



Dear Family and Friends of Mark Petchey,

2020 has been an indescribably strange year. It's difficult to remember what life was like before 2020. Everywhere in the world, the pandemic rages on - forcing us to stay home, wearing masks and gloves, social distancing, no restaurants, no traveling, no movies, no dance, no concert or anything including schools, and works as we used to know.

My life changed as soon as I returned from Seattle after a weekend English County Dance event in late February. That was a close call. The first US death by Covid-19 occurred in Kirkland, WA exactly where I stayed at a local hotel. As soon as I return, all social activities practically vanished. My last attendance in a dance was the first Saturday monthly party with Scottish folk dance in March. Then, all events were shut down - our signature Mad Robin Ball, Scottish Beginners Ball and the week-long summer camp at Sonoma State University in July as well as Scottish County Dance annual Asilomar, the over 60 years tradition. While inactivity is helpful for my pocket, it was very bad for my soul. My favorite taichi and qigong classes in Occidental have also halted since.

Fortunately, I traveled with local dance friends in the backseat of a Toyota Prius for three days. I did not go through airports, train stations, other public transportation or exposes any public area except the dance circle. I was taken by friends' cars between the hotel and the events as well as visiting old friends. This is for the first time I journeyed beyond state lines for dance in the USA though I had been to Japan and UK for dance. The event included the 50th Golden Anniversary of Victoria and Paul Bestock whom I see annually at summer dance camp week over 10-15 years. I had longed to attend this celebration.

Mark's day school, Becoming Independent in Santa Rosa, has been shut down and started zoom meetings so that he can get continuous interaction. No one had anticipated the duration or impact. The world had hoped to get over the virus by summer but now in October, not only in the USA but Europe, Africa and Asia, this virus is not diminishing! Summer vacations are badly affected all over. Meanwhile, Mark has been fortunate. Very timely, I had a new housemate and long-time local friend, Bruce, since last December. His wife finally arrived from Mali in Africa. Kafoune arrived in the USA on Mark's birthday on January 25, 2020. She is new to this country and has already become the principle of Mark's homecare team!!!

Every morning and afternoon, she is the flagship in the operation of Mark's regular scheduled routine exercise and activities. Mark's base camp was moved back home where his physical activities get more focused. Kafoune is lively, kind, and with full of energy. She speaks French with Mark. He was very proud to take French as a second language during his high school days. He got the best assistant and a good leadership friend for his daily life. She also minds his food and outings. Letha's physical therapy continues weekly at home throughout this period and we are all safe - by testing more than once, this all household are negative from Covid-19 so far. Please find Letha's comments with this letter.

Wishing you the best time with your family with good meals at warm homes during this season.

Mark has made good use of our time in lockdown. He's concentrated on occupational therapy with some of his best gains. We are following the normal sequence of development to regain his lost abilities.

Here we see Mark using his left arm to support his body weight. He is pushing himself backwards, off the plinth onto his knees. This is new. Until just recently, since the accident, Mark has had no use of his left arm.

At about 6' 5" tall, there is a lot of trunk for Mark to regain control over. He has tended to collapse into his left side.



Just look at what he's doing in therapy ~

Mark is finding brief balance in a safe kneeling position and also improving his Ability to control his head and eyes.

*Letha Marchetti
OTR/L, C/NDT, SEP*

Enjoy this sequence as you see Mark bring his eyes into control



Kafoune, Mark's new caregiver

