

hip, and with her usual sense of humor she hoped that all that musical activity didn't cause the problem.

July 31, 2003

The last day of July, a month of emotional highs and lows that I wouldn't want to live through again! Bob's broken hip was the first, then just about the time I finished the last entry here Jerry killed himself. Those two terrible events were balanced by a visit to Peter's family in Philadelphia, something I had wanted to do for a long time.

It is still almost unbelievable to me that Jerry went out in his beloved back yard and shot himself one night. I have cried more tears over that than any other event in my life, and still my eyes fill up and my voice falters when I think or talk of it. Jerry's visit here was so warm and wonderful, and he seemed to be happy on his trip from Denver to Milwaukee, and on to his Kansas memories. When he left that last morning in the early half-dark we talked of when we would next see each other, but even then he probably knew we wouldn't. I miss him so much, surprisingly since we hadn't had much physical contact over the years, though it was greatly renewed during his and my care-giving roles the last two or three years. We took turns calling each other after 8 o'clock in the evening after I got Bob settled for the night. The conversations were often about three-quarters of an hour long, and we went from commiserating with each other to laughing at the strange behaviors of our spouses. Judy was on heavy morphine medication toward the end, and apparently was verbally abusive, though he usually soft-pedaled that.

After she died he was quite shattered at first, then seemed to get a grip on himself and begin rebuilding his life. At first he couldn't figure out what to do, and would drive across the nearby country visiting small cities, or exploring local entertainment possibilities. He talked a lot of getting his financial situation in order for his children, of shredding his personal and business paper, and of his scrambling to fix meals for himself. But we thought, Janice and I, that he was beginning to plan for his future—at least he talked that way. But in retrospect we all suspect that he had been planning his suicide for a long time, while keeping up an elaborate façade that things were going better. Now we look back at several suggestions of physical ailments: his coughing, the doctor's wanting to put a stint in his heart, and his ongoing trouble with his digestion. Of course he was probably depressed, though Janice and I, as well as Sam and his family, didn't detect that. We all feel a little angry and betrayed, but mostly I just get a sinking feeling in my stomach when I remember that he's gone forever. There are so many images in my mind of his few days here in June, and I miss him terribly.

Throughout this time I have also been possessed by the up and down emotions of Bob's medical and mental problems. I had high hopes of his stay in the rehabilitation facility, and for a short while I pinned my hopes on Bradford Terrace. It is a lovely place in a lovely setting, reputed to be one of the best in the city. But I have grown disenchanted with the care and the slipshod