

# Gleanings

THE OFFICIAL NUMBER ONE NEBRASKA POST-POLIO NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER

1985

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MEMBERS CAN ORDER COPIES OF POST-POLIO ARTICLES

SPOTLIGHT: THANKS MOM!  
by Marlene Orton

Copies of nine articles published in the July issue of Orthopedics journal, covering many aspects of the late effects of polio and written by the leading researchers in the field today, are now available through this organization.

Thanks mom. When I had polio at 11, I really didn't know how seriously ill I was. You knew. You and dad drove 150 miles to visit me in the hospital each day for three months. Then you took me to Mayos and finally to Warm Springs where I really improved physically.

When I returned home, it was you who forced me to do my exercises each day --with sandbags on a special board in bed-- with your hands guiding my legs through the prescribed motions. I hated those exercises, but we did them 25 times, several times a day, no matter what you would have liked to do instead. I rebelled; I resented; but your patience was insurmountable. I still didn't know my limitations.

This is something you and your doctor will both find interesting and helpful.

Emotionally, at 13 I still didn't comprehend my limitations. Somehow I thought only of whether I could go to the current movie on my stretcher in my half body cast. I could! You worried; I didn't.

Because of your persistence, I was mainstreamed into the world of the non-disabled. Because of you, I had the opportunity to become a successful teacher, wife, mother.

Please send a check for \$2 to cover costs of copying and mailing to: Nebraska Polio Survivors Association, P.O. Box 37139, Omaha 68137.

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SUPPORT GROUP REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED AT NORTH PLATTE

The Nebraska Polio Survivors Association is looking for a volunteer to organize a support group for the North Platte area.

are a major effort of our state organization. There are currently seven support group areas in Nebraska.

Now at 47 I know I just grew along with my limitations and didn't have to adapt to sudden disability from an adult's point of view. You did that for me. You made the transition painless.

The area representative arranges for monthly meetings of the group and is the area's main contact person with the state office.

For those unable to attend meetings, our organization keeps in touch through this newsletter. The state office also serves as a clearinghouse, finding assistive devices and professional help for individuals.

Now that new symptoms are developing, maybe I can see what it is I need to do this time. This time the adaptations are up to me.

Support group meetings

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**STRESS MANAGEMENT: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO WELLNESS**

by Edward Charlesworth, PhD and Ronald Nathan, PhD (327 pages)

Reviewed by  
Cynthia Gabrielli Haag

This book is a truly comprehensive guide to stress reduction techniques. Of particular interest to our membership might be section five on assertiveness.

The authors differentiate between passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior. Passive behavior is defined as relinquishing your rights by not expressing your honest feelings, aggressive behavior as standing up for your rights in dishonest or disrespectful ways, and assertive behavior as standing up for your rights in honest, direct or helpful ways. They discuss what your rights are and how to learn to assert yourself by role-playing.

A few of the rights mentioned are the right to refuse a request, to express your true feelings, to make mistakes, to protest unfair treatment, and to make requests of others.

One technique suggested for assertiveness is using the potent power of silence. Another effective method is called the broken record, which is to repeat your feelings or response calmly and firmly until you appear to be heard.

**LOW-COST USED EQUIPMENT NOW AVAILABLE FROM PVA**

The Great Plains Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc., is offering a variety of used items helpful to persons with physical handicaps at reduced cost. Included are wheelchairs, hospital beds, walkers, and many other articles.

For more information contact Dave Clinkenbeard, PVA President, at 5315 South 94th Court, Omaha 66127, 331-3112.

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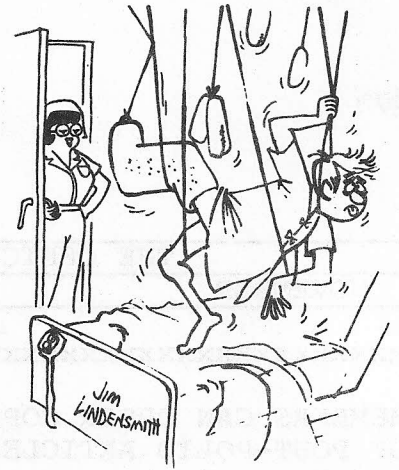
**ACCESSIBILITY IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ENCOURAGING**  
by Fran Quinn

Washington, D.C.--what a fascinating place to visit. I would like to share a few pointers, if anyone should ever go there for a vacation. The two most important things I forgot to take with me were my handicap sticker and my MCI card. These are a must when taking a trip.

I went to the D.C. Metropolitan Police Station to get a temporary sticker, but the clerk said I had to get a physician's statement saying I was handicapped. One thing I didn't want to do on my vacation was to go to a doctor, so there went my handicap sticker. However, the clerk at Arlington Cemetery gave me a temporary sti-

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A diamond is a chunk of coal that made good under pressure.



*"Aha! So, you're the one who was yelling his head off most of the night!"*

cker and this allowed me to see President Kennedy's grave. I used this sticker to park at other places, also.

I found the Smithsonian Institution, The American History and the Natural History Museums to be the most accessible. There is parking underneath the building with an elevator close by to go up to all floors of the museum. At the information desk they will lend you a wheelchair at no cost. You can use this to visit both museums, since they are next door to each other.

The Ford Theater, where President Lincoln was assassinated, was also accessible. And there are numerous other places to see in D.C. that are easily accessible. I must recommend it for everyone who has not been there.

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MONICA ROONEY OUTSELLS OTHERS IN FUND-RAISER

The count is in and Monica Rooney is the grand champ salesman in the HAPPENINGS coupon book fund-raiser from the Omaha support group.

Following close behind are Karen Dulany, Lorri Linenbrink, Virginia Walker, and Judy Kellerman. Many thanks for this donation of time to the state organization.

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WHIRLPOOL-TUB THE ULTIMATE IN BATHING CONVENIENCE

Silcraft's "The Bather 2000" is a molded unit with wheelchair-height seat that makes getting in and out of the tub a breeze.

The side-opening door slides easily overhead for entry and egress, and has a special seal

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IRON LUNG RECORD-HOLDER DIES AFTER 37 YEARS

The woman listed in the GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS as the longest survivor in an iron lung died recently in Los Angeles after 37 years in the respirator.

Laurel Nisbet, 72, was paralyzed from the neck down after contracting polio in 1948. She has a grown son and daughter.

to hold it in place for draft-free bathing. There are shower, deep-soak, or whirlpool possibilities, all in soothing comfort.

Silcraft Corp. is at 528 Hughes Drive, Traverse City, Michigan 49684.

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OMAHA PHYSICIAN SPEAKS AT SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Henry Lehnhoff, M.D., guest speaker at the Omaha group's October meeting, presented a lively talk in which he described the medical aspects of acute poliomyelitis and explained some of the terminology associated with the disease.

He answered questions from members and gave suggestions regarding how to get doctors to listen and interesting doctors in the late effects of polio.

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ABSTRACT  
CLINICAL MANAGEMENT OF  
PARTIALLY INNERVATED MUSCLE  
by

G. J. Herbison M.D. et al

In preliminary studies 22.4% of individuals who had poliomyelitis experienced a decrease in muscle strength after their maximal recovery from poliomyelitis. (Mary Codd) Followup studies have shown that 66% of the subjects experienced significant decrease in muscle strength in severely involved muscles after maximal recovery from poliomyelitis.

The authors cautioned against excessive exercises because of their potential harm to the nerves and muscles previously affected by the polio virus.

Mild stretching exercises are good for maintaining range of motion in affected joints. Strenuous stretching did not improve muscle strength. Microscopic examinations of muscle tissue showed that a vigorous stretching program may actually cause muscles to deteriorate in the post-polio patient.

Electrical stimulation of affected muscles did NOT improve nerve or muscle function

Ted Vergith M.D.



SEMANTICS: ANOTHER VIEW  
by Nancy Erickson\*

The article in the October GLEANINGS regarding terminology piqued my interest. Since becoming involved with disability issues in 1971, this has been a "pet interest" for me. Remember the '60's when Black leaders began stressing "Black is Beautiful" and the word "negro" became a no-no? At the time, I didn't give it a lot of thought. Since then, I have come to some different understandings.

It is apparent to me that the words we use have a strong influence on our perceptions. We, as people with disabilities, consistently fight against the negative images and stereotypes

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NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

The November 3 meeting of the Omaha support group will be devoted to a "theme rap session"-- discussing what the Orthopedics journal articles on post-polio have to do with each of us. Articles will be available at the meeting.

Also, Harold Wie-Sel will give a short demonstration of his 3-wheeled cart and describe what it has meant to his independence and convenience.

Please come! We need your input, your involvement! See you at Rejoice Lutheran Church, 138th & Center, 2 p.m.!

people have about us. Whether folks look at me with a patronizing smile and pat me on the head, ignore me, or tell me how brave and inspirational I am, make little difference. All of these responses come from misinformation and beliefs about people who have physical limitations being inherently different than others. These kinds of attitudes are perpetuated by generations of people using such words as victim, suffering, stricken, confined, afflicted and crippled. I believe, with Nancy Carter, that dignity has to do with what's inside a person. It's difficult to have a sense of dignity when we hear these words over and over and apply it to ourselves as does the rest of society. Our self-concept is established by our perceptions of how others behave towards us. Beha-

\*Nancy is Project Coordinator of the Independent Living Center of the League of Human Dignity in Lincoln. The League of Human Dignity co-authored one of the guides referred to in last month's editorial.

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Nancy B. Carter  
Nebraska Polio Survivors Assoc.  
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viour and language are closely related.

The media plays a major role in the development of our culture's ideas and norms. When these kinds of words are used and when articles appear which portray people with disabilities as pitiful souls or super-human heroes, it is incumbent upon all of us to let editors know that this is unacceptable. It is this kind of coverage which helps perpetuate the negative and limiting beliefs many people have about those of us who have disabilities.

I agree, wholeheartedly, that there is potential here for over-kill and we must be careful how we present this issue. However, I believe it must be dealt with if attitudes are going to begin to change.