

May 5, 2009

Dear Friend of Health Hope Network:

It was early in the afternoon on February 16, 2001. Alita Naylor was talking with her husband on the phone about birthday plans for their oldest son, Nathan.

Alita remembers the phone conversation, but the next six days are a mystery. Sometime during the two hours following that call, Alita had a stroke. After six days in the Neuro-ICU, Alita was transferred to a regular hospital room for four days, then on to a rehabilitation hospital.

“When I arrived at the rehabilitation hospital, I could not speak and I could not understand what people were saying. The doctors said I had severe global aphasia. I also had complete right-side paralysis. I could not count from one to ten. I did not know the days of the week. I could not recite the alphabet. I could not read. I had to learn all of these basic things again. I felt like my kindergartner was more advanced than me. And the only time I wasn’t in a wheelchair is when I was at a physical therapy session or sleeping.

“After seven weeks in in-patient care, I came home with a wheelchair. I say ‘with’ not ‘in’ because I was determined not to use it!”

“I was an active mom. I had to be, because we had three active sons. When I wasn’t driving our sons to a sporting event, I was volunteering at their school library, doing laundry, or trying to keep our house clean.”

Alita attends Health Hope Network’s weekly Stroke Survivor Connection meetings as well as the True Life After Stroke meetings, a monthly program created by Health Hope Network for younger, more active stroke survivors who want to rejoin the workforce or volunteer regularly.

“I enjoy meeting other stroke survivors, sharing our stories, learning how to make the most of our lives, and thrive in spite of our disabilities. What is amazing about the True Life After Stroke meetings is the opportunity it has created for me to give back to the community.



“I have been trained as a peer visitor to emotionally support other stroke survivors prior to their discharge from inpatient care. Also, our group is presently developing a resource guide for other stroke survivors and their families.”

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Mark comments, "My wife's stroke was a life-changing event for our entire family. The recovery and rehabilitation process has been a very long, arduous, and emotional journey. From the minute she gets up, to the minute she goes to bed, Alita fights to do simple tasks others might take for granted; like turning a door knob or flipping a light switch. We are on this journey for the rest of our lives. Stroke Survivor Connection meetings provide Alita with physical rehabilitation, enable valuable information exchange, and foster mutual encouragement and community building with other stroke survivors and caregivers."

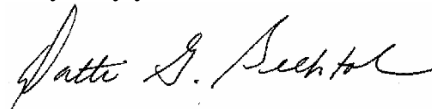
Founded in 1991 as Visiting Nurse Foundation, Health Hope Network is a 501(c)(3) organization that receives no insurance reimbursement for the services provided by its one-of-kind Stroke Survivor Connection program. The program addresses the four components of rehabilitation for the stroke survivor: physical exercise, emotional support, cognitive development, and social interaction. The Stroke Survivor Connection program is offered for FREE for three hours once a week, in 25 locations throughout Western Pennsylvania.

Please help Health Hope Network with a tax-deductible contribution so we may continue this free service that has helped Alita and many other stroke survivors achieve so much success towards recovery. We've enclosed a self-addressed envelope (a stamp is needed). Please fill out and return the form at the bottom of this page with your donation, or you can visit our website and donate securely online. Included is a SSC Heart Card that you may fill out with your name or the name of a loved one you would like to honor or remember with your donation. Cards will be displayed at Health Hope Network events throughout the month of May, Stroke Awareness Month.

If you or someone you know has suffered a stroke, please contact our office at 412-904-3036 or visit us on our Website at www.healthhopenetwork.org.

Thank you for your consideration. Your gift can truly make a difference.

Very truly yours,



Dotti G. Bechtol
Executive Director