



# GLEANINGS

WINTER 2019

## Things I've Learned the Hard Way

By Millie Malone Lill

Sometimes you can't learn from the mistakes of others. Sometimes you must do it yourself to get it done right. I'm going to give you the benefit of my vast store of wisdom, so you don't have to make all the mistakes yourself, either.



1. If you have a side lift on your van, it doesn't really matter where you park; someone will park their car too close to yours for you to be able to use your lift to get into your van. I've heard of a few remedies for this problem. You can park in a normal, non-handicapped space but straddle the line, so you are taking up two parking spots. You can park your van "on the bias" slanting across two spots. One guy suggested putting out those orange cones they use for highway construction. When asked where one would get those cones, he replied, "Don't ask."
2. Painting a parking spot blue does not make it larger. It only makes it a pretty color.
3. If you're still able to walk a little bit, someone will do the "Hallelujah! You are cured!" thing. If you try to explain that you can still walk a little bit just not very far, their eyes will glaze over before you can count to ten.
4. People will stare at you.
5. People will ignore you.
6. You will have people offer to race you, or say you are going too fast, you are going to get a speeding ticket/run over someone. I always say: "I've never hit anyone while going

forward, but if you are in back of me, I can't see you, so you are on your own."

7. People will open the door for you and then stand in the doorway, so you have very little room to maneuver to avoid hitting them.

8. If you run over a stick on the sidewalk, it will hang onto the undercarriage of your chair and make a delightful squealing/squeaking noise as you roll along.

9. You will lose approximately 50% of your IQ points once you park your behind in a power chair and people will

ask your friend "What does she want?" when you go to a restaurant with him/her rather than taking your order from you.

10. Crutches and ice are not a good combination.

11. Long full skirts and the wheels of power chairs and scooters are a recipe for disaster. I've torn a dress and a skirt in half on two separate occasions because I'm a slow learner. One half-dress should have taught me that lesson.

*Millie's Column (continued on page 2)*

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## 2018 List of Donors

*Thank you to our donors who sent gifts to NPSA during the past year. As a non-profit organization, we rely on the gifts from our members and other generous donors who support our mission.*

*Unfortunately, the number of donors has declined considerably over the past few years. We do not conduct a formal annual fundraising campaign because of the high overhead costs involved. Instead, we ask anyone who finds value in this newsletter, or anyone who wants to honor a polio survivor or memorialize a departed loved one or friend, to send a tax-deductible gift to the address listed below.*

*Our list of donors is published each year in the Winter issue.*

### Annual Gifts

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*Your gifts to NPSA can be sent at any time during the year to this address:*

Nebraska Polio Survivors Association  
 PO Box 6076  
 Omaha, NE 68106

### Honorarium and Memorial Gifts

#### ***In honor of Marie Galda's 95th birthday:***

Judy and Don Eades, Omaha, NE

#### ***In honor of Ted Roche's 80th Birthday:***

Amy H. Schwartz, Tampa, FL

#### ***In memory of Nancy Baldwin Carter:***

Fred and Eunice Jalass, Omaha, NE

#### ***In memory of Larry Nedrow:***

Wesley and Audrey Bruxvoort, Woodbury, MN

Linda and Thomas Hansen, North Platte, NE

Charlotte Nedrow, Waverly, NE

### **Millie's Column** *(Continued from Page 1)*

12. People will pull their children away from your power chair as if you are hell bent on running over them or you are contagious or a combination of the two. I have a mental picture of this old lady frothing at the mouth, bent over the joystick, laughing maniacally and chasing a poor little kid down to kiss him and then run over him.

I'm making this sound a lot worse than it usually is. Most people are kind and considerate. Children are curious but not always wondering about what you think they are wondering about. I had one little girl stare at me in the grocery store while she was in her mother's shopping cart and I was in my power chair. Finally, I asked her if she wanted to ask me something. "Yes," she replied. "Did you know you have butterflies in your ears?" She was referring to my earrings.

I guess we just must remind ourselves that we are all different. Some people are frightened by the sight of a wheelchair or crutches or canes. Perhaps they worry that it could happen to them. It could. The best thing is to smile and be friendly. If they smile back, that's great. If they don't have a smile, give them one of yours!

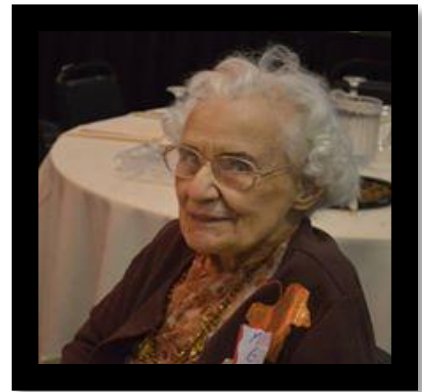
## Marie Galda, NPSA's Oldest Active Member, Dies at the Age of 95-1/2

When the email announcement went out to local NPSA members that Marie Galda had passed away at the age of 95-1/2 on November 18, 2018, the tributes came swiftly. "She was an amazing woman. And she did so much for our polio group," NPSA member Judy Eades wrote. As a founding resident of Bloomfield Independent Living, Marie hosted our monthly meetings, greeting each person as they entered the secured entrance.



*In May 2013, NPSA members gathered around Marie Galda to celebrate her 90th birthday at Bloomfield Independent Living, where she was a founding resident. She didn't like to be fussed over so we kept it a low-key event. But we insisted on getting a group photo and she graciously agreed.*

Gleanings columnist Millie Lill remarked, "She was at the top of her form at our last meeting (on November 4<sup>th</sup>). Actually, sort of flirting with two guys who were very obviously fond of her. I'm so glad that she never had to go to a nursing home or spend a long time in the hospital. Apparently, she died as she lived, matter-of-factly and without fuss. I will miss her so much."



*Marie Galda contracted polio in 1925 at the age of two, more than three decades before the polio vaccine was developed. In this photo from our July 2013 Ice Cream Social, she holds up her "End Polio Now" pin given to NPSA members by the Omaha Downtown Rotary Club.*



*Marie eagerly anticipated and participated in our monthly meetings. In this photo, she joined the rest of the group in doing chair exercises. Marie lived independently, with occasional checks from visiting nurses, until she died.*

## Post-Polio Online Resources

### Atlanta Post-Polio Association:

[www.atlantapostpolio.com](http://www.atlantapostpolio.com)

### NPSA website:

[www.ne-polio.org](http://www.ne-polio.org)

### NPSA Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/NebraskaPolioSurvivorsAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/NebraskaPolioSurvivorsAssociation)

### PA Polio Survivors Network:

[www.papolionetwork.org](http://www.papolionetwork.org)

### Post-polio Health International:

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

**Home Page:** [www.post-polio.org](http://www.post-polio.org)

**Polio Place:** [www.polioplacelife.org](http://www.polioplacelife.org)

**Provider Directory (PDF):** [www.post-polio.org/net/PDIR.pdf](http://www.post-polio.org/net/PDIR.pdf) The 2017 Post-Polio Directory can help you find a list of health care professionals familiar with treating Post-Polio.

## Add to Your Polio Library with Books Offered by Lincoln Member

A member from Lincoln, Nebraska, is clearing off his library shelves and offering several books, mostly memoirs, for free.

Mike Meierhenry was 21 years old when he contracted the polio virus in 1952. He and his wife, Pat, have made it a habit to order books by polio survivors. They want to reduce their library collection and are willing to mail them to anyone who is interested in one or more of them. Here's the list:

- Two books by Arnold Beisser, a psychiatrist: Flying without Wings and Graceful Passage
- Living, Laughing and Loving Life, by Dennis Miller, a retired educator.
- The Millionaire's Secret, by Tom Harken, whose wife taught him to read. He became a millionaire.
- Yes, You Can! by Helynn Hoffa, who was in an iron lung.

Mike is also offering his self-published Amazon book, More Hills to Climb, for the author's price break of \$10. Contact them at this address: 1000 Teton Court, Lincoln, NE 68510. Or email [patmeierhenry@gmail.com](mailto:patmeierhenry@gmail.com)

### ***Mark Your 2019 Calendars!***

NPSA's monthly meetings will be held from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. on the following Sundays in 2019:

March 3, April 7, May 5, **No June Meeting**,  
July 7 (**Ice Cream Social**), August 4, September 8,  
October 6 (**Reunion**), November 3

We meet in the Bloomfield Independent Living 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. Friends and family are welcome to join us. Refreshments are served.

## NPSA Mom Turned to Polio Survivors for Answers After AFM Paralyzed Her Son

Editor's note: This CNN story about Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) was published on December 3, 2018. This is a brief and partial summary of the story. For the complete story and video, go to this CNN page: <https://www.cnn.com/2018/12/03/health/afm-polio-support-group/index.html>

Erin Oliveria's son was one year old when he contracted Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) in 2002. Although her son received excellent medical care in California, she and her husband lacked the emotional support they needed to deal with a child who was now paralyzed from the waist down.

In her last semester of nursing school, Erin was assigned to visit a support group that had meaning for her life. She chose a support group for polio survivors, since her son's disease and polio are similar.

The members of that support group in Thousand Oaks, California, gave Erin the comfort and support she needed.

Erin took her son to a meeting of the polio survivor's group. At first, she wasn't sure these people, who were more than 50 and 60 years older than her son, could help them.

But then Erin watched one of them do something she had seen her son do. The polio survivor picked her leg up by grabbing the skin on the top of her thigh, much like one might pick up a puppy by the scruff of its neck. That's when she knew she was in the right place.

The polio survivors' stories helped Erin and her husband realize that they had to start treating their son like the rest of their children, and not with kid gloves. "That meeting reassured me and gave me such insight," she said. "They all said polio didn't limit their

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success. They had careers. They had families. They made me see that (my son) will do those things, too."

## NPSA Mission Statement

The mission of the 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.

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