

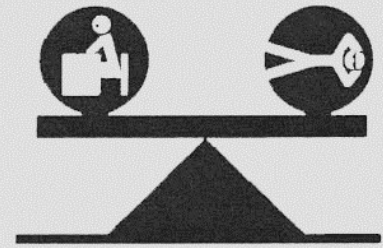
POST POLIO PACER

Conserving Strength and Energy through Pacing

January 2020 — Madison, Wisconsin

Madison Area Post Polio Support Group Newsletter

MAPPSG formed in 1985 — This Is Our 35th Year!



Gratitude – A Healthy Habit

By Kathleen Blair, Columnist

As I write this column, we are at the end of the Christmas season and entering 2020. We hear about the Magi following the star to Jerusalem and learning there were six more miles to go to Bethlehem, the hardest part of their journey.

Many of us are enduring those “last six miles” or “X” number of years as we deal with age, less energy, loneliness and health concerns. How can we help ourselves through this journey? I read an excellent article last week about the significant health benefits gratitude has on the human body. It gives us the extraordinary ability to take whatever comes and appreciate it. We suffer less stress-related illnesses, lower blood pressure and may even add years to our life span. So let’s release those burdens and take time to reflect and recognize our blessings.

Marcia and Bill received a Christmas letter from an old friend who wrote, *“I do feel like I may be approaching the end of my life, so I’m spending a certain amount of my time practicing gratitude. Thank you for getting me into Al-Anon. It’s been a wonderful philosophy to live by and that is making all this easier now.”* What an inspiration!

Marcia told me she is grateful for their good health, her daughter’s family who lives close enough to see frequently, that she can still drive and volunteer delivering Meals on Wheels weekly and having good friends to meet for dinner each week.

My gratitude list includes: the people who help with my wheelchair when I go to church, especially Don who comes rushing out of the chapel each weekday morning when I arrive. And there are so many other kind souls in my life – my family who get me in to watch my grandson’s soccer and basketball games, people who come forward to open doors, my caring neighbors who keep my driveway cleared in winter, and those who just take time to listen, are a few of the things that brighten my day.

Speaking of brightening my day, hearing Fayth Kail’s cheerful voice on her answering machine warms my heart. When asked, *“What are you grateful for?”* she answered, *“I am so grateful for the wonderful caregivers I have right now, and for all my family and friends. I’m very fortunate to be supported and we should all be grateful for everything we have.”*

John Uhler who recently joined our Post-Polio Support Group sent an email: *“I used to run into older nurses in LaCrosse and elsewhere, who worked during those years (of the polio epidemic). And no matter where they were from it was clear that they understood what it was like, and they remembered everything. They always recognized on sight that I was a polio survivor; they spied it immediately. And to all the nurses and to the doctors and the ancillary staff who worked in those years, I and every other survivor owe a great debt of gratitude. They cared much for us and they worked very hard – they need to be remembered! God bless them all.”* Yes, John, we all agree.

Granddaughters, Grace and Ellie, top Sheryl Shaffer's list of blessings. "They make me happy," she said, "They are so sweet and have the cutest smiles. I just love being with them."

And Sheryl is also grateful for the friendship and nice conversations she enjoyed with Ne-deen Strand as they drove to Post-Polio meetings together. (Many of us are grateful for Ne-deen's friendship. May she rest in peace.)



Theresa Post expressed gratitude for everything she has achieved while working through hardships: family and friends, nice warm home, excellent health insurance, music, retirement, the opportunity to watch neighbor children playing next door, and the Post-Polio support group where members understand.

The article about gratitude, that I mentioned previously, recommended keeping a gratitude journal – at the end of every day make a list of five things we are grateful for. I usually don't feel up to writing a list at the end of the day, but when I get into bed at night I reflect on the day and say a prayer of gratitude for everyone who helped me that day. Sometimes the list is long.

May I share thoughts from another story I read: A first grade class was given the assignment to name the Seven Wonders of the World. One little girl wrote: "I think the seven wonders of the world are to see, to hear, to taste, to touch, to smell, to love, to belong." Brilliant wisdom from a child!

In closing I pray – May the light of our gratitude burn brightly in our hearts and in our world. In the silence of our hearts, let each of us give thanks for all the many gifts that are ours.

Happy New Year!

STROKES, WHAT CAUSES THEM AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

By Karen La Valley, APNP

Editor's Note: There was lively discussion by the attendees during this presentation on September 14, 2019 at the luncheon meeting of the Madison Area Post Polio Support Group. Unfortunately the discussion was not recorded, but we thank Karen La Valley for sharing her presentation with us.

What do Johan Sebastian Bach, Cary Grant, Gene Kelly, Charles Picker, Winston Churchill, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Margaret Thatcher and Richard Nixon have in common? Four are in the arts, five were leaders of the U.S./Britain. Seems like total opposites—arts vs. leaders, but together they all had strokes. As one person would note, a few had too much over-use of alcohol—well, we'll cover that under risk factors.

A stroke source can be completely different: one group is ischemic stroke/CVA caused by lack of oxygen to the brain from blood clot or plaque. The other group is a bleed in the brain from hypertension (too high blood pressure) or being on an anticoagulant (ex. Warfarin for atrial fibrillation or an aneurysm).

So, the good news is that there are fewer strokes happening, but the bad news is that it can still *happen to you*.

What should you be looking for?

- Mental status change—confusion
- Aphasia—speaking is difficult
- Headache—"the worst headache I have ever had!"
- Hypertension
- Numbness on one side of the body
- Blurred vision
- Trouble walking, loss of balance

What are the risk factors?

Lifestyle

- Overweight
- Physical inactivity—aim for 30 min. a day
- Heavy/binge drinking—women can tolerate 1 alcohol drink per day; men can tolerate 2 alcohol drinks per day
- Use of illicit drugs, eg., cocaine, meth

Medical

- B/P greater than 120/80 (chronic)
- Smoking and second-hand smoke
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Sleep apnea
- Cardiovascular disease: CHF—Congestive Heart Failure, heart defect, thyroid change
- Genetics
- Older than 55 years
- Race—Black American

What are the complications post stroke?

- Possible paralysis
- Difficulty swallowing/talking
- Memory loss/thinking difficulties
- Emotional problems
- Pain
- Change of behavior

Prevention

- Control hypertension
- Control high cholesterol
- Discontinue smoking
- Control diabetes
- Healthy weight
- Exercise 30 minutes per day
- Control alcohol consumption

After reading this article, the biggest and most important thing to remember is: **if there is any question of stroke, DO NOT WAIT TO GO TO THE ER!**

You have less than 3 hours to determine whether the cause is ischemic or a bleed. That needs attention from the hospital staff. You are not bothering us—be it at 1 a.m., 5 a.m., etc.

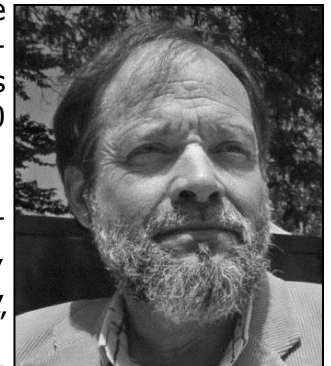
In Memorium



Nedeem Strand died on Jan. 3, 2020. Despite the challenges of polio and macular degeneration, she had an active life, raised 2 children, was employed and most loved spending time with her family. She belonged to the Cottage Grove Historical Society, Model

A Club & the Post Polio Group.

Carl Durocher, a local disability rights activist and homebrewing enthusiast, who repaired computers without the use of his hands and donated them to indigenous people, died Jan. 5, 2020 at 73.



“He was the most remarkable, determined, kind, courageous, caring, beautiful person I know,” said Mary Ellen Rieland, his partner of 20 years.

Durocher was 7, growing up in a small Wisconsin town, when he became paralyzed by polio. He moved to Madison in 1966 to attend the University of Wisconsin. At that time, the city had no transit system for disabled riders. He served on the City of Madison Transit and Parking Commission for many years, the City of Madison Transportation Commission, the City of Madison ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Paratransit Committee. He was a regular user of Madison Metro’s bus and paratransit services for all the years he lived in Madison.

These members of the Madison Area Post Polio Support Group will be missed.

FOOTPRINTS & MEMORIES OF JACOB & MARY MONTGOMERY

By Jacob E. Montgomery

Editor's note: Jacob Ezra Montgomery was born in Wirtz, VA, on April 12, 1928 and passed away on Father's Day at age 89 in 2017. His daughter, Charlene Denlinger, sent me his book for "anyone who may be interested in reading it." With her permission, excerpts of the book follow:

Part 1: In the July 2019 Pacer

Part 2: In the October 2019 Pacer

Part 3: Watch Repair School

The Woodrow Wilson School of Horology (the science of time keeping) opened in February of 1948. Ten boys and 2 girls made up the student body. More students came as time went on, and by the time I graduated there were about 50 students.

Each student had a private room, with his/her own bathroom. There was a dining room where the students from all the different trades or classes would eat. This was a few buildings from my room, but since it was all under the same roof, it really did not matter if it was cold or rainy.



In the watch repair school, they had planned to start us out on an 18 month course. The last 6 weeks was to actually work in a retail shop which was to be set up right there at the school. However, for some reason they

changed that to 15 months and cut out having a shop there.

We started out making some tools. We had no idea what they were to be used for, or how to use them. We were just given the blueprint along with a sample and instructions on how to make them. We did use them, and I still have some of them today. After making the tools, we started making some parts for a watch, such as balance staffs and stems. It was perhaps about six months before we really got a watch to work



on and try to make run. Some of us wondered why all this before we started repairing, but it turned out to be a good way to approach it. It taught us to work with the different metals, and their reactions to filing, sawing, drilling, and cutting on the lathe.

I remember one day a new student came in who had started a course at another school. He was showing us some things he had made, such as balance staffs for a ladies' watch. I said, "You mean we are going to have to make something that small?" He said, "That's right." I said, "Well, I might as well go to my room and pack up my suitcase and go home." But then, I decided that if he could do it, I could too. And in due time I did. Just to explain the size of this staff, the length is approximately 3.25 mm, or close to 1/8th inch. The staff is the axle of the balance wheel.

Everyone was on their own, none of us had to wait on the rest of the class to advance. I ended up being there approximately 15 months, including about 4 weeks of vacation time for 4th of July, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year. I finished May 19th of 1949. The instructor told Dad they did let me stay a little longer, assuming I would be operating my own shop.

I came home and set up a shop in my parents' house. I contacted a couple of jewelry stores in Rocky Mount to see if I could get

some work from them to do at home. I did get some from one of the stores. I also began to take in some work from friends and relatives.

On my Own

I had been thinking and planning all along of some way that I could get a shop in town. In the summer of 1950, I saw an ad in the *Franklin News Post*, of a room for rent that had been a barber shop. I asked Dad if he would take me up to look at it. He agreed, though he was a bit reluctant. The room was fairly large and located just behind a flower shop. The entrance was a little ways from the sidewalk, back an alley that went to the police department and jail. It was large enough that I could visualize putting a curtain across the middle with the shop on one end and a bed, hotplate, and living quarters on the other end. There was a door in the back of this room into a hallway to the flower shop. The owners of the flower shop agreed to let me use their walk-in cooler to keep some milk, eggs, bacon and other groceries. I was sure I could fry some eggs and bacon for breakfast, and thought that if I could call down to The Mart (a restaurant a block down the street) to order a meal or two a day, I would get along just fine. They agreed to do this for me. I thought if I could have someone take me up on Monday morning, and come and get me Saturday evening, I could stay all week and get along fine. The rent for this room was \$15 a month. So, this was my start in the watch repairing business.

Sometime later, probably in the later part of 1950, Everett Stanley, one of the co-students at Woodrow Wilson School of Horology, came in and wanted to join me in a partnership. He agreed to match what I had invested and we would stock some watches, watchbands, and other merchandise. Business increased, and I enjoyed having a partner. I sold my share to him in July 1953, and he was in business until he retired, in 1995.

In the spring of 1950, on Annual Meeting Sunday, the young folks had a gathering at

the Peter's residence. When we were getting ready to go home, someone was pushing me out the walk. At the end of the walk, the way the grass was cut, it looked like the yard was level with the cement, but when the small wheels in front of my wheelchair got to the end of the walk they dropped down about 3 or 4 inches. This threw me out of the chair and the chair tumbled over me. I knew right away something was wrong with my left leg. I thought it was out of place. Of course, they took me to the hospital. Since it was Sunday, they didn't even X-ray it. The doctor just put a tight bandage on and said if it started to bother me during the night, I could loosen the bandage. Well, it did start to hurt sometime during the night, and I loosened the bandage. Wow, that made it hurt worse! We went back to the hospital on Monday morning to have it X-rayed and sure enough, it was broken.

Learning to Walk

In 1950-1951 I heard about the Milton H. Berry Foundation in Cincinnati, Ohio that was noted for being able to fit braces to people like myself. I went out there in 1952. It was a large house that had been remodeled to accommodate that type of business. There were approximately 6 residents at a time—half girls and boys, some with less ability to use their legs and arms than myself. I have often wondered if any of them ever became able to walk at all. However, I will have to give them credit for trying.

The braces made for me came up around my waist; with joints at the hips and knees. Since I had not walked since before the polio, I did not just get up and walk with them. I had a lot of learning to do before using them independently. We started out with the braces on my legs and people held me up between the parallel bars. During the three months I was there, I progressed to getting out of my wheelchair and use my crutches to walk across the room and back. But, when I came to even a little step, my shoulders and arms were not strong enough to let me get up the

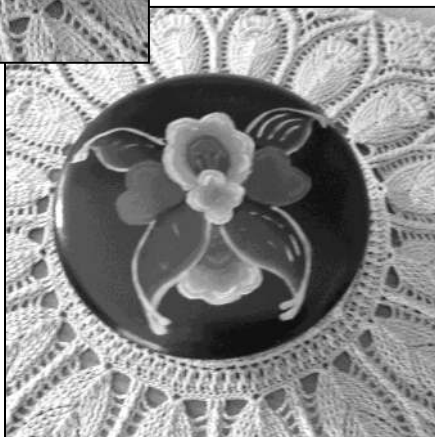
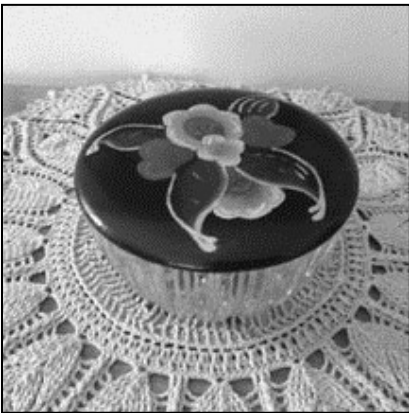
step. For this reason, I stopped using the braces in 1954. During the two years in braces, I used them daily to get in and out of the store, but could not do any steps. I was glad to have tried, but in the end, decided that it would be less strain physically, to just use the chair.



Part 4 of the story—"My first car" will appear in the March 2020 issue.

Many thanks to the post-polio group for the gifts received at the Nov. luncheon meeting.

Gail Beckwith, who is learning rosemaling, showed her talent on the cover of the candy dish presented to Kathleen.



Marcia received a napkin holder with rosemaling on front and back. If you look closely at the lower right corner the artist's name is visible.



The photos speak louder than words. Both gifts are beautiful, took much patience and talent to produce and will be treasured by their owners. *Thanks again!*

Golden Rule of Post Polio Syndrome
"If something you do causes you fatigue, weakness or pain, you shouldn't be doing it!"

EXECUTIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Gail Beckwith 608-873-8896
 Kathleen Blair 608-838-8773
 Fayth Kail 608-249-1671
 Sheryl Shaffer 608-224-9201

Suggestions for speakers, topics, books to read and discuss, etc. are needed.

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.

POST POLIO PACER STAFF

Marcia C. Holman, Editor
 3629 Alpine Rd.
 Madison, WI 53704-2201
 e-mail: mchwgh@gmail.com
 Phone: 608-249-2233

Kathleen Blair, Columnist
 5404 Wellington Circle
 McFarland, WI
 e-mail: knlmbldr@gmail.com
 Phone: 608-838-8773

Please check your email address for accuracy and send the correction to Marcia Holman at <mchwgh@gmail.com> Thanks!

Madison P-P Support Group e-mail list:

Beckwith, Gail—dbgb1973@charter.net
 Blair, Kathleen—knlmbldr@gmail.com
 Casper, Mary—maryhcasper@gmail.com
 Fisk, Julie—jfkfisk@hotmail.com
 Herness, Mary—maryherness@centurytel.net
 Jordan, Buffy—buffyjordan@gmail.com
 Klotzbach, Jennifer—maywoodteach@aol.com
 Klotzbach, Marilyn—marilynkcgw@yahoo.com
 Marsolek, Betty—bmarsolek@tcc.coop
 Miller, Diane—dem2727@gmail.com
 Montgomery, Joyce—jmrm14@yahoo.com
 Murphy, Dorothy—ddm4hymn@msn.com
 Mylrea, Marian & Earl—mamylrea@aol.com
 Newman, Leanne R.—roonie@charter.net
 Post, Theresa—tjpost@charter.net
 Purdy, Elizabeth—epurdy1@verizon.net
 Shaffer, Sheryl—sheryls@gioffice.com
 Schubring, Kathy Sue—kathysue@gmail.com
 Smith, Joy—handswow7@hotmail.com
 Tomter, Linda—ltomter2@gmail.com
 Torti, Geri—gatorti@wisc.edu
 Wieland, Dennis—boxdodger@yahoo.com
 Welcome HOME—welcomehomebb@gmail.com

To get your Pacer in color on line, set your email program to always accept messages from mchwgh@gmail.com

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: mchwgh@gmail.com

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 Winter—
 At least this snowman
 seems happy...



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A NEWSLETTER FROM THE MADISON-AREA POST POLIO SUPPORT GROUP

Mark your calendars!

2020 meeting dates:

March 14

May 9

July 11

September 12

November 14

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NO MEETING IN JANUARY

LOCATION:

Monona Garden Family Restaurant
 6501 Bridge Rd., Monona
 Noon to 2:30

March 14—Open Discussion

