

## A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS – 4

JUNE – AUGUST, 2006

This is the fourth of my “Penny” essays using the same diary format, in which I write about whatever is on my mind and chronicle the progression of my disease.

**Saturday, June 10, 2006.** I have had my feeding tube for a year already! This way of eating seems perfectly normal to me now. I get 990 milliliters of a beige liquid that is pumped into my stomach overnight at a rate that takes ten to eleven hours to accomplish. One of my aides asked me recently what the food tastes like. “Sometimes custard and sometimes fish,” I typed. “How do you know?” she asked. I explained that I taste it when I burp, especially if there is some reflux. My taste buds have not been affected at all by PLS. The only food I take by mouth is a little pudding into which vitamin E oil has been stirred. That’s a twice-a-day treat.

You know if you have read any other Penny essays that I am waiting for my disabilities to show up in my dreams. Last week was the first time a feeding tube appeared. The circumstances were so strange, though. According to the clothing I was wearing, our youngest son Paul’s age, and Leo’s work situation and appearance it was about 1974. Leo at work and I in our house on Mead Street, Yorktown Heights each received notice that our government was sending us on a secret mission to Poland. We had exactly one hour to get ready for our flight. Leo hurried home from work and we both hastily packed small suitcases. Meanwhile I was full of questions. I wondered how this happened. Was it because Leo had been in the army years ago? Had arrangements been made for child care while we would be gone? And what would the government do about my tube feedings? I realized that my situation was known, so I didn’t need to worry about it. What a story! Obviously the dream producing mechanism in my brain has not been affected by PLS either!

This evening I turned on our public TV station to watch a Best of Victor Borge show. Reluctantly I soon turned it off because it was much too funny for me. I cannot sustain that level of laughter anymore - and I miss it.

**Tuesday, June 13, 2006.** While I was still in bed yesterday, a woman came in and put a plastic bracelet on my arm. I wasn’t asked if I wanted the bracelet; in fact, I had the distinct feeling that my opinion wouldn’t matter in the least. Inserted in the plastic is a yellow strip of paper on which is written: 413 Kwiatkowski, Verna Sky View. I have mixed emotions about wearing this bracelet. I guess more than anything else, it makes me realize that I am living in a health care facility, not a luxury apartment complex with plenty of servants at my beck and call. I can understand the need for wearing identification, of course. And I will deal with my resistance until it is gone. I can’t waste emotional energy on something as small as this.

**Saturday, June 17, 2006.** Two days ago Leo and I celebrated the 49th anniversary of our wedding day. He brought me a lovely wrist corsage which I wore both Thursday and Friday. Staff members at Sky View marveled at the thought of being married that long. “It just isn’t done these days. Wow!” they said. I thought that was sad. This was our first anniversary at two different addresses. That fact was bittersweet for me at times during the day. Now we’ve moved into the 50th year of our marriage, our love for each other intact despite our circumstances. Praise God!

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Last night I had another dream in which my disability showed up, but with a twist. I was walking through a house that belonged to a musical family in which seven children had grown up. With me was a plumber who was to make extensive renovations in the house. Every room we entered

was filled with musical instruments, some of them antique: especially pianos, organs, and accordions. In one room I was tempted to pick up an accordion, but I didn't. Instead I showed him my arms, hands and fingers and said, "I used to play both the accordion and the piano, but I can't anymore." So there I was -- walking and talking, but with disabled arms and hands! (By the way, what I said to the plumber is true.)

**Tuesday, June 20, 2006.** For many years one of my favorite times of the day has been the time between waking up and getting out of bed. I call this my "mulching time." Two components predominate: becoming completely awake (I seldom wake up refreshed and often doze while mulching) and thinking, both creatively and practically (planning my day). In the "olden days" I would be happy with an hour of mulching.

Here at Sky View I get PLENTY of mulching time! About 8:00 I begin to awaken as people start coming into my room: housekeeping staff to sweep and mop my floors, empty waste cans and do a little dusting; someone from laundry to put clean clothes into my closet and drawers; and a physical therapist to work on my arms and legs. About 8:45 a nurse comes to disconnect my feeding apparatus and give me my medicine through the tube. From then until an aide comes to get me up, I am free to continue mulching uninterrupted. Often I work on my essays while in bed, both on new material and on editing. When I get to my computer, I feel like I am typing from a script, only the script is in my mind.

Because they need to use a lift to get me up and transported to the toilet and then to my chair, I take extra time. Most aides, therefore, put me last on their list of people to get up. Usually it's about 11:00 when an aide begins my morning preparations. It's become so routine to get up late that I call any time between being seated in my chair and 12 noon "found time." This term, too, is from the "olden days," and refers to any unexpected block of free time, as when an appointment is canceled or a snow storm keeps us housebound for a few days. I loved found time then and I do now.

Today my aide came at 10:00, worked efficiently, and got me into my chair before 11:00. More than hour of found time! I did an errand and then began typing this entry. It is now 1:00. That will give you some idea of the speed with which I type. One final thought: the attitudes developed over your earlier years come with you into old age. Much as I enjoyed my found time today, I would also have enjoyed extra mulching time had my aide come later. "This is the day that the Lord has made; I will rejoice and be glad in it." It is now 1:30. Time to give my hands a break.

**Monday, June 26, 2006.** Alice, the woman who lived directly across the hall from me here at Sky View, died this morning, quickly and unexpectedly - that is, she had not been sick. Being so close to her room, I got to see how the staff works in this kind of crisis, and I was impressed. As she was giving me my morning meds, the nurse said to me, "Time for me to get a new profession. I get too attached to people." She hoped Alice's daughter would get here "in time"; she did. Still in my bed, I prayed for all involved.

Alice seldom left her room. When she was facing the door in her wheelchair, we would smile at each other as I drove by. For six months I had been observing Alice's daughter, who came to see her mother every few days. The visits were not long but they were loving. Both our doors were open and the daughter spoke clearly in a loud voice. That's how I got to "know" her, although we never met.

After I was seated in my chair this morning I asked my aide if Alice had, in fact, died and she said yes. Then she added: "Her daughter is here. Would you like to speak with her?" (Comforting the bereaved was something I would readily do in my pre-PLS days.) As I shook my head no, a sentence popped into my head that I felt I had to get to her. I went to the computer, typed the

sentence, printed it out, drove across the hall and handed Alice's daughter a paper that said, "You were good to your mom. Verna 413" She was both grateful and gracious. We had a wonderful visit in the next few minutes, ending up with her in my room. I told her I had been watching and listening to her. How I value that contact!

Three groups of people mingle in places such as this: residents, staff and visitors - and each watches the other. When my visitors step off the elevator they are facing the nurse's station where someone surely notices their arrival. Then they walk through the elevator lobby where residents are sitting and socializing. Those who come regularly get to know some of these residents and vice versa. Occasionally aides or nurses come into my room during a visit and more watching takes place. My company likes my surroundings and the care they see me receive. Likewise people here have high praise for my family and friends, all well deserved, all honoring to God. And today I left my room to connect with someone I had been watching and to let her see me. Life is interesting, isn't it?

**Saturday, July 8, 2006.** I got to watch fireworks this week and learned something in the process. I have always enjoyed fireworks displays; they fit right in with my love of anything multicolor, like flower beds and patchwork quilts. When we were touring Drum Hill prior to moving in, our guide Priscilla took us to the Penthouse which had a door leading to a porch on the roof. "This is the best vantage point in the area for watching fireworks on the fourth of July," she said. From then on I could hardly wait for the holiday to arrive. George stood by me as I watched the display two years ago. It was the most incredible fireworks show I had ever seen! There were some unusual colors and patterns mixed in with the standard ones: such variety! The explosions filled the sky, as the fireworks were being shot from a point on the Hudson River just a few blocks away. My eyes certainly had a feast that night!

Then came unexpected good news: the city of Peekskill would be celebrating for several days in August and on one of the evenings there would be fireworks! I was back up in the Penthouse that night and found this display to be equally as spectacular as the one in July, perhaps more so. The next year again I saw two wonderful shows. I noticed that my enthusiasm was waning by the time the fourth show came around. I felt as if my mind had not finished digesting all the beauty that my eyes had taken in at the three previous feasts. After the last display my soul was really sated!

This year my family and I both asked the staff if fireworks could be seen from Sky View. We were assured that they could be, especially from my room! To my surprise, from my bed I saw a good (though short) display on Monday, July 3. On Tuesday, after dark, my aide told me to go to the Day Room to watch fireworks. From there I could look north and even see across the river; several towns were providing shows in those directions. Then from my room I watched more from river towns to the south of us. All of them were miles away from us, thus appearing smaller to me than those from the previous two years.

And yet my soul was satisfied. In fact, I think I would have been satisfied even if I had seen none this year. I like when I can say "enough" to things I formerly craved. I like being content.

**Monday, July 10, 2006.** Last night I had my first dream in which I could not talk, 20 months after my speech was - for all practical purposes - gone. I was also in diapers, the first time that component of my condition has appeared in a dream. I am not going to recount the story because it was complex and contained some parts I would rather forget. In this one I was walking normally and was still able to write in longhand! My curiosity about my subconscious mind recognizing my illness enough to reproduce it in dreams has now been satisfied.

About my voice: I still have the ability to produce sounds. If someone is standing in the hallway near my open door, I can make enough vocal noise from my bed that she would come in and see

what I wanted. I have done this a few times when I could not reach my call bell. The only word I can say with clarity is “no.” I find this curious, as that is one of the first words a toddler learns!

**Wednesday, July 12, 2006.** I am amazed at the number of aides and nurses that work at Sky View. There are four floors, with about forty residents on each. When our floor is fully staffed, we have four aides on each of the three shifts: day (7-3), evening (3-11) and night (11-7). Of course the aides do not work 7 days a week and there are always vacations, illnesses and emergencies to contend with. What a huge task it must be to try to keep each shift fully staffed every day! Sometimes it can't be done; the aides must do extra duty on those days.

The nurses seem to work on a different schedule, maybe 12 hour shifts. During the day our floor has a head nurse and two assistant head nurses, usually LPN's. There is also a nursing supervisor who has an office on a different floor. At night we do not have a head nurse, but everything else (barring emergency) is the same. I cannot imagine how many nurses are on the regular staff or on call to make sure we get the medical care we need.

Three times in less than two days someone I'd never seen before came into my room to help me. The reason I wrote all of the above is to tell you a story of the first two of the three. This story also involves the familiar Romans 8:28 - “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” This time I want to emphasize that we who believe are serving HIS purpose, and if, in the course of carrying out God's purpose we must suffer discomfort, then so be it.

During the night shift, in the early hours of yesterday morning, an aide who was new to me came to my bedside in the course of doing routine diaper changes. As she took care of me, the aide began to quote Scripture and talk about God. I realized immediately that she had heard about me; surely she would not have done that otherwise. I responded the best I could, really enjoying this special surprise.

After she left, I thought of the essays I had on my bookcase to be handed out. I knew there was one copy of “My Lord and My God” among them. “I'll put it on my table,” I thought, “and if she comes back tonight, I'll give it to her.” In the afternoon I did put the essay on the table. Once or twice I considered removing it but didn't, because the impulse to put it there had been so strong.

Last night the nurse told me she couldn't find any water flush bags for my feeding that night. “I'll look some more,” she said, “and I'll call the supervisor, but if we can't find any, I'll have to use the other machine.” I was disturbed. How could they have let the supply run out again? I much prefer the two bag system with its automatic hourly flush to the one bag system where a nurse must flush my tube several times a night. While they looked, my aide put me to bed. The search proved futile. Soon I was connected to the other machine, the lights were turned out and I settled in to watch some TV before falling asleep.

Just then the nurse supervisor, one I had never seen before, entered my room to check on my feeding. From the light of the TV set she noticed the essay on the table and read the title aloud. “Did you write this?” she asked. I nodded. “Do you have extra copies?” Again I nodded. “May I have this one?” I indicated that she may. She took a cursory glance and said, “I'll take this to my Bible study class tomorrow. They'll love it.” Then she checked my tube and left.

About five minutes later she was back. “You mention an essay called ‘No Other Gods,’” she said. “Do you have a copy of that one?” I pointed to my file drawer. The supervisor turned on the light, opened the file and soon ascertained that my essays were in alphabetical order. But instead of going to N she flipped through the drawer from the front, commenting on some of the titles and mentioning her Bible study class as she went. She ended up taking a handful of essays, including one for a specific woman that she was sure would be helped by it. How my heart rejoiced!

The new aide I mentioned did not come back last night. I did the right thing by putting the essay on the table, but God had a different person in mind to pick it up. You know the circumstances that brought her to my room. Today we found out that there were water flush bottles on hand last night; we just didn't know where they were! Was it worth the mild discomfort of using the other pump for one night in exchange for the privilege of seeing God at work advancing his Kingdom? Of course it was! I just hope I will remember this the next time my routine is disrupted.

**Sunday, July 16, 2006.** What a wonderful surprise I had last night! At 9:00, as I was in my room waiting for my aide, I heard some noises outside that reminded me of fireworks. I drove over to the window and looked in the direction of the sound. Soon my eyes told me that I was right: somewhere nearby people were celebrating with a fireworks show. These explosions were large and beautiful, like the ones I had seen from Drum Hill. When my aide arrived I motioned her to the window. She, in turn, summoned another aide and the three of us watched the view from my room until the show ended about 20 minutes later. I was glad to have people around me who also appreciated the display. Beauty is one commodity that seems to multiply when it is shared. I still stand by what I said previously about fireworks. Last night's event was like dessert: it wasn't necessary, but I enjoyed it.

**Monday, July 24, 2006.** My son David and his wife Dana, from North Carolina, are here visiting for a few days. We three had an extensive conversation last night that I enjoyed so much. Of course I "talked" by typing on my Lightwriter. This makes me a slow speaker, especially since I do most of my typing with my left hand only. To save me keystrokes, people sometimes try to guess my words and sentences before they are finished. I usually don't mind that, but I do have one request: Please say the word you think I am typing or the words that you guess will complete my sentence. If you are correct, I will usually nod and stop typing. If you just say "Uh-huh", I don't know if you are right or not, and will probably keep typing.

I have never sat on the other side of someone's Lightwriter. It must take a tremendous amount of patience and concentration to talk with a person who uses such a device. My thanks goes to all who "listen" to me. (I put the word "listen" in quotes because I seldom activate the voice mechanism; people usually read my words as they appear on the small screen, letter by letter.)

**Saturday, July 29, 2006.** Early this week I finished my essay "Prepare the Way," based on the life of John the Baptist. Something so unusual happened on the last day of my work that I can't stop thinking about it. To explain, I will have to tell you how I currently do my typing.

I position my right hand so that my third and fourth fingers rest over the shift key. This is partly so my hand and arm can prop me fairly upright in my chair; otherwise I lean to the right. I type with my left hand. I watch the keyboard as I write, checking the screen frequently to make sure everything is working as it should. Approximately every sentence or line I correct my typos. Chief among these are missing letters, spaces or capitalizations because I did not hit the keys or shift bar properly, or multiple letters, spaces or a string of capital letters because I did not release the keys or bar in time. I am surprised when I look up and find no errors!

The last part of "Prepare the Way" that I wrote was the section on John the Baptist and Elijah. The final thought had to do with Jesus saying that of those born of women none was greater than John the Baptist. I don't think Jesus was ranking his prophets, putting John at the top. Here is how I intended to write my concluding sentence: "I believe Jesus was talking about the special assignment John had of being the prophet who was privileged to point directly at Jesus and say, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'" When I looked at the screen I found I had written: "....privileged to point directly at JESUS and say, 'Behold, the Lamb of God....'" I was stunned! Obviously I had depressed the shift bar for the capital J and then failed to release it

properly, but to have only the word JESUS in capital letters was quite an eye-opener, especially since I saw it as such a wonderful idea! And so I made no correction; it was typed correctly the first time. I just wonder.... who was punching the keys?

**Sunday, August 6, 2006.** Two dear longtime friends of mine, Claire and Rosemary, died within a few days of each other at the end of July. In my room right now are two bouquets from sprays of flowers sent to the funeral home in their honor and brought to me by their families. What seemed strange was not being involved at all in the activities surrounding their deaths. Both women were members of the congregation when I was pastor of the Community Church of Yorktown and I officiated at the services when both their husbands died.

It has not been easy for me to drop out of active participation in services, visitation and programs. My subconscious mind is way behind my body. Just last night I had two dreams in which I was helping to plan programs. In one, I was working with pastors to set up a joint three session conference, Friday evening and Saturday afternoon and evening. In the other, I was talking with women about starting a daytime Bible study. I would have conducted services for both my friends had I been disease-free. But that was then; this is now! We all must live in the present.

Claire died suddenly and unexpectedly. Because of an eye problem, she seldom drove in recent years, so I would stop in to see her at times and was always welcomed warmly. On the other hand, Rosemary had a progressive fatal disease for years. I used to visit her too, both in her home and in the hospital. I had pictured myself sitting by her bedside, encouraging her with Scripture, right up to her death. But it was not to be. I kept in touch with both friends in new ways, and they with me. Our next reunion will be in Heaven! Meanwhile I have the flowers – and lots of good memories.

AND I have new people to visit! On our fourth floor here at Sky View are two people of faith who seldom leave their beds: John and Margaret. I met John through a believing nurse that I had for a time in Drum Hill. She was walking down our hallway to John's room, saw my name on the door and came in! Our social worker introduced me to Margaret. I try to see them weekly, usually giving them some of my writings as well. Because I cannot talk, the visiting would be easier if someone were with me. But until then, I'll do what I can.

**Monday, August 14, 2006.** I keep thinking about a fascinating movie I saw last week: March of the Penguins. MaryBeth saw it in the movie theater and highly recommended it, so Leo checked the DVD out of the library as soon as possible and both of us watched it. What a story! And yet it was simply a well-narrated documentary, showing the amazing lifestyle of one kind of penguin in the harshest environment imaginable. I kept marveling at the creativity of our God who, for example, gave penguins a flap of skin just above their feet to serve as a blanket protecting the egg and then the baby from the bitter elements. At one point the fathers were going to leave their young alone for awhile to get some food for themselves and their offspring. When they returned, how would they know which of the more than 400 young penguins was theirs, since basically they all looked alike? By voice! The film showed the fathers and their sons and daughters singing to each other just before the parting. Both the adults and the young remembered the tone or the tune and ended up reunited. Isn't that amazing? All those different voices and songs! God never runs out of creativity!

I also liked the egalitarianism I saw in the movie as both the mothers and the fathers took turns caring for the eggs and the young. Here I must give honor to my husband Leo. He was a wonderful hands-on father for our five little ones. I appreciated his help back then and cherish the memory now.

**Tuesday, August 15, 2006.** Diane Gitelson is director of the social work department here at Sky View. She is also the personal social worker for residents of the fourth floor, which is where I live. In this latter capacity Diane holds meetings every Tuesday at 1:30 in the Day Room on our floor, to which all residents are invited. I like attending these meetings for a number of reasons. First, it helps me to know my neighbors, not just their names, but also how they think and what concerns they have. Second, this is also the place where I can bring my own concerns and find the answers to my questions, thus letting people get to know me. Third, it keeps me informed about what is going on here, including who is hospitalized and who died. And fourth, it gives me a chance to watch a skilled social worker in action.

It is not easy to moderate the weekly meetings, but Diane seems to thrive on the challenge. She knows how to diffuse potentially explosive situations and is so patient when the same subjects are brought up repeatedly. She does not take offense when someone criticizes her. Diane knows how to change the subject without making people feel that they have been cut off. She handles interruptions well and that's a good thing, for there are many, such as (1) people coming in late or wanting to leave early, involving the moving of wheelchairs, and (2) noise in the halls outside our open door.

Diane is honest. Admitting that there will always be things that go wrong in places like this (like when an elevator was out of service for 3 months) and there will always be personality conflicts when so many people live together in community, she helps us find ways to cope with our frustrations. Above all, she is compassionate, caring and empathetic: just what we need.

To my list of accolades for Diane, I will add one more: she knows how to bring our meetings to an end on a wonderful, positive note. She does this by reading to us! Often she reads a story from the Chicken Soup series. She is also reading the book *The Five People You Meet In Heaven*. We all look forward to story time. No matter how tense or distressing parts of the meeting may have been, we leave with a smile, anticipating the next meeting. At least I do!

Thank you, Diane, for listening to us and for doing all you can to help us. We are fortunate to have you as our social worker.

**Monday, August 21, 2006.** How awesome is our God! My heart overflows with joy when I think of the amazing events of the past few days! I cannot possibly put on paper all that I am feeling right now. How thankful I am that my Lord understands that which cannot be expressed by words!

It began Friday evening when a woman came into my room asking for advice about a family matter. Years back this was a frequent occurrence, but it was so uncommon now that I was a bit startled. The woman was so sincere that I felt God had sent her to me. I did the best I could, but when she left, I had the feeling this story was "to be continued." Something vague was stirring in my brain; what was it?

When I awoke Saturday, the "Set Free" course that I used to teach years ago was running through my mind. What a mulching time I had that morning! I thought of the three seminars I repeatedly taught, especially in the 1980's: Bible Basics 1 and 2 and "Set Free." The latter was designed to free people from whatever might be keeping them in bondage, a sort of group counseling course very much tied to God and the Bible. The woman's question would have fit right in with "Set Free."

In my essay writing I had incorporated a lot of my Bible Basics teaching, but very little from "Set Free." In quick succession I went from thinking of writing an answer for the woman that would not only help her but also others facing the same situation, to starting a whole new series based on "Set Free"! I thought I would name the new writings Freedom Papers. But what would I do with the essays? I had two partly done, besides this one, and two the planning stage. Then I realized that the latter two belonged with Freedom Papers! So I only had two to finish and a journal to keep. If

that would end the essays, it would be fine with me!

At the computer on Saturday, I began to write an introduction to Freedom Papers. I told about the origin of Bible Basics in 1980, describing the setup in detail. I continued writing on Sunday, telling about the second course and the third. After I wrote of my new idea, I thought I was finished, so I printed a copy. This morning I thought of some more material I needed to add. At noon I was ready to type. I edited what I had already written, added the new section and made a final copy.

Just then two friends whom I hadn't seen for years walked into my room: Earl Brown and Lynn Wedges. I first met Earl when he enrolled in Bible Basics 2 around 1983 and Lynn when she took "Set Free" around 1984. Lynn said a poster for the course hanging in a Christian Bookstore caught her eye with its offer of free babysitting! Both of them, members of the same church, went on to take all the courses. We kept in touch for a long time and then, while remaining close in heart, drifted apart. When I started writing essays I sent some to Earl, who in turn contacted Lynn. Both sent me emails, but I hadn't seen them until today.

It wasn't long before Lynn was reading aloud the freshly printed introduction to my new project. She and Earl both confirmed that Bible Basics had a great impact on their lives. They were also enthusiastic about Freedom Papers. Lynn wanted a copy of the introduction, so I gave her the one she had read. The Lord knows how to encourage his people and how to affirm the work of his servants. It was not by accident that Earl and Lynn chose to visit me today!

**Sunday, August 27, 2006.** "End of an Era." I never dreamed that the time would come when I would no longer read the newspaper comics. What amazes me is that I don't even miss them! I was looking at the comics (we called them funnies) before I could read. Then one day during my first grade year I said, "Look, Grandma! This says 'Son of a gun'!" She didn't seem very pleased and I didn't know why. I learned later that Grandma didn't approve of slang expressions like that.

A favorite family memory from childhood is that of my parents, brother and I in the living room reading the Sunday funnies. Mom couldn't wait to read her favorites, but she was considerate of us, too. So she divided that section into pages and we all read at once. We traded sheets until each of us had read all we wanted. Some of the strips from back then are still fresh in my memory. I remember when Blondie and Dagwood had a baby girl and the suspense we had over her naming; when B. O. Plenty and Gravel Gertie married and then gave birth to beautiful Sparkle Plenty; and when Smilin' Jack buried his lovely wife and faced the sunset alone. Yes, some of the characters seemed real to me then and some of the current ones seem real to me now.

As turning the pages of newspapers became more difficult in the past year, I reverted to the way I had begun with papers: I read only the comics. After I moved to Sky View, I found my arms and hands couldn't even manage the comic pages Leo used to bring me. Finally Marty began cutting out the only two strips that still mattered to me: Luann and For Better or For Worse. And then it ended; no more comics - and I didn't care! As I said, I am amazed. I see God's grace in this!

**Tuesday, August 29, 2006.** Time to close another Penny essay. Time flies! It's hard to believe that three more months have passed so quickly. I used to think of three months as a year, meaning that I thought living here with PLS that length of time was the equivalent of living for a year without the disease. I'm not sure I think that way anymore. Marty brought me two new articles about PLS yesterday. Both of them said, "It is disabling, but not fatal." I don't feel more disabled than I did at the end of May, but I don't know what's going on inside my body. I continue to enjoy my days.

PS: I quickly got used to my ID bracelet. A new man moved onto our floor today. He asked for my name and before I could type it, he looked at my bracelet and said, "Oh! Verna!" That was handy!

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