

NPSA'S Ted Roche was a Beloved Friend, Mentor and Colleague

By Elaine Allen, Gleanings Editor

Family, friends, former colleagues, and students gathered on Tuesday, March 29th, to memorialize NPSA Board of Trustees President Ted Roche, PhD., who died on March 20th from complications of pneumonia. He was 83.



NPSA Board of Trustees President Ted Roche (center) with his wife, Dr. Victoria Roche, and the late Gene Roth at 2016 Annual Reunion.

Dr. Roche was a long-time member of NPSA and had served as its Foundation President since 2013. He was a faculty member in the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) College of Pharmacy for 48 years before his retirement in 2014.

Many of his colleagues paid tribute to Dr. Roche on UNMC's online newsletter (*source:* https://app1.unmc.edu/PublicAffairs/TodaySite/sites/files/today_full_print.cfm?match=28691).

Faculty member Yazen Alnouti, PhD, said, "Ted was the soul of the College of Pharmacy, and I know that this is not only my view but also the view of everybody who had anything to do with the college, including faculty, staff, professional and graduate students, maintenance workers, environmental services, etc."

College of Pharmacy Dean Keith Olsen echoed Dr. Alnouti: "Ted impacted students, faculty, staff and the UNMC community in countless ways."

One of the biggest accolades came from Tom O'Connor, retired UNMC public relations professional: "He truly made a positive impact on everyone he touched."

Dr. Roche contracted polio in 1952 at age 14, and, as Dr. Victoria Roche wrote in her husband's obituary, "he routinely said that 14 was the ideal age to face polio because young people always felt invincible." "He kept that spirit throughout his life," she said. "He made a million friends."

The April 3rd NPSA meeting began with a remembrance of Dr. Roche as a kind and gentle man, a wise counselor to many polio survivors, and an effective leader of the organization.

Prejudice and Pride

By Millie Malone Lill

Do you need help? Will you ask for it? Probably not. And I think I know why. We polio survivors have traditionally been very independent.

Do we want to look like invalids? Nope, we certainly do not. Part of our recovery was the indoctrination of Work Harder, Try Harder, Never Give Up! I've always believed that what you are taught before you are of school age is what stays with you for the rest of your life. Since many of us were preschool age when we got polio, that is what has stayed with us.

I see myself and my fellow polio survivors as...well...prideful. During the recovery period of our illness, that Never Give Up attitude served us well.

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Millie's column (*continued from p. 1*)

We forced our motor neurons to take on extra work, made them sprout little extra tendrils to reinnervate the muscles that dying neurons had orphaned. It worked!

We then proceeded to overwork those neurons, too, till they also died off, but extra effort made them sprout even more neurons. Each generation of sprouts became weaker and died off faster and soon we were back where we started with a lot of orphaned muscles. We worked hard to get those legs/arms/breathing muscles back to work and by golly they must do it! We are NOT going back to braces, canes, and all of that.

Have you ever seen a video of yourself, taken when you were unaware? If you did, you would see that your limp is quite pronounced; it is not hidden at all. You don't want to be seen as disabled, so you don't use your cane/walker/brace/power chair. People will think you are disabled if you use those devices! Well, guess what? They already see your disability. It's right out there in front of God and everybody.

But what will the neighbors think if you use the devices that you need. There is so much stigma attached to disability. So much prejudice.

Wait. Who is being prejudiced? Think about it. Oh, my goodness! It is we who are prejudiced against ourselves! We are the ones judging ourselves because of our disabilities. The people whom we are trying to please could not care less. Oh sure, there are a few people who will see us in power chairs and subtract a few hundred points

from our IQ, but do we live with those people? Most likely not. Who do we live with 24/7? Ourselves. Our own opinion of ourselves is what we deal with daily.



Let's face it: Our lives are made so much easier if we do what is best for ourselves. Accept the fact that your arm/leg/ whatever has let you down, forgive it and move on. Those appendages have worked hard enough and deserve a break. Use your assistive devices and life will get so much easier.

For example, I have begun asking for help when I'm shopping. If I can't reach something, or if I can't manage to open a heavy door and maneuver my power chair through it at the same time, I ask someone to help me. I ask. I do not demand. And I always smile when asking and thank them when they provide the help I need. Most people actually enjoy being helpful. Makes them feel good and gets me in or out the door. Win/win.

Prejudice is simply wrong. Cut yourself some slack and enjoy the things you can still do.

If you wish to memorialize or honor a polio survivor with a donation to NPSA, you may send a check to the address below:

Nebraska Polio Survivors Association
PO Box 6076
Omaha, NE 68106

We will acknowledge your gift in a future issue of *Gleanings*.

Online Resources

Post-Polio Health International's Post-Polio Directory: This health care provider directory is available as a PDF download or for purchase: <https://post-polio.org/education/publications/>

"Components of a Post-Polio Evaluation" Dr. Frederick Maynard, PHI video posted on YouTube, Aug 11, 2019 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOGWcdqytoQ>

Dr. Bruno's Encyclopedia of Polio and Post-Polio: <https://www.papolionetwork.org/encyclopedia.html>

Rotary Polio Plus Resources: <https://www.endpolio.org/resource-center>

January – March Donor List

The Nebraska Polio Survivors Association gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the following donors, who supported our mission with their gifts from Jan. 1 – Mar. 31, 2022.

Memorial and Honorary Gifts:

In memory of Donnabelle Gerhardt: Diana Worm, Fairbury, NE

In memory of Ted Roche: Patricia Meierhenry, Lincoln, NE

In honor of Mike Meierhenry: Jaxson Kant, Norfolk, NE

Annual Gifts:

Eleanor Devlin, Omaha, NE

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Zoom with NPSA

As a Gleanings subscriber, you are invited to attend our Zoom meetings, no matter where you live. We regularly have people from as far away as Germany, Montreal, New York, and Florida in attendance.

We meet from 2:00 – 4:00 Central (U.S.) time on the following Sunday afternoons. Topics will be announced via email and on our Facebook page at least one week in advance.

2022 Dates	Zoom Meeting Details
Both in person (*) and on Zoom: May 1 st June 5 th July 10 th Aug. 7 th Sept. 11 th Oct. 2 nd Nov. 6 th	Zoom web address: https://us02web.zoom.us/ Meeting ID: 825 6010 0877 Meeting Passcode: 661946 Call-in phone numbers (use the same Meeting ID and passcode): +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston) +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
Zoom only: Dec. 4 th	(*) We will continue to meet in person unless COVID restrictions prevent us from meeting in our regular location.

You are invited to join our Zoom meetings by:

1. Calling one of the phone numbers listed below - OR

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Nebraska.Polio.Survivors@outlook.com

2. By downloading the Zoom app onto your mobile device or computer

For readers in the Omaha area, we meet in person at Bloomfield by Essex, 9804 Nicholas Ave., Omaha, unless COVID restrictions prevent us from meeting.

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.

Nebraska Polio Survivors Association
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