

Gleanings

THE OFFICIAL NUMBER ONE NEBRASKA POST-POLIO NEWSLETTER

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NOTICE

The annual meeting of the members of the Nebraska Polio Survivors Association will be held at 4 p.m., Sunday, August 3, 1986, at Rejoice Lutheran Church, 138th & Center, Omaha, Nebraska.

Immediately following the meeting of the members there will be held at the same address the annual meeting of the Board of Directors.

Dated this 15th day of July, 1986.

/s/ Nancy B. Carter
President

Attest:
/s/ Marcia A. Bredar
Secretary

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CLAWSON ROCKER SHOE HELPS MANY TO WALK AGAIN

Due to a discovery by Carolyn Clawson, an MS person, many people with MS, stroke, arthritis, and certain orthopedic injuries can now walk again.

When flexibility of the ankle and knee become restricted, forward movement becomes very
See pg. 2, col. 2

SPOTLIGHT: ISADORE BROWN, PT

We called her Brownie. She was a young, pretty blonde just beginning her career as a physical therapist. We were polio patients at Lincoln General Hospital, class of '48, where she watched over us all, caring for us in a very special way.

Her real name is Isadore Brown. A PE graduate of UNL in '47, she went on to study PT for a year in Virginia before coming back to Lincoln. "For a time I was the only PT in Lincoln," she says. "Lincoln General was the only place that had a department. In fact, there were only 11



Brownie, 1948

of us in the entire state."

As a pioneer PT, Brownie recognized the value of swimming for those who had polio, and in the summer of '49 she led a group of polio patients to Capital Beach for exercise in the water. "People were so afraid of polio," she says. "We had to take all the braces off the kids and leave them in the car so as not to scare people away." Later she used the pool at the downtown Y until heating the water became too costly.

Thirty-eight years later she is still a therapist, now in Colorado. The focus of her work has shifted from polio to treating people with a variety of problems. She has even worked with the National Handicapped Sports and Recreation Association as a trainer for the U.S. Disabled Ski Team, following them to Sweden for the World Cup Competition.

Asked about current developments with polio survivors, she says, "I think they wear out a lot faster simply be-
See pg. 3, col. 3

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REMEMBERING POLIO
by Lyle C. Emery, PT*

When I started in Physical Therapy in 1951, polio was about 90% of our daily work load. The patients were made up of infants to the elderly. We cut wool blankets to conform to the size of the extremities, put them into hot water and they were applied over the muscles with plastic or rubber. This was done four times daily.

We stretched affected extremities to full range of motion. After the fever had run its course, we started the rehabilitation of the muscles with exercise and bracing, crutches or whatever. Some patients who suffered brain damage which affected breathing were placed in the old iron lungs and usually were quite extensive in the overall paralysis.

After the Salk vaccine became available, polio tapered off to nothing and Physical Therapy came of age in other treatments. Polio was a viral disease of the spinal cord and brain, not of the muscle.

*Lyle, still practicing in Lincoln, recently won the Kendall Award for Outstanding Achievement at the American Physical Therapy Association's annual convention.

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LINCOLN AREA MEETING
July 26, 2 p.m.
American Lutheran Church
42nd and Vine
BE THERE!

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ASSERTIVENESS IS THE KEY, BUT NOT ALWAYS SOLUTION
by Marcia Bredar*

Having been a post-polio paraplegic for some 32 years, I was quite taken aback when I was advised this Spring to have bilateral mastectomies with implants due to a pre-cancerous condition in both breasts.

My concern was not so much about losing my breasts, but my MOBILITY after surgery. You see, my pectoral muscles would be cut in order to insert the implants.

Even expressing my concerns to my surgeon on four occasions didn't bring any results. He still thought I'd be hospitalized for four or five days and back to
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SHOES--From pg 1, col 1

difficult. Mrs. Clawson discovered that a certain type of shoe with a special sole which acts as a fulcrum point over which the body weight is distributed, gives back a lost freedom in walking. She calls the shoe the Clawson Rocker, because the rocker action of the sole provides the necessary aid to ambulation.

While not the answer to all walking problems (it won't help those with sensory loss, severe muscle weakness, or constant imbalance) the shoe has benefited many people.

For more information call 1-800-252-9766 toll-free.

work within three weeks, possibly 10 days.

Well, unfortunately my greatest fears were realized when the doctor on my fourth post-op day said, "I don't see why you can't go home tomorrow." Only when I explained that I couldn't even sit up did he first begin to realize that my recovery might not be "standard."

After a hospital stay of 13 days, I went to the doctor's office two days later. The doctor asked why I was still in my wheelchair (usually I walk with full leg braces and crutches) and why I was still taking pain medication. Once again this "intelligent" doctor, with whom I'd discussed all my concerns prior to and after surgery, still didn't comprehend the effects of such surgery on my mobility.

It's now three months since the surgery and I'm supposed to be fully recovered. Needless to say, I've got a long way to go.

However, we must not give up on educating not only our health professionals but our families and friends as to our needs. Only then can we hope to see that special conditions receive the sensitivity they demand.

*Marcia is an Omaha member who is an attorney at Mutual of Omaha.

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GABY'S GLIMMERINGS

by Cynthia Gabrielli Haag

Something happened to me the other day that in the past I would not have given a second thought. It was the kind of thing I feel a lot of us polio survivors have become inured to. However, my perception of things has changed and I'm more aware of the subtle nuances towards the handicapped now.

chondriacs. Most of my life I followed their unspoken rule and never talked about it.

Well, I'm talking now. When surgery was done on my shoulder to prevent dislocation, there was no guarantee of success. The fact is that it is very possible my arm will dislocate again --to ignore shoulder pain would be stupid.

My husband and I had gone to the health fair and had blood tests done. One of his tests had fallen in the high range. Not seriously so but I was concerned. That morning I had felt my shoulder bone dislocate momentarily and now it was hurting. A good friend stopped over to visit. These things fresh in my mind, I shared my concern. Her reaction to this astounded me. "Oh, Cindy, you're getting to be a hypochondriac." My response was immediate and angry. "Just because I'm concerned about my husband's tests and my shoulder, doesn't make me a hypochondriac, for God's sakes."

My friend's comment still angers me. Mostly I think it comes from a desire not to be reminded of any unpleasant reality. I believe most people just don't want to deal with handicaps, disease, or death. When we face squarely that we do in fact have a handicap, people become uncomfortable. I am very sorry they are uncomfortable, but I do have a pain in my shoulder. Furthermore, I don't think I should just shut up. In fact it sort of relieves the fear just a little to express it. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
HOLDREGE GROUP PROJECT
FOCUSES ON ALUMINUM CANS

Ordinarily I would never have thought about it again. But since I've admitted my limitations and faced the post-polio possibilities, I'm suddenly aware that little signals have been sent our way most of our lives to shut up about our handicaps. And anytime we don't, we are dismissed, patronized, or treated like hypo-

Delores Bray, Holdrege area representative, reports that their group has begun a new fundraiser--turning in aluminum cans for cash.

Their first trip to the scales netted \$18. The local hospital and others save their cans for NPSA, giving us all a boost in this worthwhile endeavor. Hats off!

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NORFOLK AREA GROUP HEARS STATE COORDINATOR CARTER

The Norfolk area support group hosted a talk by State Coordinator Nancy Carter at their July 13 meeting.

Those present heard about Nancy's experiences with Post-polio Syndrome, what's happening in post-polio today, and learned a little about our state NPSA organization. Hand-outs were offered, and time was devoted to questions and answers.

Donna Mavis, area representative, arranged for goodies and fellowship following the talk.

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BROWNIE--From pg 1, col 3

cause they don't have the reserve. They didn't realize they were working at the max all the time, and you can't afford to lose any of that."

Looking toward retirement in two years, Brownie vows, "The first thing I'm going to do is spend a year going around the country seeing people I haven't seen in a long time. You can expect me in Nebraska--I'll be there."

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