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H&H Committee Wally's Declining Health

Mary Cappello

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Date: Tue, 13 Feb 96 11:20:19 EST
From: mary cappello <WYE101@URIACC.URI.EDU>
Subject: Re: Agenda & Minutes
To: Bill Bartels <wjb@uriacc.uri.edu>

Dear Bill: I don't know if Wally has been in touch with you or if anyone has told you about the state of his health. Last thursday he called me and Jean and told us that he finally got a diagnosis of a very debilitating set of symptoms that he has been dealing with since late October. He has a severely damaged liver as the result of having carried Hepatitis B all of his life. The doctor actually gave him a life expectancy given the state of his liver. He told him that he could live for one to three years. I'm sorry to give you this news over e-mail. We were and continue to feel shocked and devastated BUT I refuse to believe the doctor's grim prognosis. I've started to do research on Wally's condition and it appears there are numerous treatments and that the liver can rejuvenate itself. I am trying desperately not to think in terms of losing Wally in anything like a near future. Jean and I have not worked out with WALLY what kind of help he will need so I don't know yet if we'll be at the next H and H meeting or visiting with him in Providence. Right now he is staying with dear friends in Massachusetts who are taking care of him. I asked Wally's permission about letting people know what he is dealing with right now, and it is ok with him that people know. I am wondering if as a group we can do anything to help Wally in the ensuing weeks. Since he lives alone, the more people we can mobilize, especially those who live in Providence, to help out in little ways like to get him groceries or read to him or help him open his mail and deal with bills, etc., the better. Right now he is experiencing water retention as a result of the liver damage and so is pretty wiped out. He's been sleeping a lot of the time. I'm sorry to be the bearer of this difficult news. I look forward to talking with you, warmly, Mary