

Sunday Oct. 21, 2007

We had a huge turnout yesterday – I counted 50 people! We were jammed into our room and overflowing into the hall. It looks like the time has come to move to a bigger room. I am working with people at Northwest Hospital about that, and will let you know what develops.

NEW FACES

- Dennis Duva
- Jeffrey Rothenberg
- Peter (?)

Dennis has been to our group before, his stroke was 24 years ago. Nice to see you again, Dennis! Jeffrey is a newcomer who lives just down the hall from Kaki Reeves. Hope you can come again, Jeffrey! We want to hear your story. Peter and his wife got away before I could get their contact information, so I hope they come again too.

FEATURED SPEAKER

Vicki Johnson from Harborview gave us an informative presentation on the causes of young adult stroke and steps we can take to prevent another.

- Hemorrhagic stroke is much more common when the stroke occurs in a young person.
- There are dozens of causes of stroke. Those of us who know our cause saw it on the list I'm sure, but there are also many cases when the cause is not known.
- Risk for stroke increases as the number of risk factors increase. The risk factors we can't control include age, sex, race, and history of prior stroke (which includes all of us). The risk factors we *can* control include:
 - ✓ High blood pressure (hypertension). 120-130/80 is normal after a stroke.
 - ✓ Smoking
 - ✓ High cholesterol (poor diet)
 - ✓ Physical inactivity and obesity
 - ✓ Diabetes
 - ✓ Defects or disease in blood vessels or the heart
 - ✓ Excessive alcohol or drugs (both street stimulants like cocaine and meth, and drugs like decongestants)

Vicki stressed the importance of watching your blood pressure, exercising and eating properly, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. We all have a strike against us already with our previous stroke(s), so we need to be particularly careful.

She also had a table full of handouts including Stroke Smart magazine, a free publication available from the National Stroke Association. See <http://www.stroke.org/site/PageServer?pagename=MAG> or call 1-800-787-6537. And she gave out some cool cups, refrigerator magnets, and pens. :-) Thanks a million for the wealth of information, Vicki!

EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE

I've been made aware of some available medical equipment:

- Single manual hospital bed (free)
- Elevated toilet seat (free)
- Ceiling-to-floor transfer pole (\$50, or best offer)

Contact me if you are interested in any of this.

HOORAY, I CAN EAT!

Gary Ruen has passed his swallowing test, so he can eat solid food now. That is sure nice after weeks of mush and a feeding tube! I ran into Gary and Dorrit at the grocery store buying lobster (the dish he's been craving) just after passing his test. Now we know what to get him for his birthday. :-) Congratulations, Gary, and keep up the hard work!

APHASIA RESEARCH

JoAnne Silkes, a doctoral candidate from the UW, met our group and is looking for aphasics to help with research. I'm attaching her brochure, and that of another doctoral student, for those of you with email. If you are interested, contact JoAnne, Cathy, or me for more details.

SUE'S WEDDING BELLS

Sue Santerelli has gotten married! Congratulations to the happy couple.

JOHN'S INVENTIONS

John Tardiff had some clever inventions for filing your fingernails with only one hand. If you have a vise and small drill, you can use a small disk sander, or you can also put some glue from a glue stick onto the back of an emery board and stick it to a table that way. Very clever! Thanks, John.

TRAVEL MAGAZINE FOR THE DISABLED

Robert Pacht shared his copy of "Emerging Horizons", a travel magazine for the disabled. You can find more about it at <http://emerginghorizons.com/>.

Next month we have Mineko Sterling from Epilepsy Northwest speaking to us about seizures. She has some very interesting new information about partial seizures, and much information about seizures in general and their treatment. Hope you can all make it!

Gerrit