

From Henry's Desk by Henry Holland

Three Gone Running

"Linda Wyand went to run with the Lord on Saturday, April 12, 2008." This is how Linda's obituary began when it appeared in the Richmond Times Dispatch a month ago. Linda had been a long time member of our Post-Polio support group. At the age of 10 in 1946, Linda contracted paralytic polio. As so many of that time period she regained some strength, but still bore the mark of polio for the rest of her life. She did what people of our generation often did. She finished high school and junior college, married, had four children and raised them and worked for twenty-five years in the circulation department of Richmond Newspapers. In her latter years she adapted to a van and a wheelchair. She had rallied from near death a few years ago when congestive heart failure slowed her down even more. The family had a photo of Linda on her new bicycle shortly before she had polio. Now Linda is not only running but riding her bike with other polio survivors who have gone before.

On January 29, 2008, Dr. William M. Lordi began practicing psychiatry in the Kingdom of God. Bill died in his sleep on January 29, 2008. Bill had polio as a 31 year old adult in 1954. He did not have much residual effect except for a weakness and limp in his right leg. He had many falls after polio and his wife Beverly stated that "Bill fell well." Bill graduated from the State University of New York College of Medicine in Brooklyn, NY in 1949. He went on to achieve specialty training in general psychiatry and child psychiatry. Bill had a full and successful career. He was a leader in opening a psychiatric children and adolescent hospital in Richmond. Bill and his wife Beverly were both polio survivors and active members of our support group. Bill was always cheerful and uplifting. During the last year he had gotten a power wheelchair. Fortunately his wheelchair had a back up warning horn. This was a blessing because the horn gave some warning to those nearby that Bill was moving and was close by.

Woodrow "Woody" Morris is cutting hair in the Kingdom of Heaven. Woody had been an active member of our support group for many years. He had polio when he was five years old and was initially in a coma. He spent some time in an iron lung and gradually improved with the aid of a brace. He eventually got rid of the brace. With the onset of PPS, he began using a brace again. Woody was a barber as was his father in the suburban village of Sandston, VA. Woody died on August 7, 2007 from cancer. Woody loved our group's brown bag auctions. These auctions were to raise a little money for our social committee. On almost every item auctioned Woody would make the opening bid and often made repeated bids until he often won. If the item was something that was not particularly interesting to Woody, he would simply give it away to another member of the group. Recently our group had the first of what will be many Woody Morris Memorial Auctions.

Linda, Bill and Woody are probably running together in the hereafter. All three had fulfilling lives despite polio and all three were active and positive members of our Post-Polio support group. Their love of life and exemplary lives will be long remembered. What can one say at

such a disheartening time? The words of the Apostle Paul to his younger friend Timothy say it well.

“As for me the hour has come for me to be sacrificed; the time is near for me to leave this life. I have done my best in the race. I have run the full distance and I have kept the faith. And now there is waiting for me the victory prize of being put right with God, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that Day – and not only to me, but to all those who wait with love for him to appear.” (II Timothy 4: 6 – 8)