

POLIO NEWS



JUNE 2016

“Having polio is an ongoing learning exercise. You are always adjusting how to use the affected limb as it changes with age. You learn determination NOT to let it prevent you from living to the fullest and living in the day. Pain is a constant, but learning how to cope without meds is the goal.”

**** Nancy Frank, Polio survivor*

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"Rotary's Polio Plus has helped to avert massive suffering. Some 16 million people who otherwise would have been paralyzed by polio can walk now. Around a million and a half children are alive today thanks to Polio Plus. I thank you for such a great contribution."

**** United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Rotary Convention,
Seoul Korea, 2016*



Child with polio relearns how to walk

My sister Sue was diagnosed with Polio in 1952 at age five. Imagine seeing your little sister put in a convalescent home away from family. She was fitted with braces and put into isolation at that young age wondering what had done to be put there and having to learn to walk all over again. She managed to survive the brunt of the early effects of polio, marrying and raising a family. However, she has had many health issues and surgeries over the years. She currently has pains in her hands, back and feet along with her jaws locking and has to take pills and shots for the pain. It is very hard for her to ride in a car for a long distance because of the pain in her back. My sister has said the Doctor hasn't diagnosed her with post-polio YET but my thoughts are she has all the signs. Thank you Rotary for all you have done to eradicate this disease so children like my sister will never have to suffer the effects of Polio.

**** Donna Harding, Locke, NY*

DELTS MAKE POLIO VICTIM VALENTINE – Michigan State University 1951

Valentine's Day took on a special significance to a 15 year old polio victim when 70 members of Delta Tau Delta asked her to be their Valentine. Joyce has been in an iron lung since October. On Valentine's Day she was presented with a large basket of fruit and a request from Delt President Bill Frank to be the Valentine of the 70 fraternity men. Joyce, an enthusiastic football fan, met Sonny Grandelius at the close of last year's football game. Ever since then the Delts have been visiting her. "I only had to go down once – from then I just invited myself back". Last Friday, Joyce left her iron lung for the first time in almost five months. She was out of the lung for seven minutes. Tuesday she was out more than eight minutes. When asked if he had seen any improvement in the girl, Grandelius said, "I have noticed some improvement – especially in the past two weeks."

Post script: Unfortunately, Joyce passed away later that year. Sonny Grandelius was drafted by the New York Giants and coached in the NFL. Bill Frank became a professor at Cornell University.

THE NEW NORM: DEALING WITH THE POST POLIO CURVEBALL

Most people have a game plan for their lives. Mine was changed even before I had a chance to put it to paper. In 1958, three individuals in McLean, NY contracted polio within a few weeks of one another. I was 10 months old and had gone to the Doctor to have my polio immunization, but was suffering from the flu. But the good Doctor said to come back in 2 weeks when I was feeling better and he would administer the shot then. Unfortunately for me, I was one of the three. Within a 48 hour period, I had gone from a toddler who could make my way by holding on to the couch or the coffee table to a child who could only move their eyes. I was taken to the hospital and the NY State Police even crashed a car bringing me a portable iron lung machine. The Doctor said to my parents not to make any long term plans, as my chances of survival were a mere 10%. We proved them wrong! With a loving and devoted mother and father, family, friends, teachers, coaches, school bus drivers and countless others, I was able to live a fairly active and successful life. Fast forward now 57 years...After long term rehabilitation, five surgeries, countless sets of braces and wheelchairs, I find myself going backwards as far as my physical abilities. Before they stressed that you had to use it (muscles) or lose it; now the strategy is conserve to preserve what strength and ability you currently have. Where before it was push it to the limit now it is be sure to take a number of rest periods between any physical activities. The most frustrating effect is the loss of your own independence. I had to give up driving at the end of 2010 after driving over 500,000 miles. That was only the beginning. Then it was the ability to lift anything over two pounds, now it is the ability to lift anything over one pound. Having to have someone assist you with showers and getting dressed, as well as having them cut up your food before you can eat are just some of the other adjustments that have been required as part of the new norm. Thankfully, I have a loving wife who is my caretaker and helps me through the challenges of Post Polio. Two life lessons that I wish to pass on: first, please make sure that you encourage people to get their vaccinations so that they don't have to deal with the effects as outlined above. Second, make great memories while you are young and able, because as you get older and you are unable to get out and about, you will relive them hundreds of time in your mind.

*** *Glenn Munson, Groton NY*



Foundation Minute for Week of June 6

As of May 27, 2016, only sixteen cases of polio have been reported in the world – five in Afghanistan and eleven in Pakistan. The eradication of polio is clearly in site. So why contribute to Polio Plus any further:

According to David Green, Rotary Foundation's Coordinator for Polio Plus:

“Our funds are not only working to interrupt the transmission of the wild poliovirus in the two remaining endemic countries (Pakistan and Afghanistan), but also to keep the rest of the world polio-free. For example, there are up to 60 countries still conducting large-scale immunization campaigns this year, many at risk of the virus returning due to conflict, weak health systems and other emergencies. As we get closer to the end, we also need to increase surveillance, to ensure the virus is truly gone from other parts of the world. Given that only one in 200 cases of polio result in paralysis, we rely on the program's extensive surveillance/laboratory network to tell us where polio does (and does not) exist. Furthermore, until polio is eradicated, the risk of resurgence remains. Failure to eradicate polio could result in global resurgence of the disease, with 200,000 new cases every single year, within ten years, all over the world.”

Let's keep up the fight for a Polio Free World. Thank you for your continued support!

*** submitted by Lana Rouff



Thank you for joining Rotary and, in addition to all you do, taking part in the battle of Polio eradication. Your contributions and continued support will ensure that no child ever faces the devastating and long term effects of Polio. It has been an exciting year in the eradication efforts: Africa will be going on it's second year of being Polio free, we are down to just one strain of the Polio virus and the type 2 component (which causes 90% of all the circulating vaccine derived polio) has been removed from the vaccine. With your continued help we are on target to be Polio free in 2018!

*** Janet Watkins. District 7170 Polio Chair