

24 June 2020

Unfortunately, the past some months, family medical has been my big activity for the next many months.

At the beginning of 2019, my wife was having subtle medical problems. Difficulty speaking and swallowing, a little weak over all. Doctor suggested maybe an allergy; try Claritan. Then many tests at ENT, then visit other departments of clinic. Then brain MRI. "normal, some sign of deterioration typical of someone 10 years younger." Good, its not a tumor. In September we wound up in neurology.

By process of elimination, there is only one remaining diagnosis that fits all the symptoms and tests: ALS. Now we know why her voice has been starting to sound like Stephen Hawking. Unfortunately, medical science doesn't have any answers. No known cause, beyond 5% seems to be hereditary. No cure. A couple of drugs that slow the progression.

August of 2019 we walked on the beach in Hawaii. Now she needs help to walk to the next room. There are good doctors at Stanford, but all they can do is tell what is coming next. Most likely Cathy won't last another year. The question is how long until the virus is under control and we can have the memorial services.

I'm in no big hurry, but sometime, I will be on my own. I won't have to decide between helping her with an art show and doing a radio thing.

I don't see any reason to put this on the email, but it is not a secret. I have told several others. If it comes up in some conversation, you don't have to be quiet.