



## Survivors Speak:

**Peter Heffernan**

The history of polio is still being written as global eradication efforts continue and it becomes possible there may be a polio-free world within the next five years. However, polio survivors still have a story to tell, one they are determined is not lost to history. New Brunswick resident Peter Heffernan is one of many across Canada leading the charge.

Peter contracted paralytic polio in 1943 when he was five-years-old. He remembers exactly where he caught the polio virus – playing at Bayshore Beach that summer. Now known to be a water-borne virus, summers in the 1930s, 40s and 50s were tinged with fear for parents - as many children contracted polio swimming at local beaches and in pools. Initially paralyzed, Peter's right leg was left permanently shorter and smaller than his left.

Despite his disability, Peter has led a full and active life, spending 35 years working for London Life Insurance.



Peter and his wife Lynne  
at their wedding.

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## Complementary and Alternative Medicines

It has long been believed that there are various routes to health and wellness, including complementary or alternative health treatments that can be used in conjunction with traditional medical management of post-polio syndrome (PPS).

You are the leader of your healthy choices. Many types of alternative therapies, such as acupuncture, herbs, botanical medicines, and dietary supplements may prove helpful to managing your PPS symptoms.

Acupuncture is a key aspect of traditional Chinese medicine. It is based on the concept that there is a cycle of energy that passes through the body and controls health. Any kind of ailment or pain is a direct result of

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## Note from the Chair, Elizabeth Lounsbury



In September, 2012 my husband Hubert and I, along with my sister, packed our bags, a small travel scooter and my wheelchair, leaving reality at home as we set off on the adventure of a lifetime.

For seven years all three of us had provided care for my elderly aunt. She passed away in September, 2011. In her will she left us money, with the instruction that we were to use it for a cruise around the world!

We ended up embarking on an Asia-Australia Grand 75 day cruise. The trip left from Seattle, Washington and returned to San Diego, California, taking us to 34 ports of call! This vacation gave me the opportunity to be an ambassador for polio survivors around the world. Of the 800 passengers on our cruise, over 80% were

seniors. Many of them were also polio survivors, hungry for information. Many people with other disabilities were interested in my wheelchair, as they had never seen one like it.

We had the trip of our lives, but I still faced accessibility challenges while on shore. Problems were solved and I proved that you can travel with a disability - you just need to be flexible.

After my aunt died I had no idea how tired and worn out I was, until I returned home from this trip. Then I realized how good you can feel when relaxed and taking care of yourself. I am enjoying life at home as much as when I was on this holiday.

This is a warning to all of you who are, or might become caregivers - listen to your body and take time for yourself!

Elizabeth Lounsbury,



Chair, Post-Polio Canada

## March of Dimes Welcomes Pennzoil as National Sponsor of Rock for Dimes

Pennzoil has donated \$50,000 to March of Dimes to support a number of initiatives, and is now the national presenting sponsor of Rock for Dimes, a corporate battle of the bands held to benefit March of Dimes Canada's programs and services for children and adults with disabilities. Amateur musicians compete in this friendly fundraiser for the title of their city's best corporate band.

"We are so excited to welcome Pennzoil to the March of Dimes family," says Mary Lynne Stewart, Director of Fund Development and Communications.

What began as an event in Toronto, Ontario has since expanded to become March of Dimes' flagship national fundraiser and is now held in 10 sites coast to coast.

Since its inception, Rock for Dimes has raised over \$750,000 to support March of Dimes' programs.

For more information, please visit [www.rockfordimes.ca](http://www.rockfordimes.ca)



## Survivors Speak: continued from page 1 ...

After retiring, Peter wanted to remain busy and began volunteering with March of Dimes' post-polio support group in southern New Brunswick. The group doesn't meet on a regular basis, so the members keep in touch over the phone to provide support. Peter also attends March of Dimes' annual Leadership in Volunteer Education (LIVE Conference) in Toronto, Ontario to take back to his members what he's learned about managing post-polio syndrome. Peter is also a passionate advocate for childhood vaccination.

"It is so important for parents to remain ever-vigilant about vaccinating their children," explains Peter. "We live in such a global world, with people traveling in and out of the country – we're so close to eradication – it would be the greatest shame if there was to be another polio epidemic because children are not vaccinated," he continues.

This past year, Peter worked with March of Dimes

staff to help organize two 'Living with a Disability' conferences in Saint John and Moncton, New Brunswick. The conferences were designed for individuals living with a disability, allied health professionals and service providers. Sessions included discussions on mental health issues, respiratory care, stroke recovery, living with post-polio syndrome, Conductive Education®, advocacy for people with disabilities, emergency preparedness, accessing community services and support and more.

"The Living with a Disability Conferences provided us with a great opportunity to meet many people living with disabilities in New Brunswick – not just fellow polio survivors and to liaise with government officials and March of Dimes staff," says Peter.

In September, 2012, Peter married Lynne McCarthy and they live happily together as active members of their Saint John community.

## Complementary and Alternative Medicines continued from page 1 ...

the disturbance of that energy. It employs the use of sharp and thin needles inserted at key locations on the body. The needles are inserted along longitudinal lines (meridians). It is believed each point controls a specific area of the body. Once the needles are inserted they are rotated back and forth or charged with a small electric current. Western medicine has not completely tapped into "how" acupuncture works but it is believed it alters the way in which the body's nervous system functions.

Herbs, botanical medicines, and dietary supplements are used to treat various external and internal ailments. They can be taken orally or applied topically. They are sold in different forms: herbs and teas, creams, liquids and pills and capsules.

Always talk to your healthcare professional before beginning any type of supplement or alternative medicine. Unfortunately just because they are "natural" does not mean they are safe or free of side effects or allergic reactions. They can be harmful to people taking certain medications, (even aspirin), or with health conditions, i.e. heart disease.

It's important to do your research and inform your doctor of all the different natural treatments you are considering - ask questions before trying any new treatment. Keep in mind that regulations regarding alternative medicine vary from province to province.

Consider:

- Does it interfere with other traditional medications or therapies you are undergoing?
- Is it effective?
- Is the practitioner qualified? What body regulates their practices? Investigate that body.
- What has been the experience of others who have been cared for by that practitioner?
- What are the costs? Not just for the initial visit – but consider the long-term investment – as more often than not alternative therapies are not covered by your provincial insurance plan.

*The Canadian Medical Association has a guide to herbal remedies – well worth checking out. Information to the guide can be found at [www.cmaj.ca](http://www.cmaj.ca). The book, which costs \$39.95 for CMA members and \$49.95 for nonmembers, is available by phoning 888 855-2555.*

## Gadgets, Gizmos and Good Things

### Making Life Easier

According to Health Canada one in three seniors will fall at least once this year, and hip fractures are the most common type of fall injury. Fall prevention needs to be a priority. Some things you can do to help reduce your risk of injury include:

- Reduce the clutter. The more clutter you have, the more likely you are to trip.
  - Ensure your home is well-lit, so you can see obstacles in your way. If you find you are often travelling in dimly-lit areas, you can purchase a cane that has a flashlight built into the handle, or a pilot light which is small enough to fit in a pocket, and slips over your ear for bright, hands-free illumination.
  - Invest in grab bars for the tub or shower, and near the toilet. While you may not need these items, visitors may appreciate the assistance. Towel bars, soap dishes and toilet paper holders are not designed to support a person's weight and should never be used to assist with balance.
  - Put a rubber bath mat in the tub or shower to help prevent slips and falls.
  - Consider using a shower seat if your get tired
- standing, or if you are unsteady on your feet.
  - Remove scatter rugs, or ensure the edges are tacked down and they are non-skid mats.
  - Rise slowly from a seated position. Getting up suddenly can cause dizziness, and lead to falls. If this is difficult, consider getting a lift chair, which gently lifts you into a standing position.
  - Don't rush. Invest in a cordless or mobile phone so it is near you at all times, to avoid rushing to the phone.
  - If getting in and out of a car is difficult, consider using a Handi-bar. This grab bar fits into the striker plate of the car door frame, and provides a stable grab bar. In case of emergency it can also be used to break your window, or cut the seat belt.

There are a whole host of other useful devices and gadgets available to make life easier, but many people don't know about them. If you find yourself struggling with an activity, ask your friends what they do, or visit a home health care store and ask the staff for advice. Your safety is paramount!

*Submitted by Linda Norton OT Reg.(ONT), MScCH, National Education Coordinator, Shoppers Home Health Care*

## The End of Polio Google Hangout

On Friday November 2, 2012, Post-Polio Canada participated in Google+ Hangout online to discuss issues surrounding polio today. A Google+ Hangout enables people from around the world to connect via video conference.

The End of Polio Google Hangout was attended by various organizations and health professionals and was chaired by d'Arcy Lunn, of the Global Poverty Project, a key advocate for The End of Polio Campaign. Audrey King represented March

of Dimes Canada and advocated for polio survivors and those living with post-polio syndrome in Canada. This particular forum created a unique engagement opportunity to discuss on a global scale, both the need for polio eradication and greater awareness of post-polio syndrome.

To watch the full 45-minute discussion, visit the following link: <http://www.theendofpolio.com/home/2012/10/join-us-for-a-hangout-on-air-with-dr-hamid-jafari/>

## Change the Future and Create a Legacy Gift

People have many different ideas when it comes to how they want to spend their money and the subject of planning a will is no different. There are individuals who believe in careful spending – others feel they should enjoy their money.

Those that try to achieve a balance between saving and spending usually are much faster to recognize the benefits of leaving money to a charity through their will. The reason being that their minds are open to the idea that this arrangement has tax advantages which can reduce the probate fees charged to their estate and in so doing, help reduce the burden of loved ones.

A will divides your lifetime savings. Everything from your car, furniture and real estate, to your stocks, Registered Retirement Saving Plans (RRSPs) and life insurance policy, are given a dollar figure and added together with your income in the year of death to calculate the value of your estate. Your will is a statement of who or what is important to you. Through it, you can provide for your loved ones and invest in organizations you want to see supported in the future.

Often people shy away from leaving a gift to an

organization like March of Dimes that has been a meaningful part of their life because they fear that their family will not be adequately provided for or that such a gift would reduce the amount their family receives. This does not have to happen. Naming March of Dimes in your will can entitle you to income tax savings that may in fact increase the amount you will be able to leave your heirs.

Many people also believe that only individuals who can create large gifts through their estate should consider a planned gift. This is far from the truth. As with the vast majority of charitable gifts, it is the sentiment behind the act of giving and not the amount that matters. When a person leaves a gift to March of Dimes, he or she is ensuring that the services provided through our organization to individuals and to the community will continue to thrive well into the future.

If you do not have a will, or if your will has not been updated recently, perhaps it is time to meet with a lawyer. Take the first step; you can contact Margaret Purcell by calling 1-800-263-3463 extension 7338, or emailing [plannedgiving@marchofdimes.ca](mailto:plannedgiving@marchofdimes.ca) for a free copy of My Personal Organizer – a handy estate planning tool.

## Walk 'n' Roll 2013!

2013 will mark the fifth year of this fantastic fundraiser. 2012 saw our most successful Walk 'n' Rolls yet! We had participation from groups across Ontario and for the first time were joined by a group in Calgary, Alberta!

Participants raise pledges from friends, family, neighbours, coworkers, etc., in return for a commitment to walk, or roll at a local mall. Walk 'n' Roll is the perfect opportunity for volunteers or fitness groups to get active, improve their fitness, foster a spirit of community involvement and support a great cause. The event is open to people of all ages and abilities.

Proceeds raised help support stroke and polio survivors, people with an acquired brain injury and other people living with disabilities, as well as providing funding for March of Dimes' critical programs and services. In 2012, Walk 'n' Roll events raised almost \$50,000 for stroke, polio and ABI support groups. We are confident we can do even better in 2013!

Special thanks to this year's sponsors: Scarborough City Cab and Redpath Sugar.

For more information, or to set up your own fundraiser, please contact Gemma Woticky, Education and Health Promoter at 1-800-263-3463 extension 7207 or email [gwoticky@marchofdimes.ca](mailto:gwoticky@marchofdimes.ca)

## IMPORTANT NOTE:

When you are coming to terms with new symptoms, it is important to know that you are not alone. The most important aspect of Post-Polio Canada is our member groups, who organize local meetings and seminars, in addition to providing information, support and encouragement. Please contact the local support group leader nearest you.

## POST-POLIO CANADA SUPPORT GROUPS IN CANADA

### Southern Alberta Post Polio Support Society

7 – 11 St. NE Calgary AB T2E 4Z2

Contact: Esther Hendricks

Tel: 403-813-9583

Fax: 403-281-1939

calgary@sappss.com

www.sappss.com

### Wildrose Polio Support Society

132 Warwick Road NW

Edmonton, AB T5X 4P8

Contact: Glyn Smith

Tel: 780-428-8842

Fax: 780-475-7968

wpss@polioalberta.ca

www.polioalberta.ca

### Lethbridge & Area

2722 – 7A Ave. North

Lethbridge AB T1H 1A4

Contact: Juanita Takahashi

Tel: 403-329-9453

lethbridge@sappss.com

### Saskatchewan Awareness of Post-Polio

2310 Louise Avenue

Saskatoon, SK S7J 2C7

Contact: Ron Johnson

Tel: 306 - 477 - 7002

Fax: 306-373-2665

sapp1@sk.sympatico.ca

www.geocities.com/sapponline

### Polio Regina

825 McDonald St

Regina, SK S4N 2X5

Contact: Carole Tiefenbach

Tel: 306-761-1020

twilf\_ecarole@hotmail.com

http://nonprofits.accesscomm.ca/polio

### Post Polio Network (Manitoba) Inc.

c/o SMD Self-Help Clearing House

Suite 204, 825 Sherbrook Street

Winnipeg, MB R3A 1M5

Contact: Charlene Craig

Tel: 204-975-3037

postpolionetwork@shaw.ca

www.postpolionetwork.ca

### Polio Ontario

Over 15 groups throughout Ontario

Tel: 1-800-480-5903

or 416-425-3463 ext. 7207

polio@marchofdimes.ca

www.marchofdimes.ca/polio

### Association Polio Quebec

3500 Decarie Blvd., Suite 263.

Montreal, QC H4A 3J5

Contact: Mado Shrivell

Toll Free: 877-765-4672

Tel: 514-489-1143

Fax: 514-489-7678

association@polioquebec.org

www.polioquebec.org

### Polio New Brunswick

268 Montreal Ave.

St. John, NB E2M 3K6

Contact: Peter Heffernan

Tel: 506-635-8932

peterhef@nbnet.nb.ca

www.poliocanada.com

### Polio Northern New Brunswick

Contact: Claudia LeBlanc

Tel: 506-548-1919

sunrayfifty@yahoo.com

### Polio PEI

47 Westwood Crescent

Charlottetown, PE C1A 8X4

Contact: Stephen Pate

Tel: 902-566-4518

stephen\_pate@hotmail.com

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE - JOIN POST-POLIO CANADA NOW!

Mr.  Mrs.  Miss  Ms. Are you a:  Polio Survivor  Healthcare Professional  Family/friend  Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your donation to Post-Polio Canada will help us continue to provide education and support.

Here is my tax-receiptable donation to Post-Polio Canada of:  \$250  \$100  \$50  \$25  I prefer to give \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I have left a gift in my will to March of Dimes.

I would like more information on making a gift in my will to March of Dimes.

My cheque is enclosed OR  Please charge my:  VISA  MasterCard  American Express

Card No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date (mm/yy): \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Send form with donation to: **Post-Polio Canada® - March of Dimes Canada, 10 Overlea Blvd., Toronto, ON M4H 1A4**

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www.marchofdimes.ca 1-800-263-3463



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