

Sun 22 Nov, 2009

A great meeting yesterday! Lots of business and events covered.

NEW FACES

- Jeff & Lisa Nerat
- Evelyn Greenberg and daughter Joyce
- Wallie Smith Gilchrist and husband Jack

Thank you folks for coming! We hope you can come again, and we would love to hear your stories. Hope you can make the holiday party next month!

STROKE IN THE MEDIA

Megan Oelke from the UW gave us a presentation about "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly", including some clips from the movie, and led a discussion afterward. This is a very moving film and book, written letter by painstaking letter, by a man with "locked-in syndrome" due to a brain stem stroke. We discussed some other examples of stroke in the media, including some pretty unrealistic ones, and agreed that more media coverage of our condition would lead to better public education and understanding. If you have any further thoughts or feedback, contact Megan at moelke@u.washington.edu.

DON RISAN TALK

Don Risan gave us an excellent talk about his experience on a Mexican cruise in 2004. He and his partner Linda had a great time but he had a seizure at one point, which was a frightening experience. Don spoke to us from note cards he wrote, easily and fluently, for about 15 minutes. This is a remarkable achievement and shows how far he has come with his severe aphasia. Congratulations and thank you, Don!

MIKE GORDON'S KITCHEN TIPS

Mike gave us a great demonstration of some kitchen survival tricks he has developed for one-handed cooks. Some of his ideas include using strips of inner tubes for grippy, easy-to-tie straps, a spiked cutting board with nails driven barely through it for holding food while cutting, whacking a screw-on milk jug lid back into place instead of messing around with screwing it back on, using two spoons as tongs, using a knife held on edge with a clothespin for cracking an egg, and pushing a cheese grater sideways against a backsplash instead of trying to use it vertically. I would like to make a video of this great presentation and get it on our website, so all can see. Stay tuned for that. Thank you, Mike!

SHARON LEITHEISER SPEECH

Sharon read a speech she has written entitled "The Courage to Move On". She did a wonderful job, telling us her life story, the tremendous obstacles she has overcome, and the philosophy she has developed. She read beautifully, from a very well written text, for about 20 minutes. Her presentation was very moving and, like Don, a tremendous achievement for someone with her severe aphasia. Our group is a living testimonial to the positive power of determination and hard work. We have so many members who have overcome so much. Thank you, Sharon! We'll be discussing her ideas and sharing our own stories of courage at the January meeting.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Over the past month I have been to Northwest Trek <http://www.nwtrek.org/> (360-832-6117) near Eatonville, and the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center <http://www.padillabay.gov/aboutlocationhours.asp> (360-428-1558) a few miles west of Burlington. These are both great trips for the disabled. Northwest Trek is \$15.50, with discounts for Pierce county residents, military, seniors, and kids. I did not see a specific handicapped discount. Your admission includes a great tram tour of the wildlife, a walking tour of the animal habitats, entrance to the Cheney Family Discovery Center and Baker Research Cabin, access to the nature trails, animal presentations and keeper talks. Padilla Bay is free, and includes a very interesting interpretive center, observation deck, easy walking trails, and birdwatching. Both are highly recommended!

DON AND BILLIE Mc DANIEL

Some of you may remember these folks, who were with the group for a while several months ago. They moved back to Hawaii. Well, Don is back in Seattle now in assisted living while Billie has remained in Hawaii to look after their property there. This is a very difficult time for them, especially for Billie. She would love to hear from other wives dealing with the loss of their husbands' personalities due to stroke. Please give her a call if you can help, or just to talk: 808-443-7414. Also, Don's number is 206-552-4148. Give him a call too, if you feel like chatting, or pay him a visit. His address is 9001 Lake City Way NE #239C.

SKIING OPPORTUNITY

Outdoors For All <http://www.outdoorsforall.org/> (206-838-6030) is offering a free Friday afternoon ski trip for our group, if we can get at least three or so interested people. This will be at Snoqualmie pass. They offer skiing for all disability levels, with equipment and lessons. Let me know if you're interested! This is a great group, and several of our members have been skiing with them.

ROOMMATE WANTED

Lea Black, a fellow stroke survivor living in West Seattle, is looking for a roommate. She is offering room and board in exchange for housekeeping and assistance with errands. Must drive, non-smoker preferred, over 40, male or female. Contact Lea at 206-913-2955 or leaeblack@yahoo.com .

MY BIG NEWS

I'm getting married! My girlfriend of two years, Pat, is now my fiance. Some of you may remember her from a meeting which she attended some time ago, and a Lake Union sailing cruise when she came with me. I popped the question last Friday night, and thankfully she has accepted. We'll be married in the spring, probably late April or May.

NEW GROUP MOTTO?

I ran across this the other day and thought we might adopt it for our group motto: "When you stumble, make it part of the dance". How do you like it? Any other ideas?

Next month is the legendary Young Adult Stroke Survivors Holiday Potluck Party and Cutthroat Gift Exchange! We should have a big turnout and a great time. I will let you know about time and room (along with the extremely complicated rules for the Gift Exchange) in the next meeting announcement. Meanwhile, stay warm in our wintry weather, and have a great Thanksgiving!

Gerrit gerrit@exality.com 206-361-2696