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Next Picnic:

**Sunday
November
12th
12:00pm**

At The Keyser's

Hydro Chat



From The Editor

Happy Fall Yall! It finally feels like a little bit of cool weather will be here before you know. It was exactly one year ago that I decided to publish this little informal newsletter for our local group. I do hope you have enjoyed receiving it and hope you will help me by contributing articles for upcoming editions.

We had a fantastic turnout and success for our 2nd Annual Team Florida Walkathon at Largo Central Park. We had a group of 58 individuals representing 12 people with Hydrocephalus. The youngest was 11 months old, and the oldest was 68 years old. They had a combined staggering number of 125 surgeries. Money has been continuously rolling in, and our new grand total as of today is: \$8,529.00, 107% of our goal!

I could not have done it without all of you. Despite the thunderstorm in the middle of it all, our wonderful cooks did an outstanding job of getting the food on the table. I hope that everyone can make it to our next picnic gathering at our house on Sunday, November 12th at 12:00pm. We hope to see all of you there.

~Paula Keyser
Team Florida Captain

Do You Have
Something To Say?
If You Would Like To
Contribute To Our
Upcoming 'New Year'
Newsletter,
Please Email Articles
and Comments To:
hydrosupport@gmail.com

Our Friend's Special Days

Chris R.	October 1st
Ka'Rhon D.	October 4th
Spencer T.	October 15th
Pat M.	October 19th
Scott B.	October 28th
Nicole C.	October 29th
Chris S.	November 5th
Janet N.	November 5th
Donald W.	November 10th
Alexandra C.	November 15th
Kendall H.	November 20th
Christopher R.	November 23rd
Mark K.	November 29th
Kathy G.	December 14th
Ronnie C.	December 17th
Tara L.	December 27th
Kenneth D.	December 28th
Cameron S.	December 29th



“From a Daughter’s Eyes”

Written by Janet Noah

Just what are the “golden years”? Most of us dream of retiring to a warm climate with family and friends nearby. We wish to be healthy and financially secure. My dad was living those golden years until five years ago when we began to see my seventy-nine year old father’s quality of life gradually decline. What seemed like symptoms of aging, turned out to be something very treatable. Initially, dad grew less engaged in conversation and in the hobbies he used to enjoy. He became more interested in sitting in front of the television watching the 24-hour news stations. Dad, always a good communicator, began listening rather than participating in a conversation. His walk became less steady as he shuffled his feet slowly. Getting in and out of the car was becoming more challenging everyday. Gradually his memory faded and he began to forget upcoming events and appointments. It got to the point he could no longer remember his address. Concerned he was experiencing Alzheimer’s or dementia, my mother made an appointment at a memory clinic within a local hospital. While the conclusion was not the stages of either disease, no one could give an exact diagnosis. Was this merely the aging process, we wondered?

During this five-year period, dad progressively worsened. In addition, his mood became depressed and sullen. Numerous visits to neurologists and other specialists included MRI tests, CAT scan, blood work, and the such, yet did not provide a definitive diagnosis. Several practitioners merely prescribed a cane and a handicapped-parking permit; then sent him on his way. We were not ready to settle for a conclusion of “old age”. As his daughter, it was disheartening to see dad’s quality of life slipping. In my mind, dad would always be strong and age gracefully. Yet, the reality wasn’t nearly as picturesque.

It wasn’t until a family friend and retired physician suggested the symptoms might be NPH that we decided it was time to make an appointment with a neurologist at Mayo Clinic-Jacksonville whose specialty is NPH. The x-rays from the CAT scan and MRI were reviewed. Additional tests were performed, and the conclusion was NPH. The decision to surgically insert a shunt in his brain to drain the excessive fluid was difficult upon hearing the complications that can arise. A spinal tap to remove several tablespoons of spinal fluid to determine whether dad was a good candidate *(continued on next page)*



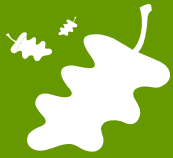
(continued from page 2) for a shunt made the decision much easier after seeing the positive short-term results. With the simple removal of spinal fluid, dad's gait and steadiness on his feet improved considerably for the subsequent 24 hours. Several weeks later, a neurosurgeon at Mayo Clinic-Jacksonville, successfully performed the surgery. Weeks of rehabilitation following the shunt implant dramatically improved dad's stability. He easily slides in and out of the car. He no longer uses a cane in his home and relies on it only as a precaution when walking elsewhere. With memory practice tools and regular reminders, his memory is improving. Dad is happier, stronger and more engaged in life. The "golden years" that seemed to be tarnishing are now shining and worth their weight!

Janet Noah is one of our newest additions to our local support group. We really appreciate her contribution to our newsletter to help others understand this very difficult condition to diagnose.

Michael's Trip to China in July!



Michael Riccio, age 16, hydrocephalus/aqueductal stenosis, traveled to China in July 2006 as a People to People Student Ambassador. Mike spent 3 weeks visiting Beijing, Shanghai, Xian, and Hong Kong with a delegation of 39 high school aged students from Alabama and NY/NJ. Chris, Mike's mom, located neurosurgeons and medical centers in China equipped to reprogram Mike's Codman programmable valve through support of Codman. Mike was given Codman representative's cell and pager numbers throughout China for emergency use. Although there were no emergencies, they had an action plan in place and less worry. The Riccio Family are members of TEAM Florida, Largo and TEAM Liberty NJ/NY. Way to go Michael!



Good News

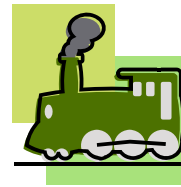
Quita Fuller, one of our group moms has this great news: She is now the Associate VP for Amerigroup and commutes each week to Virginia Beach and comes home to Florida on the weekends. She is enjoying the change, though it is a juggling act! Anna was with her a couple of weeks ago visiting her mom. They have a fabulous house at the beach which is wonderful to enjoy while they are there. She said that they may relocate there eventually, but not for now. Congratulations Quita!

Also, Quita suggests folks who might be interested in alternative treatment or diagnostic avenues to check out the following web: www.sierraintegrative.com

They have clinics in Reno and in Chicago and do a fabulous job of homeopathic, natural approach toward issues - they did a full diagnostic on Anna and found extensive food allergies to eggs, dairy, wheat and gluten. So life has been interesting for Quita in trying to find and creating a diet for Anna!

SPECIAL REQUEST

If you are unfortunate and have to spend time at All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg, please let Ms. Jen know (aka Nurse BandiAid) She is ready and willing to visit you and give you a big hug! (she works at the hospital)...



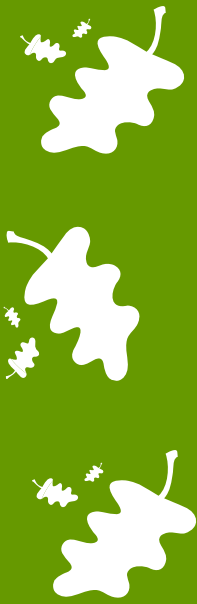
They're Back!

Dottie and Al Andrews returned to Bradenton via Amtrak from New Hampshire in September; three days after Dottie's 60th High School Reunion...Wow! They also welcomed in their second great-granddaughter just before they left. Her name is Lillian. Dottie candidly told me she calls her 'Miss Lilly' and has written her a letter to be opened on her 12th birthday letting her know about her grandmother's dislike to her name. Apparently it reminds Dottie of a 'horrible' little girl she knew in the 6th grade!

If you have not yet had the privilege of meeting this spunky couple from Bradenton, I hope you will get the chance at our picnic. They will truly keep you on your toes! Dottie is on a crusade to spread the word about NPH. She has written to Guidepost and Oprah and is hoping to get some response from them soon. Way to go Dottie!

Healing Thoughts

One of our dear friends, Amanda just endured her 31st shunt revision a few weeks ago. We're thinking of you, Amanda, and hope you feel much better soon!



We Did It Again!



Thank you to everyone who came to our
2ne Annual **TEAM FLORIDA** walkathon

Special Thanks to:

- Pete & Shorty's Tavern (our sponsor for the food, shirts and goodies!) Thank you Marsha & Ed!
- Joe, Al, Harry & Armando for cooking the awesome food (in the rain!)
- Nurse Bandi Aid (for the face painting and fun!)
- My Sister Samantha (for taking all those wonderful photos)
- Jean Marie Wanser (for bringing all the extra prizes to share)
- Terry Martself (for giving us the cameras for our raffle)
- The Riccio & The Card Families for Helping With Last Minute Cleanup
- The Conde-Ramirez Family (for traveling 240 miles)

\$8,529.00 Great Job TEAM!