And hundreds of faces came to my mind and I knew it was enough. I had contributed a lot and it was enough.

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HOLDREDGE--from pg. 1
A polio survivor herself Delores and two of her daughters contracted the disease in the summer of 1954. The oldest daughter died the next year from respiratory problems.

Delores is in the process of contacting other survivors interested in the support group, which will hold its first meeting in September at Phelps Memorial Hospital in Holdredge.

You can reach Delores at Box 23, Loomis, NE 68958 or (308) 876-2245.

MARIE GALDA ANNOUNCES AUGUST DISABLED MEETING

Marie Galda of the Omaha polio support group is chairman of the Committee for the Disabled, a branch of Presbyterian Metropolitan Ministries. They meet the first Tuesday of every month at 5 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, South Calvin Hall, 216 South 34th Street.

Everyone is invited to attend the August 6 meeting. The filmstrip "Stones in a Stream" will be shown. Call Marie at 391-2003 for accessibility directions.

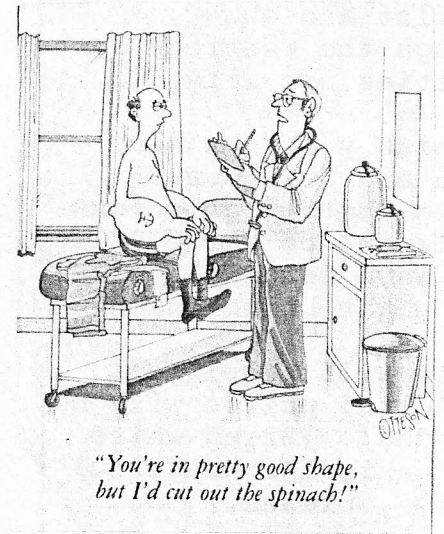
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FREE SWIM AND EXERCISE CLASSES AT MONTCLAIR

Omaha support group members are still enjoying free handicapped classes at the Montclair Pool on Monday nights.

Why not join them? Call Franny Quinn at 391-9401 for details.

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A POLIO SURVIVOR LOOKS AT ACCESSIBLE FACILITIES

by Marlene Orton

How to find an accessible bathroom while on vacation. Just follow the wheelchair symbol, right? Wrong. It would take a body made of silly putty to adapt to most of the ingenious designs fashioned for accessible bathrooms today.

There are those that go overboard to provide an abundance of reachable toilet paper, but you can't flush the toilet without practically sticking your head in the stool trying to reach the foot pedal on the floor, and you can't dry your hands without an extension grip to

grab the paper towels six feet up the wall.

One motel bathroom has a bar high along the outside of the tub. Does one slip under the bar, using it as a trapeze, or try to vault it hopping to hit the water gingerly.

A prize should go to the accessible bathroom in Illinois that boasts a two-inch-high ramp to the door, right after which there are three tight 90-degree turns and no stalls wide enough for a wheelchair. Actually, Abraham Lin-

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coln's privy designed for the hoop skirts of that era was probably more accessible.

But there is hope--the most comfortably designed restroom has to be at Churchill Downs in Kentucky. It is large enough to turn a wheelchair in and to close the door, and it has accessible bars, sinks, mirrors, and towels. But even this paragon of bathrooms has coat hangers attached at the top of the stall doors. Wilt Chamberlain, where are you when we need you!

CHRIST CHILD POOL OFFERS SWIMMING ALTERNATIVE

-----c-l-i-p-----
NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

The Omaha group's First Annual Jubilee, Festival and Down-Home Picnic will be held Sunday, August 4, at Elmwood Park, south of Dodge at about 60th. Come by noon if you can, or soon thereafter. The terrain is flat and shady, though the restroom facilities are iffy.

Furnish your own meat dish and drinks and bring another delicious something to share. If you have folding tables, you might bring them.

Games will be played! Wonderful prizes will be awarded! (Bring white elephants for wonderful prizes, please.)

Bring EVERYONE you know!

For those who want to swim during the day, handicapped swimming classes are offered free on Fridays from 12 to 1 p.m. at Christ Child Pool, 10th & Williams.

The classes are taught by Mary Volcek, who has been teaching the handicapped to swim for 45 years, 29 of them at the Jewish Community Center.

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Nancy B. Carter
Nebraska Polio Survivors
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Omaha, NE 68137

Wheelchairs are provided to help get from dressing rooms to the pool, and assistants will be present for those who need a helping hand.

No prior arrangements need be made--just grab your towel and suit and show up. For more information, call Mary at 551-5642 around 6 p.m.