

# Take It From One Who Knows!—

*“With one swift stroke, fate left her a victim of the terrible disease. It all happened so quickly that all of us were stunned in our tracks.”*

Read The Prof. J. William Frey Letter Below To Better Understand The “FIGHT AGAINST POLIO”



Leaving the Lancaster General Hospital for Baltimore—April 12, 1954  
(New Era Photo)

← Pictured here is Dr. E. W. Melsner, head of the polio unit of the Lancaster General Hospital making certain that Mrs. Frey is made as comfortable as possible and double checking so that every measure of safety has been employed to insure a safe and comfortable trip to the Baltimore Children's Hospital. Chapter officials, hospital officials and friends and City and State Police stand by as preparations for the eventful trip are being made.



Taken on Arrival at the Children's Hospital in Baltimore, Md.

→ Pictured here is Mrs. Frey still in the same iron lung she left Lancaster a few hours earlier being comforted and congratulated by her husband, Prof. J. William Frey as she arrived at the Children's Hospital, Baltimore, where she will undergo an intensified program of therapy and specialized treatments in a determined effort to free the young wife and mother from the iron lung. Constantly in the iron lung on arrival, today she can be "on her own" out of the lung for 3 hours at a time.

Note:—Prof. and Mrs. Frey gave their permission to the Lancaster County Chapter For Infantile Paralysis to reprint the letter Prof. Frey sent to his many friends and associates. The letter verbatim and in its entirety is printed below.

## Take it from one who knows!

Last January 22nd, my wife Jean was admitted to the Lancaster General Hospital with every symptom of poliomyelitis. Naturally, we held out every hope that diagnosis would prove that it was not polio, but, with one swift stroke, fate left her, a victim of the terrible disease. It all happened so quickly that all of us were stunned in our tracks. Here we were faced with the most important part of our family a victim of polio and to make it even more exacting — one of the most serious types — an iron lung patient.

Can you appreciate our position in our little family circle? Can you appreciate the anxieties which we were forced to face? Can you appreciate the many worried moments with three children, Allan 11, Christina 5, and Maria 4, for the most part too young to understand the terrible transition? I can promise you that there were many sleepless nights and many days of incoherent thoughts, for I had read of polio patients — of iron lungs — of costly rehabilitary cases — but, I had never given it a thought that it could happen to us.

When the early days of Jean's unfortunate ordeal seemed darkest, I received a call from the Lancaster County Chapter for Infantile Paralysis — from Mr. Christian C. Rudy, chapter chairman, first of all extending his personal interest and thoughts in our plight and then offering every facility at the disposal of the local polio chapter — financial and otherwise — to help our stricken wife and mother fight back at this terrible crippling disease. I cannot begin to tell you how much that call meant to me and the family. And right here I would like to tell every one of you that the chapter did everything it said it would do and even more, for the help is definitely continuing.

Jean was a patient at the Lancaster General Hospital until April 12th when she was admitted to the Children's Hospital at Baltimore, Maryland. The trip from Lancaster to Baltimore was most efficiently arranged by the Lancaster Chapter and was an event which I will never forget. On her admission to the Baltimore institution, Jean was a constant occupant of the iron lung but with highly trained therapists working incessantly, she is today able to be out of the lung with no help whatsoever for a period of over two hours. Yes, indeed, there is marvelous progress being made — slow, that is true — but it is progress and the children and I are looking forward to the day when she can once again be entirely on her own and come home.

This terrible ordeal which hit us was not only very painful for Jean, but separated our little family, at least temporarily, and was a most nerve wracking experience for all of us. And, too, it was a most expensive experience — far more than most people are in a position to meet. So far, a total of \$12,000.00 has been spent by the Lancaster County Chapter for Infantile Paralysis in Jean's behalf. The chapter

has paid every cent of all the expenses and I want my many good friends and associates to know just that. I haven't been asked to pay any part of it — I haven't been asked what I might be able to do in the future — I haven't been subjected to any "red tape" or financial worries. The Lancaster Chapter has paid all the terrific costs and has sent me the receipted bills. Many of my friends and associates have asked me time and again, "Is it true that the Polio Chapter has paid all the bills at the Lancaster General Hospital and at the Baltimore Hospital?" My answer is in the affirmative — "The Chapter has paid everything, amounting to, as I said before, better than \$12,000.00 to date and promises many additional thousands of dollars necessary for future care and rehabilitation for Jean. There is no telling at the moment just how long this expense will go on and not once has the Chapter even suggested that it would be necessary to curtail or terminate such wonderful financial aid.

I would be most ungrateful to the Lancaster County Chapter for Infantile Paralysis if I did not tell you, my good friends, of this outstanding community health project and I would be most ungrateful if I did not try to reciprocate, in some way, for the financial aid given the Frey family in a most trying period. So, I felt that with your help we could create a JEAN FREY POLIO FUND, to replenish a badly depleted polio fund here in Lancaster.

Enclosed you will find a self-addressed envelope which I sincerely trust you will use to help continue this fine community service. I will personally acknowledge each and every contribution made on Jean's behalf, and I can assure you I will appreciate your thoughtfulness — Jean will appreciate it and the three children will share our sincere appreciation. Oh, yes, one more thought — these contributions are deductible as a charitable contribution on this year's income tax return. Checks should be made out to the Polio Fund of Lancaster.

Thanking you kindly for your thoughtfulness and support, I remain

Sincerely yours,

*J. William Frey*  
Prof. J. William Frey  
Franklin & Marshall College

jwf/tbs

P. S. What prompted me to write you is that I only very recently learned that the records show there were 106 polio cases so far this year here in Lancaster and that better than \$125,000 has been spent here in Lancaster city and county for polio this year and that the chapter is facing a \$20,000 deficit. That's the reason I felt I should ask for your support to the local polio chapter. Jean heartily joins me in this appeal — not so much in our personal interest but as a security against the future toll of polio. Remember:—polio respects no group or individual!  
—JWF