

A Member Story by Eulie Nahm As the treasurer of our Post Polio Support Group, my name may sound familiar to you all. I was born fifty something years ago in the Philippines. At that time, the polio vaccine was not yet available in our country and I was one of the many victims who became infected with the polio virus. I was only three months old. My left arm and left leg were seriously affected, but I was fortunate and blessed that my grandparents had the means to send me to one of the best hospital in Manila where medical care for polio was available. According to my uncle, who was a medical intern that time, I was given all sorts of treatments and physical therapies to improve my condition. One of them was the iron lung machine that I was in for a year. Gee, I must have been a tough baby. Otherwise, I would have not survived. Growing up, I was able to get around in leg braces. My parents were strong disciplinarians and never treated me differently from my four brothers and three sisters. It was the same with my siblings, too. My close knit family has always been my inspiration. With their unconditional love and support, I finished high school, went to college and earned a degree in Optometry. I never allowed my disability to be a hindrance to my dreams of achievement. After high school, vanity got the better of me and I put away my leg braces. I did without them for thirty years and managed to enjoy a full life as a young woman, in spite of slips and falls I experienced along the way. There were even times that I overlooked the fact that I had polio, because of my active lifestyle. Twenty years ago, my family and I migrated to the USA. It's a different world out here compared to where I came from. If you are disabled, driving is unheard of in the Philippines. But here in the states, I drove. That added to the carefree life I was relishing. In my mid thirties, I meet a wonderful guy, Greg, and got married. We have a daughter, Kimmie, who is sixteen years old now. In addition to running a household as a wife and mother, I was working in the optical field and staying pretty busy. Seven years ago, I started to feel that I did not have the same energy as I had before. I tired easily need more rest; I began to fall more frequently. Yet, I kept going and going. To put it bluntly, I was in denial. Finally, I gave in and went to see Dr. Thornsteinsson and was diagnosed with Post Polio Syndrome. I have slowed down a little bit, but I still work part time and do volunteer work at my church and at my daughters school. Recently, I broke my foot. My doctor says that I may have to go back wearing leg braces after I healed, which is not something I am looking forward to doing again. This time my health wins over my vanity Because life is short I try to enjoy each day as if it were my last. I wake up everyday thanking God for the blessings He has bestowed on me: my health, a loving family and friends who support me all the way. How can I ask for anything more? Eulie