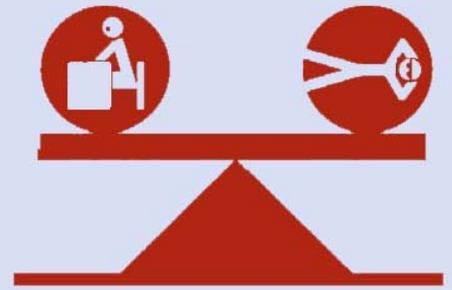


POST POLIO PACER

Conserving Strength and Energy through Pacing
October 2014 — Madison, Wisconsin

Madison Area Post Polio Support Group Newsletter
MAPPSG formed in 1985 — This Is Our 29th Year!



Mary Herness of Whitehall, WI, who contracted bulbar polio at age 13 in August 1951, has written her story—dedicating it to her 10 grandchildren. She generously shares it with the Pacer which we will publish in four parts.

RED LIGHTS AND SCREAMING SIRENS

I threw my bike down on the edge of our lawn and plopped my tired body upon the cool grass. Why, I wondered out loud, am I so tired from just a short bike ride? I had spent the day at our neighbor's farm across the field. They had the threshers at their farm, and help was needed in the house preparing meals and feeding the crew. At age thirteen, I welcomed the chance to help, in hopes that I may even be paid fifty cents for the day's work. It had been a busy day lending a hand with baking and cooking in the kitchen. So, I rationalized, no wonder I'm feeling drained. But my aching legs, pounding headache and fast, hard breathing seemed out of the ordinary.

That late summer day in August 1951, was the onset of my long ordeal with polio. Looking back, my first summer as a teenager had been overshadowed by warnings of this dreaded disease. An ominous aura had been

created by foreboding cautions. Crowds were to be avoided, swimming pools had been closed, county fairs were cancelled, and my mother had set down strict rules regarding the use of public drinking fountains or toilets.

Flu-like symptoms plagued me for a couple of weeks after that exhausting bike ride. Forcing myself to ignore a nagging headache, a sore throat and uncharacteristic fatigue, I kept going with the social events that filled my life. My parents were unaware of these problems as our family went to the Saturday night free show in town, attended a monthly 4-H meeting and took part in a Luther League meeting. I dragged myself to confirmation class at church, as well as the opening day of a new school year. The highly anticipated annual fall festival days at Osseo arrived. Not wanting to miss a chance to exhibit my Holstein calf, I ignored my aching body and went along with our 4-H dairy leader. By this time I almost preferred staying at home in bed.

The following five or six days remain a blur. I was in bed barely able to get to the bathroom on my own. High fevers made me delirious, especially at night when my sleep was disturbed by dreams and a recurring frightening falling sensation. Weird tingles were tearing through my body with prickles and pains. It got to the point where I was afraid to fall asleep. Mother kept a close vigil, bringing me food, drinks and aspirin, all of which I had great difficulty swallowing. Spells of choking and coughing racked my body. In the back of my mind I kept thinking about all the days I was absent from school. At last I had reached the status of being an eighth-grader...the oldest kids in Pigeon Falls State Graded School.

Around the fifth day of being confined to my bed with this unrelenting “flu,” I started seeing double. I would screw my eyes tightly shut, afraid to open them. Along with this vision problem, I coughed and spit up phlegm. Swallowing became almost impossible! The straw that broke the camel’s back was when I fell out of bed trying to reach my tissues while having a coughing attack.

Mother was alarmed! She headed down the stairs on a run and went right to the telephone. On our rural party line one only called the doctor in a dire emergency. So it was very frightening to me when I heard Mother’s voice on the phone telling the local operator in Pigeon Falls to ring Dr. Leasum’s office in Osseo. He said to bring me in immediately.

Dad drove Mother and me to the doctor’s office. That was most unusual! He had farming chores at home, and usually Mother would be the person to take my brother or me for doctor appointments. He walked me out to the car and drove the Chevy faster than I could ever recall him driving. I was very wobbly and weak as I attempted to walk into the doctor’s office. Finally, I staggered in between Dad and Mother. I sat in the waiting room while Mother took care of checking me in. Seeing double, dizzy and weak, with a pounding headache, I could still feel the other patients staring.

It wasn’t long before Dr. Leasum’s nurse, Anna Shipman, called me back. Mother went with me into the examination room. It was so reassuring to see Dr. Leasum come in the door. He had brought me into this world, and was our trusted family doctor. Chicken pox, tonsillitis, ear aches, hives and all our vaccinations had been conquered by this wise doctor. I told myself he would prescribe something for this pesky illness and life would return to normal.

Dr. Leasum checked all the usual things: temperature, pulse, blood pressure, lungs, heart-beat, my nose, throat and ears. Then he did a test that was different. He tapped each of my knees with a hammer-like instrument. Nothing! No movements! He tried a second

time. The same results! I had no clue what this meant. He turned to Mother, informing her he would like to send me to Luther Hospital in Eau Claire.

Following his call to the hospital, we were on the way. Had I overheard his telephone conversation correctly? He mentioned suspecting polio! It was rather curious that I was guided out the back door of the clinic. I had guessed it was the closest way to reach Dad’s car, and it was getting extremely difficult to walk. Now I am thinking they did not want to expose other patients.

I must have dozed off, because the next thing I was aware of, my parents were walking me toward the emergency entrance at Luther Hospital. Once inside the door I was whisked away in a wheelchair. It was late afternoon by the time I was admitted to the hospital. Mother had called a neighbor family, making arrangements for my fourth-grade brother. Dad made a phone call to his uncle’s home, asking for help with the milking chores. My stay at Luther Hospital consisted of only about two or three hours. The entire fourth floor, converted to an exclusive polio ward, was filled to overflowing. I was not even admitted to a room! The critical spinal tap test was performed in the hallway. It was painful and confusing. No one would tell me what was happening. I tried to listen to their comments, and phone conversations, but had trouble focusing and concentrating. Where were Mother and Dad?

Unknowingly, I was diagnosed with bulbar polio. The results of the laboratory analysis on the fluids withdrawn from my spine confirmed the doctors’ suspicions. A doctor talked with my parents, informing them that I had symptoms of two kinds of polio: first was spinal polio which was causing my legs and arms to become so weak. But the most urgent problem was the bulbar or respiratory polio. Therein was the cause of my difficulty swallowing, breathing, and seeing double.

I needed to be transferred to a hospital equipped with a respirator called an iron lung.

The respirator would breathe for me if my lungs were no longer able to function. The nursing staff at Luther Hospital called to locate an available iron lung. Sister Kenny Institute in Minneapolis would have been the closest option, but the iron lungs there were filled. General Hospital Polio Annex at Madison confirmed that they had an available iron lung. Although I was cognizant of what was being discussed, it all seemed to be out of my hands, almost as if these people were talking about someone else. At this point no one had specifically told me that I did have polio.

Darkness had fallen that late August evening by the time Dad and I were in the ambulance that was to transport me to Madison, WI, and the waiting iron lung. It was decided that Dad should be the parent to accompany me, because he had also been a victim of polio as a ten-year-old boy in 1920. Their reasoning being, that he was immune to contracting the disease again.

The haunting wail of sirens and flashing red lights remain vividly stamped in my memory. The three and one-half hour trip to Madison was made through numerous small towns along this route. Sirens and red lights announced our approach at each little hamlet. I dozed off, only to be repeatedly awakened to that eerie wailing sound. Dad sat in front alongside the ambulance driver. A medical person rode beside me, occasionally checking my pulse and breathing. Oxygen was given to me to help the labored breathing. In denial, I thought this was most certainly unnecessary! Would the endless red lights and sirens ever end?

Upon entering the emergency room at Madison General Polio Annex, I was whisked away to an examination room. Doctors and nurses hoisted me up on an examination bed. Stark bright lights shone down on my hurting head....still seeing double. They pushed my legs to bend at the knees, asked me to press down with my hands and feet, instructing me to follow the light of a small flashlight-like instrument with my eyes. Learning that I had walked into the hospital in Eau Claire, with

help from my parents, they attempted to have me take a few wobbly steps. What was wrong with my legs? They buckled down like wet noodles! Finally I asked the frightening question that had been nagging away in the back of my mind. Up to this point, no one had truthfully told me whether or not I had polio. Do I really have polio? "Yes," was the reply, "I'm afraid so."

In the January Pacer Mary brings us memories of her stay in Madison General Polio Annex, hot packs and physical therapy.

Editor's note: Many thanks to Kathleen Blair for the pre and post notes to this article.



In Memoriam

Bonnie J. Haushalter, age 65, passed away on Saturday, Sept. 6, 2014, from complications from Post Polio Syndrome. Bonnie was the daughter of Edward and Laura (Phillips) Arndt. She married Rodney Haushalter on Aug. 1.

1981. Bonnie worked for Madison Metro, was an active member of Blackhawk Church and the Senior Adult Community (S.A.M.). She loved being around children, traveling, and was an avid Packers fan. She is survived by her husband, Rodney; son, Matthew (Nicole); siblings, Sandy Jensen and Bob, Dick, and Larry Arndt. She was preceded in death by six siblings.

The excerpts from the Wisconsin State Journal are reprinted with the permission of her husband, Rodney Haushalter.

Our condolences to her family. Bonnie was a long time member of the Madison Area Post Polio Group and will be missed also by her family, friends and organizations with which she volunteered.

Celia Yoder Looks Toward 99th Birthday With an Attitude of Gratitude



Exactly three years before the peace treaty ending World War 1 was signed in France, Celia Bell Yoder was born on November 11, 1915, on a farm in north-central Oklahoma.

In 1930, she contracted polio, which affected her left hip and leg, which is a half-inch shorter than the right. She was never hospitalized, but remembers being in pain. She was diagnosed with infantile paralysis after the fact.

Following high school and two-and-a-half years at Northern Oklahoma College, Celia earned a teaching certificate and landed a job teaching all eight grades in a one-room country school. Starting pay was \$75 a month, but it was enough to afford her own 1928 Ford.

One of her most memorable days in the classroom involved one of the many dust storms that blew through Oklahoma in the 1930s when she was teaching: "The little country schoolhouse was suddenly enveloped in an eerie darkness of dust with wind rattling the windows of the old building. I soon needed to light the Coleman mantel lamp on the piano and two kerosene lamps on the walls. Eventually, the room was so filled with dust that the students needed to intermittently blow the dust off of the work on their desks. The children were coughing and scared."

She walked one girl, who lived nearby, to her home. "Returning I loaded the rest of the pupils into my 1928 four-door Ford sedan. Driving close to the grader ditch with my lights on, I drove to each one's home and dropped off the remaining children."

Celia left teaching for marriage and to raise her family. Bored, after her sons were grown, she went back to work in the business office of a medical clinic, retiring in 1977 after 17 years doing bookkeeping and transcription.

"I never lamented any 'can't-dos,' but enjoyed all the 'can-dos' - college, teaching, Cub Scout den mother and working in the clinic," she said.

After she and her husband, a builder/contractor, retired, they enjoyed being "snowbirds," pulling their RV to the Rio Grande Valley in the winters where they took painting classes.

"My husband said many times that he took me from the farm, but couldn't take the farm out of me."



In 2001, her husband of 61 years died. "At the age of 86, I was alone and ill. I was living in the dream home my husband built for us in 1946."

She and her family agreed that she should move to a retirement home in Olathe, Kansas, with two nieces nearby to look after her.

"I said goodbye to Oklahoma and hello to Kansas. I am a descendant of pioneers, so moving is an adventure. (Her maternal grandfather made The Run, the Oklahoma Land Rush of 1889 where 50,000 people lined up for a race to lay claim to unoccupied public land.)

"In Olathe, I have made many friends. I am a member of the Olathe Visual Artists, and I became a member of the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution at age 90."

Celia has written four family histories and two books - *Memories of a Farmer's Daughter* and *Memories of a Carpenter's Wife*.

"I now help people write their memories and teach a landscape painting class in the senior apartment building where I am in independent living. I still paint landscapes, although I am struggling with macular degeneration. My hearing is failing even with expensive aids."

Post-polio problems in her left leg caused a fall that has left her with stasis ulcers exacerbated by poor circulation and antibiotic allergies.

"But I feel I am still blessed and I am proud to be a polio survivor," Celia says. "It has made me aware of and empathetic to people with any handicap or disability. I always felt blessed to enjoy a good life even with problems. Now I realize it was with an 'attitude of gratitude,' I enjoyed understanding and helpful parents, sisters and brother, a loving husband, two sons, valued nieces, nephews, cousins and friends."

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Come to the November 8 meeting

Dr. Andrew Waclawik, Prof. of Neurology, UW School of Medicine & Public Health, will accompany his presentation "*Evaluation of a patient with suspected post-polio syndrome*" with power point slides. This presentation should be of interest to all.

Questions submitted at the March meeting were sent to Dr. Waclawik so he has a basis for his talk. Bring your family and others who might be interested in this topic and questions you have for Dr. Waclawik.

Golden Rule of Post Polio Syndrome

**"If something you do
causes you fatigue,
weakness or pain,
you shouldn't be doing it!"**

Holiday Preparations—Already?

Halloween is at the end of this month, but Christmas decorations, etc. are available in the stores and online. Now is the time to set a budget, make a list and check it twice--after you have browsed online for the "perfect gift" if possible.

If you prefer store shopping--rest before you go, take a list, and *let your body tell you when it is time to go home.*

Wrap and label as you buy and sit to wrap if possible. If standing, use a high table or top of the washer/dryer. Other options are using a gift bag or having the store or a friend wrap for you.

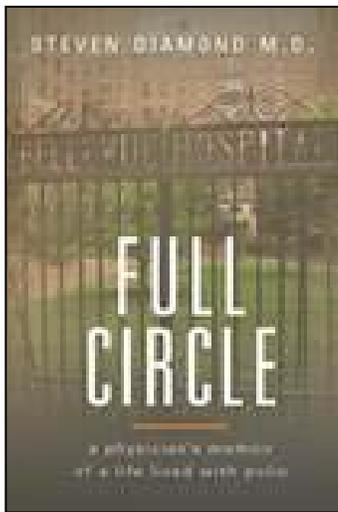
Need help decorating? Have a decorating party so guests can help you decorate and at a later date put decorations away.

Rest and eat something before going to holiday parties. Enjoy small quantities of holiday treats.

Options for hosting a meal—prepare what you can in advance, ask each guest to bring a dish to pass or order a prepared meal from a grocery store.

**Conserving your energy
is a gift to yourself.**

TWO BOOK REVIEWS



Full Circle: A physician's memoir of a life lived with polio is a new book by Steven Diamond, MD, a gastroenterologist who was among the first to master surgical techniques that saves thousands from colon cancer. Diamond grew up in post-World War II Bronx. He contracted polio there at age 13 and entered the polio ward at Bellevue Hospital.

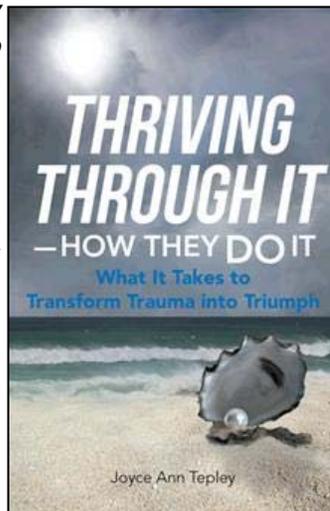
Twelve years later he returned as an intern and later as chief resident in gastroenterology. The book, about his career, includes an assessment of American medicine and his struggle with post-polio syndrome.

It can be purchased directly from the publisher, TBM Books, and on Amazon.

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Polio survivor Joyce Ann Tepley's contribution to books about disability is **Thriving Through It- How They Do It: What it takes to Transform Trauma into Triumph**. Tepley, retired from a forty-year career as a clinical social worker, interviewed 20 people from all walks of life asking them what it takes to thrive through difficult times.

Her book tells their stories, but more importantly, in Part Two, she describes what kind of person is a thriver, and in Part Three, "My



Findings," she shares her insights as to what it takes to not only thrive but as a continuing process through life.

Tepley's book about thrivers was launched at PHI's recent conference. It can be purchased on Amazon (check out the reviews), Barnes and Noble or iUniverse.

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PUT YOUR CAR KEYS BESIDE YOUR BED AT NIGHT

Tell your spouse, your children, your neighbors, your parents, your sisters, everyone you run across. Put your car keys beside your bed at night. If you hear a noise outside your home or someone trying to get in your house, just press the panic button for your car. The alarm will be set off, and the horn will continue to sound until either you turn it off or the car battery dies.

This tip came from a neighborhood watch coordinator. Next time you come home for the night and you start to put your keys away, think of this: It's a security alarm system that you probably already have and requires no installation. Test it. It will go off from most everywhere inside your house and will keep honking until your battery runs down or until you reset it with the button on the key fob chain. It works if you park in your driveway or garage. If your car alarm goes off when someone is trying to break into your house, odds are the burglar/rapist won't stick around. After a few seconds, all the neighbors will be looking out their windows to see who is out there and sure enough the criminal won't want that.

And remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot. The alarm can work the same way there. This is something that should really be shared with everyone. Maybe it could save a life or a sexual abuse crime. Would also be useful for any emergency, such as a heart attack, where you can't reach a phone.

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Do you have suggestions for speakers, topics, books to read and discuss, etc.? Call or e-mail (see e-mail list) one of the people listed above to suggest program topics or speakers, volunteer to organize one meeting program, share your knowledge (or find an expert) about becoming a non-profit organization or volunteer your talents (financial, organizing, etc.) as a committee member.

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**To get your Pacer in color
 on line, set your email
 program to always accept
 messages from
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Names in bold are new to the list or have an address change.

To add your name and/or up-date your e-mail address to this list, notify Marcia Holman at: wghmch@chorus.net

POST POLIO PACER is a quarterly newsletter published in January, April, July & October for polio survivors, the Madison Area Post Polio Support Group, health care professionals and interested persons to share information and to promote friendships. Articles in this newsletter are for information; medical advice is always necessary.

Please request permission from the editor to reprint articles from the Post Polio Pacer.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual writers and do not imply endorsement by Easter Seals Wisconsin or the Madison Area Post Polio Support Group.

**Happy Holidays,
 Everyone!**

**From
 Kathleen Blair
 and
 Marcia Holman**



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Saturday, November 8, 2014

**Andrew J. Waclawik, MD ,
Professor of Neurology,
UW School of Medicine &
Public Health**

**will accompany his presentation
“Evaluation of a patient with suspected
post-polio syndrome” with power point
slides.**

NO MEETING IN JANUARY

