

POLIO



POST

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President's Report August, 2011

Well here we are in the middle of the most beautiful summers we have seen in years. I hope you are enjoying the heat and the sunshine. Our issues with Post Polio Syndrome never go away but surely the sunshine lifts our spirits and we can view the world with a renewed energy.

The annual summer picnic at Bourkevale Community Club was a roaring success. The weather was lovely, the food was excellent and the company was grand. The picnic is a time that we connect with old friends and enjoy a meal together; it is a great time to get caught up with each other. Many thanks to Tailgaters Barbeque Pit catering and the organizers and volunteers who helped make this a terrific evening.

As usual Doug saw that we had some goodies for a fun raffle, but is chocolate really necessary after a big meal? Of course it is – chocolate is always necessary !! Grey Cup tickets were distributed to members which helps raise the funds for our many activities and with the start the bombers are off to they shouldn't be hard to sell, and who knows maybe be Winnipeg will go all the way to the Grey Cup.

The fall is fast approaching and we look forward to getting together for our meetings on September 27th and October 25th. With having such a wonderful summer, time has really flown by and it won't be that long before we renew our fellowship at the Christmas dinner, hard to believe how time flies.

I look forward to our next get together and trust you are all making the best of this fine and almost mosquito free summer.

~ Charlene Craig, President ~

Robert Fryatt (1939 - 2011)

A TRIBUTE

Written by: Maggie Keller

The first time I noticed Robert was ... let me put it this way, at the beginning of my life in The Misericordia Pool. Upon entering the water for my very first class, I was greeted warmly by several of the individuals who turned out to be executive board members of the Post-Polio Network. But, it wasn't until about half-way through the class that my eyes alighted on Robert. The reason was simple ...he had been joking around with our instructor, Diana, and she, being pressed for time, took it upon herself to bring their dialogue to an abrupt halt with: "O.K. 'TROUBLE', that's enough!"

To my surprise, and delight, there was a spontaneous roar of laughter from everyone in the class. This was followed by a sardonic comment from Robert, as he ruefully shook his head. Always the generous gentleman, he knew that he had pushed Di's patience to the limit and that it was time to stop ... for a while, anyway. As I watched, all that I could think was...who are these wonderful people, who have so much trust and love for each other that they can play this way?

The weeks went by, and I learned that Robert was part of a small group of fellas who seemed to feel that it was their duty to disrupt every class with their talk, whereby getting themselves into trouble with either Diana or Bonnie, our other instructor. It didn't seem to matter how organized or serious the class began, Robert and his cohorts would manage to disturb, or side-line the instructor's orders with their talk, laughter and general tom-foolery.

Usually treading water in the deep-end of the pool, I always have a bird's eye view of their shenanigans. Their type of fun, and it always was pure, harmless fun, was a staple part of the class's agenda and whether it was summer, winter, spring, or fall, all of us could count on "TROUBLE" and his pals to keep the jokes and laughter an uproarious part of pool life.

So, it is an understatement to say that all of us were shocked and sobered when we learned the news that Robert was not going to be at the pool because he was undergoing treatment for lung cancer. Robert did come back a few times and joined us during his chemotherapy sessions. He looked himself, albeit minus his hair, and he still was as eager as ever to toss off a joke or a self-deprecating remark that would immediately have everyone chuckling.

It was during my very last conversation with him, that he told me a personal story from his childhood. Of course, in the telling of the tale, he and I ended up laughing so hard, I was worried that I would miss a beat treading water and gulp in half the pool.

But, it is my memory of him that is so precious. There he was, eyes closed and yelping with

joyous delight as he tried to tell me the story. He too, was gasping for breath... laughing so hard at the recollected memory of himself: a guileless 6 year old boy, getting into mischief, completely oblivious that his behaviour was managing to disrupt the peace and tranquility of the occupants of an *entire neighbourhood!*

That was Robert's gift: his grand ability to grasp the absurdities of life ... and respond with laughter. I was told that when friends from the pool visited him during his brief stay at Riverview, he was still cracking jokes and filling the room with light.

Finally, Robert loved fishing and true to form, in defiance of the Grim Reaper, his ashes were laid to rest in his fishing tackle box. What a perfect ending to a life filled with generosity, humour and love.

Dearest Robert, we will remember thee....

*I will arise now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the heart's core.*

*From: "The Lake Isle of Innisfree"
By: W.B. Yeats*

General Meeting

Katherine Freisen Centre

940 Notre Dame Ave

September 27th, 1pm- 3pm

Speaker: ***Bonnie Hopps***, (from the Arthritis Society)

As September is National Arthritis Awareness Month,
Bonnie will speak on "Arthritis and Post-Polio Syndrome"

Lunch will be served!

Weight Training at Age 60 – Go Figure!

I'll never forget November 20, 2010. Apart from commemorating what would have been my dear mum's 90th birthday, it was the day I began a new chapter in my life.

For the past eight years, I had been exchanging smiles, hellos and handshakes with a charming gentleman by the name of Vic Keller. Having read articles about him and his fitness program, I always admired him from a distance and thought how great it would be to have someone like Vic to help me improve my physical well-being.

It wasn't until October 2010 that I actually stopped to talk to him, commending him on how he had been helping people add quality to their lives. I also read of his gentle approach to everything, backed by a sincere commitment to go the extra mile with each and every client who put themselves in Vic's capable hands. That same morning I told him how I wanted to sign up for Tai Chi and get some good stretching and toning happening. It was then that he introduced me to his program for joint and muscle rehabilitation and encouraged me to join the downtown YMCA/YWCA where he meets with his clients. He believed that I could achieve the benefits I was seeking through weight resistance training in a gently controlled environment. November 20, 2010 I had my orientation and muscle assessment. I was ready to go for it.

By the beginning of December Vic introduced nutrition counseling to my regime. I reduced sugar in my coffee and served myself a smaller bowl of cereal in the mornings, plus made sure that I added protein to each meal. I began to go to bed earlier and snack less in the evenings, both involuntary actions, due to the addition of ample protein throughout the day. I had more energy during the day, got tired earlier in the evening, and ended each day with a new sense of contentment.

By mid-December I no longer experienced low back, neck and shoulder pain that I had been experiencing every day thus reducing the intake of pain medication. The weight resistance training was strengthening and toning some critical areas for me. My overall strength doubled, my range of motion increased, bending was easier, and I was able to fit into a pair of pants that I received as a gift a year and a half earlier that I could not get done up. My winter coat was buttoning easier, and my self-esteem was quickly rising.

By January 2011 I could fit into chairs (with arm rests) that I could not for many years. I was shrinking! And I was very encouraged. My weight wasn't changing, and I wasn't getting my body fat index down as I should have, but I didn't want those to be stress factors. I wanted them all to remain as positive challenges and lifetime goals. I still struggle with balancing everything as the pain levels in my legs are constant and drain my mental and physical energy very quickly. There are some realities in life, and these are some of them. I did have Polio. I was totally paralysed. I was in an iron lung. There were and still are repercussions from all that, but coping is the key. I do what I can when I can and make the most of it.

I enjoy precious playtime with my grandson, Owen. Not only do we enjoy colouring and read-

ing, but he gives my cardio a workout every time we're together and helps in my weight training as I've been lifting and carrying him every week since he was born (2 years ago). He is now about 35 pounds of solid "boy" and I can still lift him up and into a shopping cart. I'm not worth a button at the end of those days with Owen, but I wouldn't miss one moment of them, pain or no pain. Now he has a wee sister, Alice, who is also growing and blessing everyone around her.



Life is worth living, so live it the best way you know how – whatever it takes within your means – go for it! We may not all achieve groundbreaking results, but we will all achieve some sense of accomplishment by saying that we tried and finding at least one area of improvement along the way.

By Kathryn Harper

Gaining Wisdom from Experience

*by Kathryn Harper
(with permission from Vic Keller)*

In interviewing Vic Keller for an addition to this newsletter, we reflected on his introduction to Polio survivors he met at the April meeting. Before the meeting began, Vic worked his way around the room speaking to as many individuals as he had time, making brief notes and remembering their names as he wove them into his presentation which generated further comments and suggestions from those present. Vic offered his golden rules on nutrition which can all be found in his book *Vic Fitness Total Health Nutrition Guide*.

Vic told me the next day, "As much as I had to share about positive aspects of fitness and nutrition, I learned so much from talking and listening to the individuals at the meeting. They are so wise and very aware of their bodies. They are doing a great job of taking good care of themselves."

- Vic Keller, Owner of Vic Fitness (Winnipeg).

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Is Polio Really Over?

“You’re not disabled. You may think you have Post-Polio Syndrome, but I want you to know that you don’t. If you just lose weight then everything would be better.”

Listening to this from a medical professional who conducted a ten to fifteen minute consultation including a brief hands-on examination, and who just a few months earlier prescribed a cane for my everyday use, I sat in disbelief. Having had countless sleepless nights from the pain in my legs and back; having had extensive neurological examinations and tests ruling out other possible muscle disorders, I was more than frustrated.

I felt that I had to start searching again for a doctor who would at least listen and try to understand without making quick adamant conclusions about my physical limitations. Most Polio survivors have been outwardly affected a lot longer than the Post-Polio survivors. The syndrome known as Post-Polio manifested sometime in the 80’s when people began to complain of certain afflictions and then discovered they had similar backgrounds and history of Polio from the epidemic, the 1940’s and 1950’s being the worst years.

Polio was and is real. Post-Polio is real. All we ask is that those listening are willing to listen and understand how we cope with and adapt to our daily lifestyles for a healthier, more pain free access to living.

The literal definition of the word ‘access’ reads, *“a coming to the means or way of approach.”* That is to say that canes, wheelchairs, walkers, shoe lifts, braces, handicap-converted vehicles, therapists, doctors, support groups, etc. are all, in some capacity, crucial instruments in the accessibility of the patient to face and cope with daily living.

Access, to a Polio survivor, can range in meaning from no stairs to a ramp, from a cane to a wheelchair, from a wider door in a private bathroom to completely modified living accommodations. Access, to a Polio survivor means “help make things a little easier for me; take time to listen and to care about positive changes in accessibility.”

Is Polio really over? Most definitely not. Who would believe that here in the year 2011 there are new cases of Polio surfacing not only in third world countries, but right here in Canada. Who would believe that some children and adults have never been immunised? That’s a very scary thought. Just ask a Polio survivor and walk alongside them for one day.

By Kathryn Harper

The Two Wolves

An old Cherokee was teaching his grandchildren about life. He said, “A battle is raging inside me...it is a terrible fight between two wolves. One wolf represents fear, anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego. The other stands for joy, peace, love, hope, sharing, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, friendship, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.”

The old man looked at the children with a firm stare. “This same fight is going on inside you, and inside every other person, too.”

They thought about it for a minute, and then one child asked his grandfather, “Which wolf will win?”

The old Cherokee replied: “The one you feed.”

Member's Page

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE

By Maya Angelou

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE...

enough money within her control to move out and rent a place of her own, even if she never wants to or needs to... something perfect to wear if the employer or date of her dreams wants to see her in an hour....

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE...

a youth she's content to leave behind..a past juicy enough...that she's looking forward to retelling it in her old age...a set of screwdrivers, a cordless drill, and a black lace bra....one friend who always makes her laugh...and one who lets her cry...

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE...

a good piece of furniture not previously owned by anyone else in her family...eight matching plates, wine glasses with stems, and a recipe for a meal, that will make her guests feel honoured....

A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE...

a feeling of control over her destiny...how to fall in love without losing herself...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...

how to quite a job, break up with a lover, can confront a friend without; ruining the friendship...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...

when to try harder...and WHEN TO WALK AWAY....

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW

that she can't change the length of her calves, the width of her hips, or the nature of her parents... that her childhood may not have been perfect..but it's over...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...

what she would and wouldn't do for love or mover... how to live alone...even if she doesn't like it..

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...

whom she can trust, whom she can't, and why she shouldn't take it personally...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...

where to go...be it to her best friend's kitchen table...or a charming Inn in the woods...when her soul need soothing...

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW...

what she can and can't accomplish in a day...a month...and a year....



"The annual summer picnic at Bourkevale Community Club was a roaring success."

Lettuce Rolls

Romaine lettuce
thinly sliced roast beef
hummus
mustard (your choice but not
honey mustard)

Spread a thin layer of hummus and mustard on the lettuce. Top with slices of roast beef.

Roll up lengthwise and enjoy!

You all know that I have been sustained throughout my life by three saving graces - my family, my friends, and a faith in the power of resilience and hope. These graces have carried me through difficult times and they have brought more joy to the good times than I ever could have imagined.

Elizabeth Edwards

Do you have an interesting story to tell? Or do you know any good jokes, inspirational or humorous quotes or poems?

Then you are invited to email them to:

postpolionetwork@shaw.ca or mail them to:

Post-Polio Network (Manitoba) Inc.

C/O SMD Self-Help Clearinghouse

825 Sherbrook Winnipeg, MB, R3A 1M5

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C/O SMD Self-Help Clearinghouse
825 Sherbrook Street
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Membership Application Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Please check one or more of the following options:

New Membership - \$10/year

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I wish to make a charitable donation of \$ Tax deductible receipt will be issued.)

I would like a copy of the newsletter sent to:
(My doctor, therapist or other individual at the address below)

Name: _____ Profession: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Province: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone: _____

Please make cheque payable to the Post-Polio Network (Manitoba) Inc. and mail to the address listed above.

Membership Renewal

REMINDER: It's time to renew your membership for the year 2011 due on January 1st. \$10.00 covers the cost of our newsletter published 4 times a year. A tax receipt will be issued for any other financial donations, as membership fees are not tax deductible.

Thank you. Estelle, secretary

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