



GLEANINGS

Winter 2016

A Letter from NPSA's Foundation President

Dear Reader,

Most of us polio survivors are at a point in our lives where we have to watch our finances closely. We're on fixed incomes because of retirement or disability or both. Our Social Security cost of living increases haven't kept up with inflation. If some of your pension or 401K has been tied to the stock market, you are well aware of the dive the market took this summer. And all of our "rich uncles" have departed this mortal coil and didn't remember us in their wills. Whatever the reason, we sometimes need to find creative ways to keep our expenses from exceeding our income.

And so, unfortunately, does the Nebraska Polio Survivors Association. On November 5, 2015, the NPSA Foundation Board of Trustees held its annual meeting, as required in its bylaws, which are on file with the Nebraska Secretary of State's office in Lincoln. My fellow trustees and I, as President, have a legal obligation to responsibly manage the endowment funds of the Foundation. Among the other agenda items during our annual meeting, we reviewed our finances.

Just as it is with your personal finances, our responsibility is to ensure the NPSA's expenses do not exceed its income. For several years, membership donations and the interest earned from our endowment kept up with our expenses. However, in the past three years, membership donations have dropped off dramatically, and at the same time our interest income has decreased. After careful review of our financial situation, the trustees voted to take action to reduce the expenses of the organization. These actions will impact the service we are able to provide to you, our NPSA members.

First, we will reduce the number of times we publish this newsletter. Instead of six times a year, *Gleanings* will now be published and sent out quarterly as the Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall issues. This will result in a savings of almost \$1,000 a year in printing and postage costs. Second, we voted to reduce the number of times we hold membership meetings in Omaha from ten times a year to nine. Our first meeting of 2016 will be Sunday, March 6, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Commensurate to the reduction of time needed to fulfill the Executive Director's duties, we have reduced Executive Director Elaine Allen's monthly salary, effective November 30th. This reduction will save the organization over \$7,000 in wages, taxes, and workers compensation. Other expense reduction steps may occur during 2016, as the board meets in April, July and October to reassess its financial situation.

As trustees of the Foundation, we appreciate your understanding. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these actions, please contact me or any other of the trustees listed on this page. Our addresses and phone numbers are published in every issue of *Gleanings*.

Have a Wonderful New Year,

Edward (Ted) Roche, Ph.D., President, Board of Trustees, Nebraska Polio Survivors Association Foundation

Happy Holidaze

By Millie Malone Lill

At the risk of being mobbed by people who waited until December to do their Christmas shopping, I'll admit I was almost done before Thanksgiving! I had one great-grandchild to buy for and that took care of my Christmas shopping for this year. I know there are people who enjoy going to the malls with all the holiday stuff on display and the excitement in the air. Not me. I do not like shopping. When faced with all of those choices, I panic and go home either empty-handed or with something I really hadn't planned on buying and that will have to be returned.

Shopping is exhausting unless you do it my way: The Pajamas and a Cup of Coffee Way. Yep... online shopping. I get emails from many, perhaps too many, websites with incredible sales. I also belong to Amazon Prime. I shop all year long in my own way. EBay is a good place, too. I can click on Buy Now, US only, and Free Shipping. No food court to tempt me, no crowds to jostle me and no exhaustion. I don't have to load/unload my chair, find someone who is less of a chicken than I am to drive me to the city, pay for a tank of gas plus a meal for me and my driver, or carry my purchases up to my apartment. Fed Ex, USPS, UPS can deliver them.

Toward December, the Stash Boxes cluttered my bedroom quite a bit, but that's OK. By Christmas all of it was distributed. Sometimes the bargains for stuff I didn't know I needed till I saw it on sale are just too tempting. There is one All Year stash box for birthday gifts and such. And occasionally, there are bargains just for me.

I no longer buy gifts for my children or grandchildren, since most of them are now

verging on being older than I am. Well, have you ever heard me say, "Oh, I'm too old for that!"? Nope, because I rarely if ever think I'm too old for anything, even stuff I very obviously am too old for. But I've heard my sons say they are too old for this or that. However, I have six very adorable great grandchildren for whom I buy gifts and also a few gift exchanges that pop up during the holidays.

What can be more fun than discovering a child has a wish for something I can afford to buy? Google that item, or go to Amazon where I swear you can buy anything. I think our armed forces probably order their stuff from Amazon Prime. One tank and a case of army fatigues, please, and yes... Free Shipping!

I use to spend a lot of time baking cookies

and making candy for Christmas but not anymore. I have become lazy in my old age and it's working for me. I discovered that Walmart has really great shortbread cookies and there are recipes for microwave fudge online. Since I can no longer stand long enough to do many



of these chores, I've let my fingers do the walking. They walk right over my keyboard and push my online shopping cart around. So much easier than going to the mall. I also subscribe to Stamps.com for \$5 a month so I no longer have to go up that long ramp to the post office to mail my cards and letters. I can print the stamps right on my printer.

Henry Ford was right. He said, "If you want to find the easiest way to do something, ask a lazy person to do it." Now, that the Holidaze are past, contact me I'll see if I can fit you in.

Happy New Year to all.

Next Issue of *Gleanings*:
Spring 2016 – Mailed in mid-April

Thank You to Our 2015 Donors

We're grateful to the following donors for their gifts received during 2015:

Memorial Gifts

K.M. Albin, San Diego, CA

In Memory of Theresa Thoms
Virginia Laughridge, Weston, NE

In Memory of Virginia Phelps
Patricia Meierhenry, Lincoln, NE

In Memory of Donna Mavis
Donna Smith, Albion, NE

In Memory of Norm Smith

Cash Donations

Albert Berke, Anchorage, AK

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Linda DeRyke, Branson, MO

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Reunion Raffle Donations

Penny Jewell, Omaha, NE

Stanley & Barbara Johnson, Villisca, IA

Millie Malone Lill, Denison, IA

Edward B. & Vickie Roche, Bellevue, NE

Darrel & Patti Sudduth, Plattsmouth, NE

Your gifts, no matter the amount, helps NPSA achieve its mission. All gifts are fully tax-deductible because we are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Please consider NPSA in your charitable giving this year. You may send your donations to:

NPSA

PO Box 6076

Omaha, NE 68106

This Note Accompanied a Memorial Gift

My mother, Virginia Phelps, was a victim of polio. She contracted it in 1919 at the age of two. The effects of the disease prohibited her from many activities but, in spite of her disabilities, she lived life to the fullest. She passed away October 19, 2015, at the age of 98 years, 5 months.

She enjoyed Gleanings. She found it to be informative and comforting... I am enclosing a small donation in her memory.

*Thank you,
Virginia Laughridge*

NPSA Board Names Karen Dulany

One of NPSA's most active and dedicated members has become a member of the NPSA Foundation Board of Directors.

Karen Dulany was nominated by a board member during its annual meeting in November. "I am pleased to report that Karen has accepted our offer to join the Board. We look forward to her ideas and input to the work of Board."

President Edward (Ted) Roche said.



Karen is a polio survivor, having contracted the virus at the age of eight. She works part-time as histotechnologist for three doctors at the Nebraska Medical Center. "I hope can be of service to NPSA. It should be interesting," Karen said. She and her husband, John Dulany, regularly attend NPSA's monthly meetings.

Post-polio Health International Online Resources:

PHI offers many helpful resources online, including videos on its Polio Place page.

PHI's Home Page: www.post-polio.org/

Polio Place: www.polioplace.org/

Directory (PDF): www.post-polio.org/net/PDIR.pdf

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Thank you for helping us reduce costs and keep our mailing list current and accurate.

Nebraska Polio Survivors Association Foundation Board of Directors

President:

Edward B. Roche, Ph.D.
117 Bellevue Blvd S
Bellevue, NE 68005-2440
Home: 402-292-3781
Work: 402-559-4645
Email: ebroche@cox.net

Vice President and Secretary

Kusum Kharbanda, Ph.D.
770 N. 93rd St., Apt. 4B4
Omaha, NE 68114-2674
Work: 402-995-3752
Email: kkharbanda@unmc.edu

Treasurer

Larry Weber, CPA
Weber & Thorson PC
11205 Wright St., Ste. 220
Omaha, NE 68144-4719
Work: 402-330-9900
FAX: 402-330-4022
Email: larry@weberthorson.com

At-Large Members

Eugene and Barbara Roth
4011 N. 15th St.
Lincoln, NE 68521
Home: 402-477-2188
Cell: 402-326-3266
Email: groth@neb.rr.com

Karen Dulany
8027 S 69th St
La Vista, NE 68128-4372
Home: 402-339-8480
Email: kjdulany@msn.com

Executive Director

Elaine J. Allen
PO Box 6076
Omaha, NE 68106
Voice mail: 402-932-5426
Email: npsa.org@hotmail.com

Life-long Learner Earns Second Master's Degree at 77

By Elaine Allen

A month before she turned 78, life-long learner and polio survivor Marjorie Fey Farris earned a master's degree in history from Eastern Kentucky University.

Marjorie met with NPSA members via Skype during the August 2, 2015, meeting. She talked about her passion for learning throughout her life, after spending most of her working years in front of a classroom as a teacher.

"This is my second master's degree: the first was in English, and this one is in history," she told the group. To earn this degree, she took advantage of EKU's program that allows seniors over age 65 to attend classes at EKU tuition-free. "I took one class a semester because I would get too fatigued. Most of the time, I was the oldest person in the classroom, and sometimes that included the professor!"

She told the group that students loved to hear her perspective because many times the topics they discussed were historical events that she remembers vividly. "They really loved my first-hand recollections since they could only read about them or see in movies about them," she said.

Marjorie was born in rural Anthon, Iowa, on June 17, 1937, and was infected with the polio virus at the age of three months. When responding to NPSA's 2014 membership survey, she was recorded as the youngest respondent to survive polio.

As an infant, her mother used hot packs and water therapy to help her develop the muscles in her legs. "I learned how to walk in a barrel full of water," she joked. She walked with braces and crutches for most of her life until five years ago.



"The best thing that could have happened to me was five years ago when I fell (again!!) and broke my left leg for the fifth time. My doctor and therapist and I all decided that I was ready for a full-time motorized wheelchair. I bought a used van that was equipped with a ramp and that I could drive, and that made it possible for me to go back to college," Marjorie said.

"I've had a ball these last four and a half years, and I encourage anyone out there, polio or no polio, to consider going back to school even if you just want to sit in class and take notes. The young people on campus have given me so much energy!"

So much energy that she began taking another class at EKU during Fall Semester 2015: Women and Gender Studies.

(Full disclosure: Marjorie is my first cousin, once-removed. Her mother and my maternal grandmother were sisters. Marjorie and another first cousin, once-removed, were the first two polio survivors I knew as a child.)

2016 NPSA Monthly Meeting Schedule

Our meetings are held from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. on first Sunday of the month, except in July and September, when holidays fall on the first weekend:

March 6: Video of PA Conference

April 3 May 1 June 5

July 10: Annual Ice Cream Social

August 7 September 11

October 2 (Reunion TBA) November 6

We meet at the Bloomfield Forum Community Room, 9804 Nicholas Ave., Omaha, Nebraska. Meeting topics will be announced on our Facebook page, via email notification, and at the previous month's meeting. All are welcome to attend.

Winter 2016



PO Box 6076
Omaha, NE 68106

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NPSA Mission Statement

The mission of Nebraska Polio Survivors Association is to educate the public and the health care community concerning polio and post-polio syndrome and to respond to the needs of individuals who suffer from the syndrome through group meetings, educational programming and newsletters, financial and other support of research concerning the syndrome and the circulation of research results.

Are you moving? Do you have a friend or family member who survived polio and who would like to receive *Gleanings*? Return this form with your address changes or the name and address of your friend/family member.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____