

Sunday Jan. 20, 2008

Another great meeting yesterday! I tell ya, you guys recharge my batteries every time we get together.

NEW FACES

- Bart Brasten
- Allen & Arlyn Jones

Welcome to you newcomers! Bart and the Joneses both shared their stories with us, and we hope to see them again.

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Tim Oswald and Sandie Hasegawa shared their story in detail with us. When Tim's first stroke happened they were living in northern Virginia, and had some awful experiences with hospitals and care there. They related nightmare experiences like Tim being abandoned in a hallway for four hours while Sandie was accused of vagrancy, waiting for him in the cafeteria. Unbelievable! During this period Sandie learned how to demand the care and service they needed, despite inattentive medical personnel. Fortunately Sandie got a position in the Seattle area, after reading good reports about the medical care here, and they were able to relocate about three years ago. There have been ups and downs in Tim's condition, including a second stroke, seizures, and a severe "TIA" episode, but fortunately Sandie has nursing in her family and she has been an observant life-saver for Tim on several occasions.

What a moving story they told, and a great example of courage and never giving up! Thank you, Tim and Sandie.

LUANA IN BARBADOS

Luana Talltree-Mitchell wasn't at the meeting because she won a trip to Barbados from a local radio station!! We're all green with envy, and want to hear all about it next month.

VETERANS STUDY

Bert DePaoli has brought a study to my attention, from the Veterans Administration. They are looking for veterans for a research study using robotic-assisted exercise. You may be eligible if you had a stroke at least 6 months ago, and the stroke affected the use of your arm or hand. Contact Mike Donahue, Research Coordinator, at 206-277-3460, Michael.Donahue1@eva.gov

UW APHASIA CLINIC THIS SUMMER

Nancy Alarcon's group at the UW Speech and Hearing Clinic is holding their intensive aphasia clinic again this summer. The clinic is designed to help individuals with aphasia develop and strengthen their communication skills. It involves over 20 hours of group and individual treatment during the summer. Cost is \$300, but this may be reduced if you can't afford it. Get your application in as soon as possible! Contact Jill Jones Redmond, 206-685-7798, summersp@u.washington.edu

FOOT DROP STUDY

If your stroke was within the last 12 months and you suffer from foot drop as a result, you can contact Brian Hafner at the UW: 206-228-0112, bhafner@u.washington.edu about a study involving an electronic device from Innovative Neurotronics. Sandy Efseaff from Innovative Neurotronics will be giving us a presentation of their device at the March meeting.

POOLING OUR NUGGETS OF WISDOM

Jerry Boen has proposed that we pool our collective wisdom into a brochure of sorts for caregivers and people recently affected by stroke. When stroke hits an unprepared family it is devastating, frightening, and confusing. We've all been through it now, and there are plenty of things we wish we knew then. The sanitized handouts from the hospitals don't always give you the unvarnished truth or what you really need to know to get through the difficult times, so we have decided to brainstorm up some sort of "user's guide" from the health care consumer's point of view. We can make this available to hospitals and clinics, and publish it on line too. So start thinking about this, and next month we will get started. I'll email a skeleton outline we can start with, and you start thinking about what YOU would tell a new caregiver or stroke survivor.

Next month we have author Jennifer Sokol presenting her her new book *Six Years of Grace: Caregiving Episodes With My Mother*, and we'll get started writing our Guide. Hope to see you all there!

Gerrit