

Polio Survivors and the Paralympics: We're Still Here

William G. Stothers, San Diego, California, President of the Board of Directors, Post-Polio Health International, wstothers@cox.net

About 25 polio survivors participated in the 2012 Paralympic Games in London a month ago. Two of the athletes were members of the U.S. Team: Zena Cole, at 55 the oldest member of the women's track and field team, won a bronze medal in the discus, and Dennis Ogbe, who contracted polio in his native Nigeria, participated in the shot put and discus.

Other polio survivors represented Great Britain, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, India, Pakistan and South Africa. These athletes were among the 4,250 athletes from a total of 164 nations who competed in 21 sports and won 1,992 medals. China, Russia and Great Britain topped the medal table, with the United States ranking sixth.

Few people in the United States saw any of the Paralympic Games on television. NBC, which saturated the airwaves with Olympic coverage, devoted only five and a half hours of coverage of the Paralympics, mostly on cable channels.

Other countries fared better with hundreds of hours of coverage aired in Britain, Europe, Africa and Asia. And the British public bought more tickets to these Paralympics than any other in the past.

Among those who did not catch much of the Paralympics was Steve Goldman. But, too, he was getting ready to hit the road in another of his beloved road trips.

Steve feels some nostalgia for the Paralympics. He was very athletic growing up in New York as a polio survivor. A wheelchair racer, he even held a couple of world records for a while.

In 1972, Steve was on the U.S. Team that participated in the Paralympics in Heidelberg, Germany. That was the

year the Olympic Games were bloodied by terrorists in Munich. It was only later that the Olympics and Paralympics were linked, a major step in raising the profile and visibility of the Paralympics.

About 1,000 athletes from 43 countries participated in 10 sports at Heidelberg. Many were polio survivors with the majority of the rest being individuals with spinal cord injuries. The U.S. Paralympic Team comprised 45 athletes, as Steve remembers, with about 30 of them polio survivors. Were you one of them?

Because of his involvement in wheelchair sports, Steve met his future wife and found his way into a career in the Durable Medical Equipment industry. Now retired and on his own

continued, page 11



Steve Goldman at the 1972 Paralympics.



Steve Goldman shows his silver medals for the 100-meter dash and the wheelchair slalom to his parents on arriving home from the Paralympics in 1972.

Thank you

For recognizing your friends and loved ones with contributions to support the unique mission of PHI and IVUN. PHI strives to publish an accurate list. Please contact us if we made an error.

Contributions to PHI's educational, advocacy, and networking activities ...

In Memory of

Shirley Ann Callahan	Robert T. O'Brien
Mary Castiglione	Evangeline Reisser
Thomas F. Daly, III	Sandy Stuban
Edie Elterich	Cathy Wice
L. Gregory Hooper	Gail Williams

Contributions to The Research Fund ...

In Memory of

Phyllis Bailey	Nancy Judkins
Janet Harter	Kathy Stoney
L. Gregory Hooper	

In Honor of

Richard C. Gearhart, Jr.	Suzanne Sheridan
--------------------------	------------------

Contributions to the Gilbert Goldenhersh Memorial Tribute Fund ...

Joseph Kohn	Sherman Sklar
Sandy Lawson Samuels	

Polio Survivors and the Paralympics

continued from page 3

again, he's indulging his passion for packing up his car and touring the country.

A lot has changed in 40 years. Technology has vastly improved. Steve says in 1972, U.S. athletes used regular E&J chairs, but that the Europeans had more advanced equipment. Training has gotten better and more sophisticated, and other disabilities are represented.

But polio remains a part of the Paralympics. There are still plenty of younger polio survivors in parts of the world where polio eradication is perhaps in its last lap. They are likely to be competing in Brazil in 2016. And, hopefully, we'll be able to see more of their efforts in the U.S. media. Steve Goldman will try to watch, even if he's on the road. ▲

PHI Thanks its Members for their support. If you are not yet a Member,

Join PHI!

Support Post-Polio Health International's educational, research, advocacy and networking mission.

PHI annual membership levels make it easy to start taking advantage of timely and important news and activities relating to the late effects of polio. Select your level below and return it with your check or credit card information. Memberships are 100 percent tax-deductible.

\$30 Subscriber

Newsletter of your choice:

Post-Polio Health (quarterly)

OR *Ventilator-Assisted Living* (bi-monthly)

\$55 Subscriber Plus

Both newsletters:

Post-Polio Health (quarterly)

AND *Ventilator-Assisted Living* (bi-monthly)

\$100 Contributor

ALL the benefits of Subscriber Plus AND

Post-Polio Directory AND

Resource Directory for Ventilator-Assisted Living;

discounts on special publications

and meetings sponsored by PHI

\$150 Sustainer

ALL the benefits of Contributor AND

One additional complimentary gift membership to:

Person of your choice (include name and address) or

Person who has expressed financial need to PHI

Membership at the following levels includes ALL benefits PLUS special recognition in PHI publications:

\$250 **Bronze Level Sustainer**

\$500 **Silver Level Sustainer**

\$1,000 **Gold Level Sustainer**

\$5,000 **Platinum Level Sustainer**

\$10,000 **Gini Laurie Advocate**

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Country _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

email _____

Phone (include area/country code) _____

Fax (include area/country code) _____

I am enclosing a check for \$_____ made payable to "Post-Polio Health International." (USD only)

Please charge \$_____ to this credit card:

VISA MasterCard Discover

Card No. _____

Exp. Date _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Send this form to: Post-Polio Health International
4207 Lindell Blvd, #110
Saint Louis, MO 63108-2930 USA
Phone: 314-534-0475
Fax: 314-534-5070