

### THE OFFICIAL NUMBER ONE NEBRASKA POST-POLIO NEWSLETTER

MAY

1989

#### CONFERENCE TAPES AVAILABLE BY MAIL

High quality audio tapes can now be purchased from the company that made them at Polio Update '89.

The tapes are available in a handy album at five tapes for \$20 or \$5 for each tape individually. If you order tapes singly, identify the speakers you want--Augusta Alba, M.D., Neil Cashman, M.D., Sybil Kohl, CSW, Jacquelin Perry, M.D., and/or the panel discussion. If you order the album, you will receive all five of these for the same price as four individual tapes.

Order your tapes today from Dicobe Tapes, 1707 Farrell Drive, Bellevue, NE 68005, 402/291-3381.

### BOOKS ON TAPE FREE

## FROM LIBRARY COMMISSION

Since 1952, the Nebraska Library Commission has been supplying books on tape to the blind and physically handicapped of this state.

"We have over 25,000 titles," says the Commission's See pg. 2, col. 3

# POLIO UPDATE '89 HUGE SUCCESS

What a day! It was standing room only as over 300 polio survivors, their families and friends, and members of the medical support community flocked to the Red Lion Inn on April 1 for Polio Update '89.

Excitement filled the air as, one after another, the speakers imparted their polio messages, and polio survivors had the opportunity to ask these experts the questions they always wanted to know about the late effects of polio.

The speakers complimented NPSA for promoting good polio practices by providing rest periods throughout the day and by not allowing smoking in the area.

Six states were represented, with 15 doctors in attendance as well as other medical professionals. In order to carry the word to even more physicians, NPSA arranged for Dr. Cashman to speak to a group at Bergan Mercy on Friday morning and at UNMC on Friday afternoon.

Area medical professionals were impressed with the

number of polio survivors in attendance at the conference, several of them expressing shock that so many survivors showed up.

Conference participants loved the NPSA Magic Totes given to each of them as a special surprise. Enthusiastic exhibitors helped many examine new equipment, with Amigo Mobility supplying a prize to a lucky NPSA member.

With the help of NPSA's many volunteers, the day went off nearly without a hitch. We thank you all for being there and doing your part.

# ALUMINUM CAN SAVERS STRIKE AGAIN

NPSA's Holdrege area support group, long time savers of aluminum cans, have forwarded another \$100 to NPSA's state coffers for their fundraising efforts.

Delores Bray, Holdrege Area Representative, says the group plans to continue collecting the cans and hopes to keep sending money to NPSA regularly. Keep up the good work!

## POLIO SURVIVORS REUNITED AT NEBRASKA CONFERENCE

Thirty-five years after saying goodbye in the Himilayan Mountains, Peggy Moe and Verda Bialac found each other again, chatting and remembering old times in the midst of Polio Update '89.

The two had met when both were attending Woodstock, a co-educational boarding school high in the Himilayas.

Peggy was 16, and had moved to New Delhi where her father had been sent with the Ford Foundation in 1953.

The life there was quite different from what she knew in the United States. "Our home was staffed with servants--a head cook and his assistant, a bearer and his assistant, a dhobi to do the laundry, and sweepers who swept the hard cement floors from a squatting position," says Peggy. "Then there was the guard, who had his own little protection racket going-if you didn't have a guard, you were sure to have a theft."

There was a monkey colony only 200 yards from their house, and bars on the windows were necessary to keep the little visitors out. Even closer, village people of New Delhi lived in mud huts.

Peggy was sent to Woodstock since it was the only accredited school available for her. Students from 16 countries attended the school at that time, many of them children of missionaries.

Verda's parents were Mennonite missionaries in the central part of India, and she had been attending Woodstock for several years before she met Peggy. Since it was so cold in the Himilayas, "summer" vacation was held in the winter, when Verda returned to the mission.

Verda was six and living in India when she contracted polio. Doctors from the United States treated her at the mission. "My therapy at school was walking across the mountains to the teachers' house for eggnog and lots of pampering," she says.

Peggy had gotten polio in 1942, 11 years before moving to India, and she found walking across the mountains quite a challenge, too.

"Neither of us knew the other had had polio," says Peggy. "We had recovered sufficiently enough not to notice a problem in each other."

The meeting in Omaha was the answer to a dream of both women. "I recognized Peggy right away when I saw her at the conference," says Verda. "We had kept in touch over the years, but had not seen each other. It was really great to get

**LIBRARY**- from pg. 1, col. 1

David Oertli. "We get our tapes from the Library of Congress, and all of this is paid for with tax money."

Application forms are available at public libraries or from the Commission. Each applicant must be certified by a medical professional. In order to be eligible, a physically handicapped person must be unable to hold a book or turn its pages.

"We are currently closed until April 24 in order to go to a new automated system so that we can provide better, more timely service for our 4,500 subscribers," says David. "We will be able to serve many times the number we now have with this new system."

Subscribers are provided special playback equipment as well as catalogs listing the library's holdings.

Contact Nebraska Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, 1420 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, toll free 800/742-7691.

# LINCOLN AREA GROUP TO MEET ONE WEEK EARLY

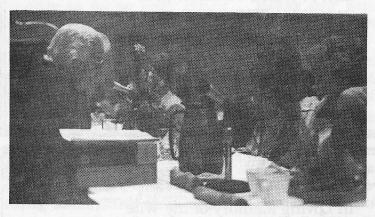
The Lincoln Area NPSA Support Group will meet at 2 p.m. at American Lutheran Church, 4200 Vine Street one week early on May 7, in order to avoid Mother's Day complications.

Topic will be provided by a dietitian from St. Elizabeth's Hospital who will speak to us on the subject of good nutrition combined with weight control.

### **CONFERENCE COMMENTS**

Thank you for a superb conference. It was very helpful for us as the speakers answered many of our questions in their talks. Also, the question and answer periods were very good. This was our first experience of contact with other survivors. Many thanks!

Mr. & Mrs. Dallas Mussman Ohiowa, NE.



My husband and I attended the conference last Saturday and were profoundly impressed with all that we received there. Stayed the whole day, took many notes, met several fine people,...and feel truly inspired and encouraged. Altogether the conference was a wonderful experience and we thank you for it. I enclose a check for GLEANINGS.

Julia Barthel Papillion, NE.

I really enjoyed Polio Update '89, and found everything very informative. Thank you.

Paulette Steffensmeier Fremont, NE



I attended Polio Update Saturday. I could see the month of work and the hours of ironing out problems and details. I was so impressed with each speaker....I went away with the feeling that I had gained new knowledge and also with a feeling of being armed with new strength. Thanks.

Harriet A. Starr Omaha, NE.

The conference was truly worth my time and money to travel for this meeting. I was particularly impressed with the rest breaks and the opportunity to meet other women closer to my age who had polio. The hospitality of the group was most warm.

Janice Hawkins Pleasant Hill, Iowa



Congratulations on the splendid Polio Update '89 Conference held in Omaha April l. Everything about it was superior. It was very well organized and professional in every way. It worked out really well for us to have the breaks so that we could go back to our rooms and rest. Being able to lie flat for a brief period helped me a lot in being able to stay reasonably alert throughout the day. Thank you for a conference that all of us could be proud to attend.

Peggy Moe Lincoln, NE

#### **CONTRIBUTIONS**

We thank the following people who have sent cash contributions to NPSA.

**BUILDERS**--Individuals who contributed \$100 to \$500

BURNS W. ROPER, Pelham, NY ROBERT GRIESS, Sutton, NE

**FRIENDS**--Individuals who contributed up to \$99

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#### **MEMORIALS**

In Loving Memory of

#### **BOB McMILLIN**

from Dennis and Nancy Smith

Council Bluffs, IA

In Loving Memory of

#### **RUTH ALLEN**

from

Ray and Linda Zimple Lincoln, NE

In Loving Memory of my Wife

#### **RUTH ALLEN**

from

Larry Allen Omaha, NE

In Loving Memory of

#### HARLEY MATHEWS

from

Harlene Prochnau Omaha, NE

## We thank these supporters of Polio Update '89

\$500 to \$1000

Anonymous Mutual of Omaha Insurance Company Jo Ann Lehnhoff FirsTier Bank of Lincoln

\$250 to \$499

March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation Aid Association for Lutherans, Branch 3385 Helget Home Care Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Dr. and Mrs. William M. Berton Helget Safety Supply, Inc.

\$100 to \$249

Amigo Mobility of Nebraska and Iowa Borsheim's Jewelry Marcia Bredar Easter Seal Society of Nebraska, Inc. Farmer's National Company Missouri Valley Orthotic & Prosthetic Center SHARE Health Plan of Nebraska University Internal Medicine Foundation

## ENERGY SAVERS FROM A POLIO SURVIVOR

by Vera L. DeBuhr Lincoln, NE.

Here are some tips that help me to save energy. I no longer make plans to do things that will be too taxing on the energy, and I tell people, when asked for a commitment, that I will be able to do so only when I get up that particular morning and see how I feel. I don't feel guilty anymore because I can't keep up with other people's energy. And I take one day at a time.

I no longer let people put guilt trips on me because I can't or don't feel up to doing something they want me to do. Just because my disability isn't showing on the outside, is no reason that I don't feel it on the inside.

I call a store ahead of time when I am going to do some shopping, to see that the things that I need are in stock. I don't waste energy this way.

Also, I ask the managers of the stores to see about a motorized cart for use in their stores.

One particular store had only one handicap parking space. I went to the manager and said, "If you value my business, you will get more handicap parking spaces for us." They did.

Remember that word from the Mickey Mouse Club? Back when our THIRTY SOMETHINGERS were sit\*

STICK-TO-IT-EVNOUS by LeEdda Hinsley Omaha, NE

ting cross-legged three feet from the TV? It sounded like a good idea then. Don't give up. You can do it.

Now, us FIFTY SOME-THINGERS are having to change our thinking. Relax our mind-lock, so to speak. Because for us, it iust ain't so.

For years it was like THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD. "I can do it."

We have to learn we can't do it. It is not an easy lesson. We go kicking and screaming off into the recesses of our minds in protest. What we could do just a few years ago, or just a few weeks or even days ago, we have found that now we can't. We have found the limits of what we could do are constantly shrinking.

Yet, we can't stop entirely and give up. Life isn't that easy. As long as there is a breath of life, we have to keep trying to maintain what we have without losing it. Maybe that's where the challenge lies.

We must learn to appreciate what we can do and give thanks. I guess our motto should be accept and adjust. I get great comfort from this Bible passage: Psalm 118-124. "Rejoice and be glad, for this is the day the Lord has made." Each day is a gift and should be lived as such.

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#### THEATER GROUP MAIN-STREAMS THE HANDI-CAPPED

When the curtain goes up on the Bellevue Community Theater's production of NO SEX PLEASE, WE'RE BRITISH, one of the leading players will be acting from his wheelchair.

Wiley Harker, the play's director, has added a new dimension to the comedy by casting a handicapped actor in the role written for someone on foot.

"He really does a marvelous job with the part," says Wiley. "Handicapped people are a part of life, aren't they, and I would like to show this on the stage. We are all handicapped anyway, in one way or other. This is a direction I'd like to see more often in the theater." The farce can be seen April 21-23, 28-30 at the Bellevue Little Theater, 203 W. Mission, 291-1554.

May 7th is the new date for NPSA's Hasting Area Support Group Meeting, 2 p.m. at The Kensington. Be there.

#### WHOSE QUALITY IS IT, ANYWAY?

Quality of life. I have been thinking about these words lately, trying to get a clear understanding of their meaning.

A couple of months ago, a young doctor suggested that I have a custom wheelchair made to support my head and shoulders, along with all sorts of contraptions to turn this doll into a mechanical marvel with a pretense of function.

"Why would I want to do that?," I asked. "Well, to improve your quality of life," he said.

I would still have no way of bathing or going to the bathroom on my own. Even if I could use a feeder, someone else would have to prepare the food and place it before me. If we had a ramp built out the front door and purchased a big bucks van with a lift, I would be able to go

## NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

The May 7th meeting of NPSA's Omaha Area Support Group will hold a panel discussion of the topics discussed at Polio Update '89.

Come and share your feelings and questions about the conference. Be there Sunday at 2 p.m.--IBM Building, 450 Regency Parkway (use the North door).

Please come--and bring your family!

out, it's true, providing I had someone to drive and accompany me and there were accessible places at the other end where I wanted to go. But all of this would render my legs, the one part of me that works, useless. I had trouble seeing the plan as an improvement.

And here's the catch. The able-bodied doctor has no idea how it feels to be shored up by bolts and harnesses, completely dependent upon others for even the smallest needs. He imagines that his suggestions will add quality to my life because he is trained to believe in getting 'em up, rolling 'em out. It's the best he has to offer.

What he apparently has not been trained in is PEOPLE. I think he should have talked with me first. I think he should have asked me

what I consider would add to the quality of my life. He should have discovered that I've been there before, with the wheelchairs and braces and scientific wonders. He should realize that I DO know how it feels, and therefore I am aware that his proposal would add darned little to the quality of this life of mine.

Fortunately, there are other doctors, other solutions to improve my mobility. But I am concerned that we still have new M.D.'s who seem more fascinated with science than with human beings. More impressed with technology than with feelings. So enamored of their own ideas that they never bother to discover something as significant as the fact that their quality of life may not be someone else's.

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Nancy B. Carter Nebraska Polio Survivors Assoc. P.O. BOX 37139 Omaha, NE 68137 (402) 895-2475

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