

MARK PETCHEY

News Update Dec. 2012

I appreciate our friends and relatives close and afar for keeping Mark in their thoughts and wishing for him to have a continually improved life as time moves forward.

His accident was over 13 years ago. Mark is becoming 30 next January and for almost half of his life, he has been bound to his bed and wheelchair. Those who knew the tall-for-his-age rascal before his accident – the kid born selfless, restless, intuitive, creative, talkative, naughty, and mischievous – still find it difficult to accept the limitations put on his boundless energy and personality.

But this is the reality and he is aware of it; he is not beaten. Mark has retained his free spirit and has never given up on his day to day challenges.

Mark has a weekly physical and occupational therapy at his day school this year. Letha, a private therapist, has been with Mark and has really helped Mark understand his capacity and how to help himself improve his status and options. I just updated his website at www.markpetchey.com (See Recent Work Out 2012/ <http://www.markpetchey.com/recent2012.html>) I have also enclosed a printout with this letter. Mark is following his rehab program weekly and this hard work keeps him in good health.

Fortunately, Mark has not needed much medical attention in the past few years. I believe this is in part due to his alternative medicine and therapy doctors. They have been very helpful for many years to maintain his good health without medications. Although Mark's medical insurance with Kaiser does not cover physical therapy, he does have a hand therapist and rehab doctor who do their best to support him. I have to be grateful for this access; as you well know, the US is notorious for the coverage offered by medical insurance, despite the excellent healthcare available. I have been working during the last 9 years at a local district hospital and the complexity and bureaucracy of the insurance system are just beyond belief.



Mark's daily practice on standing frame at home. A family friend, Hiroshi Sakaguchi, a Japanese master carpenter, standing by.

Mark's caregivers at home are supportive and reliable. Because of their excellent help, I have been able to enjoy my favorite pastimes: English English County Dance, Scottish County Dance and my newly acquired hobby, recorder practice. The caregivers know how to communicate with Mark and ensure that their time with him is productive and enjoyable. On some weekends, they take him to a movie after exercise/therapy is completed. Mark is a much better movie-goer than his mother. He still has difficulties going out at night (he is crashed out by 9pm and most events in the neighborhood start after 8 pm), but he can still enjoy many activities.

Mark and I wish you a wonderful festive season with your family and friends and a very happy start to 2013.

Hideko

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