Mona Randolph and The Whole Person

No one would want to have polio, but catastrophes can have good endings. Here is the story of one of The Whole Person's founding members.

My wife, Mona Jean Randolph, died February 18, 2019 from long delayed effects of polio. She was in a wheelchair during the day and an iron lung at night. Summing up 82 years of a rich full life in 50 words:

1. Mona survived polio

2. She was an energetic and effective advocate for people with disabilities (see a curb cut, think of Mona)

3. She married a husband, to whom she gave great joy, and who loved her dearly in return

4. She lived independently for 46 years while continually ministering to others

How did she do that?

In 1956, when Mona was 20 years old, she had a worsening headache. Light hurt her eyes. She had trouble walking, then breathing. She was rushed to Saint Luke's hospital. It was polio. They put her in an iron lung. They saved her life. Six months later, she was able to travel to Warm Springs, Georgia, where everything the medical staff knew was invested in her recovery. While she improved, she realized she would have to give up piano – a harder adjustment that realizing she would never walk again. After seven months, Mona was released to go home with a wheelchair for daytime and an iron lung for night.

(Above) Mona Randolph.
(Bottom left) Mona in an Iron Lung.

In 1972, Mona bought a home at 55th and Oak and graciously ministered to others. She said, "…It was sometimes hard on my nerves, but that year was good for my faith." God kept a promise to give Mona a life partner and soul mate to marry, and we cherished and nurtured each other. She helped form a local chapter of the National Paraplegic Foundation and within five years, they achieved two goals: compile and distribute a guide on accessibility to architects and obtain a city ordinance requiring curb cuts. The chapter evolved into The Whole Person. I am honored to be Mona's husband and to share some of her remarkable life's story with TWP.

–Mark Randolph