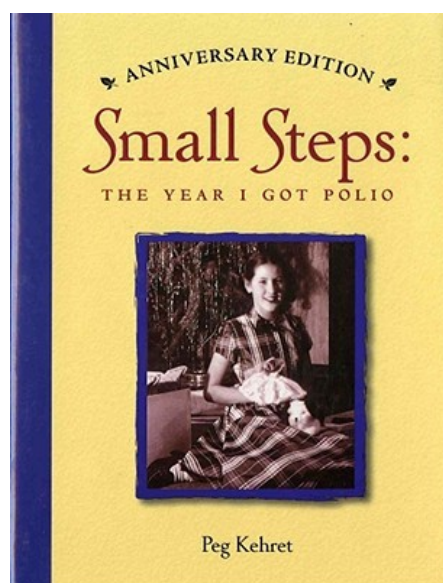




Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio

Peg Kehret

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Ten years ago, in a riveting story of courage and hope, Peg Kehret wrote of the months she spent in a hospital when she was 12. The book deeply touched readers of all ages and received many awards and honors. This anniversary edition includes an updated and extended Epilogue, 12 pages of new photos, and a new section about polio.

Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio Details

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Author : Peg Kehret

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From Reader Review Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio for online ebook

Elaine says

What a beautiful story! My grandmother was born in 1901 and had polio as a young teen (we think that's the right age). Her father was a doctor and had heard about some unorthodox treatments that were being done for polio victims and tried them on her. They involved heat and massage, so I am now assuming these were the Sister Kenny treatments that the author referred to. My grandmother made a full recovery. I'm fascinated that my great grandfather found out about these treatments so early and used them (they were started in 1903 in Australia and didn't come to the U.S. until 1940). I would love to learn more about my great grandfather and what he did exactly, but I guess I'll never know. I'm thankful to have read Peg Kehret's account and get a little glimpse into what polio must have been like for my grandmother. As an aside about the book, one of the things I love the best are the pictures and the update at the end about the friends she made along the way. She brings it all to life so clearly that you long to know how it all turns out.

Wendy says

Just started reading this as it's one of our "Battle" books. My youngest son just finished a science research project on Jonas Salk, the scientist who developed the polio vaccine. When we told my mom about his project, she told us that she was about 6 or 7 years old in 1952/1953 and was one of the kids who received the vaccine as a test before it was distributed worldwide in 1955. Never knew that - how interesting!!

Sarah says

This woman's optimism is contagious, loved it. Especially the epilogue. I realized I never really new much about polio- just the bare basics. Excellent book for pre-teens to be reading especially when you consider some of the other "literature" available to them.

Melissa K. says

"P-O-L-I-O" Those were the words that Peg and her parents never expected. I don't think you can expect it to.

It all started one afternoon when Peg was noticing a hot fever (103 degress) and muscle cramps. When she went to the doctor, they assumed that she had the flu. The fever contiued for a couple of days. When she woke up the next morning, she was paralyzed! The doctor took Peg to the hospital. There, they diagnosed her with polio, but not just one, three types, bulbar, spinal, and respiratory polio. She had to stay at different hospitals until she finally got cured. There are the hopital, she went through walking sticks, hot packs, re-learning to walk, and daily exercises which she hated. During her hospital stay, she had made some friends, whose conditions were worse than hers (Including her friend Alice, whose relatives would never visit her because she was ugly).

When you follow Peg Kehret's small steps for overcoming polio, you will love it! This book is very inspiring

even for people who don't even have polio. I love this book because it contains her personal feelings and how she had to adjust to her new life. I would recommend this book to everyone because it really captures your mind (it is also really short). When I started reading it, I literally couldn't put it down. I don't understand why in the beginning she wouldn't tell her mom she had aches and cramps because if I were her I would just tell my parents because I would be worried if I had any illnesses. If you are interested in this autobiography, read more of Peg Kehret's books. Keep in mind that it counts for the thirty book challenge.

Julia Zuklie says

Omg I LIVE this book. My favorite Character is Alice. I am at the part where she gets her walking sticks

Kashvi Lalgudi says

This was a very touching story and memoir- it almost made me cry! I felt very sorry for Peg when she learned that she had all three kinds of polio, but her courage and bravery were even more admirable. I loved seeing how funny and clever Peg was with her friends and how she had to manage while not being able to move. It made me feel very thankful for my healthy life and supportive friends and family, and glad that I'm living in a more modern time, where many more diseases are easily treated. I recommend this to those who like reading memoirs and feel-good stories.

Ginger says

I like to expose my kids to stories about people overcoming difficult circumstances and this book did exactly that. It was surprisingly easy to read and but sparked many interesting conversations about polio, health, life and the things we can take for granted.

Amy Richter says

This is a charming and easy to read book for children about one girl's struggle with polio. Despite being an adult, and not necessarily the intended audience, the book was informative as well as compelling. I finished it quickly, in part because it was short, but additionally because I wanted to find out how our cast of characters turned out. It's an excellent book for kids, and I particularly like it because it's a book about a terrible disease that always feels like it's aiming at the positive- looking at the individual lives of polio victims and how they're surviving, rather than wallowing in the horror of the disease. (Full confession, I suspect that I'd be a wallower if I ever had polio, and I admire the resilience of all the characters in the story.)

While reading, I got this vague sensation that I'd read it before, and by the end I was suspicious that I read this a long time ago as a child and the memory faded over time. This made the read feel nostalgic for me, on top of everything else.

I'm glad I read (or perhaps re-read!) this book.

Lexa says

I read this in 5th grade for a book club book. I thought I wouldn't like it that much after hearing a little bit about it. As I got into it more, though, I began to understand it better and I was disappointed that I couldn't keep reading when I finished the required pages. I would recommend this to anyone who wants something to read or a biography or both.

Emery K says

The book small steps is about a teen girl named peg that just discovered she has polio, Her parents rushed her to the hospital to see if she could overcome this terrible disease. Peg battles going from highs to lows with polio, meeting people through her journey of polio in and out of hospital rooms. Will she survive this terrible disease? I thought this book was great it had so much details and emotion. I loved it! I also thought this book was great because it wasn't too sad because there was happy moments and sad moments. If you like books that have lots of emotion then you will love this book.

Kasey H says

February 4, 2013

I am currently reading Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio, by Peg Kehret. I think that Peg Kehret is so smart to write a story about herself! From the title- it looks like this book is about the year Peg Kehret got Polio.

There is no paragraph or sentence that I don't like! I can't stop reading it! Every sentence is rich with descriptive words, action verbs, and everything that makes a sentence good. Actions and nouns, and descriptions- OH MY! You get my point!

Most people have read this book by fifth grade, because it was so popular, but I'm one of those people who like to wait until the book isn't popular anymore, and it's not hard to check out. I like to wait for the right time. Like Peg does in this book. She's waiting for the right time for her to conquer her Polio. Peg knows that moment is going to come. What makes her want to do it even more is that she's doing it for one of her SPECIAL doctors, from the hospital. He is a doctor from her old hospital, but she got moved to a different one because her conditions got- no need for me to spoil the book!

Peg has been going through some hard times, so she needs her friends to help her through it. New friends, new friends, new friends, she's got that finished! New friends are coming from everywhere, which she loves, of course! She loves her roommates! They play, they joke, they even sing with her before she goes to bed! Like Peg, I couldn't live without my friends. There has been tons of times where my friends have had to help me through hard situations, but those situations are not exactly like Pegs. I wasn't the best at spending the night over at my friends houses. It was dark and different than I was used to. Don't worry, they helped me over that by making every sleepover special and fun! I feel comfortable now when I spend the night with my friends. I couldn't live without them!

This story is slow paced and very focused on Peg. If you like those types of books, then here's a book to consider! Well, that is if you haven't read it yet!

Nate says

This is the perfect example of why I love the Oregon Battle of the Books program. Prior to this year's selections, I'd never heard of Peg Kehret. In flipping through her extensive bibliography, I wouldn't be surprised if I had read at least one of her books when I was a kid. However, she was a new name to me this year, and she has two books on the list. I read *Escaping The Giant Wave* first, and it was a fantastic adventure story set in Oregon, so that was great. Then I read *Small Steps*, and I was completely blown away.

This is an autobiographical rendition of the year she had polio as a 12-13 year-old. While this is a shorter book, the story is a riveting, thought-provoking, and emotional powerhouse. Everyone should read this book to be exposed to life pre-vaccine and the horrors the different types of polio have visited on previous generations.

She is also a young person in love with reading and writing, so that adds a lot to the story for fellow bookworms. Peg Kehret is a treasure of the Pacific Northwest, an amazing writer, and both my son and I look forward to reading more of her work.

Faith K says

Although I haven't read to much of this book I'm in Love with it! It goes in to so much detail and it is definitely character driven. This book tells the story of a girl who obviously got polio. It tells a out her struggles and how she reacts to them. She is so upset and she is super scared. Who wouldn't? She has two different types of polio, one that causes her to not be able to move her arms and legs and one that causes her not to breath very easily.if I was her I would be screaming but she is sitting there quiet, not freaking out. She can't see her parents because it is super contagious, and she didn't even get to say good bye to her grandpa or her dig B.J. I really think you should read this book, you will totally like it!

12/11/12

I just finished this book and it is one of the BEST books i have ever read! I really admire that this was a true story and she wrote it about her self. i also liked how she used really people and decribed them throughout the book. The main character was Peg Kehret and in the book, at the Sheltering Arms, peg meets three other girls that have polio like her. There was Alice, Dorothy, and Sherley. These girs were special to Peg and later in they were sisters. Every night, even when the lights whent out, the all sung to each other. Sunday was the only visitors day in the hospital. Alice, Dorothy, and Shirley never had any visitors so when Pegs parents came they were their parents too. I have been very sick before but I have never have had a disese or have been hospitalized. I was thinking of what was going to happen next on every page. This book kept me thinking of what it would be like to be her even after I finished.

Sofia A. says

1:17:13

I am currently reading this awesome good book. This book is about a 12 year old girl who got three types of Polio. She had to race to the hospital because it was serious. I once had to go to the hospital because I pnemonia. I was only in Kindergarten. In the story she said she had to move to a different hospital because the first hospital could not handle this really bad sickness. At first she could not breathe by herself so she had to use an iron lung. In the book she said that when you are using the iron lung that you can only see the head

of the body that is using the iron lung. She said that it was so hard to drink and eat food. the nurses said they cant have milk but when her mom snuck that extra milkshake but it saved her life. If you want to know more about this tory than I suggest that you read this book!

Ms. Foley says

Kids have been telling me this was their favorite book for years so I finally picked it up and read it. I was not disappointed--it was a wonderful and inspiration story, but not too sappy. She describes her feelings very realistically and she's not always nice about it!

Beth Nieman says

What a fantastic book. I just wish it had a recent copyright so I could recommend it for LOE! I literally could not put it down. Kehret writes in a straightforward and entertaining manner about her sudden polio symptoms at age 13, her trip to the emergency room, and the experience of waking up paralyzed.

However, the story doesn't end there--in fact, it's just the beginning. She meets wonderful doctors, nurses and has four roommates, all girls, her own age, and they go through therapy together, share treats and baked goods brought by Kehret's parents, who treat all the girls as their own daughters. Kehret delves into the emotions she went through as she regained the use of her arms and legs, learned to use a wheelchair, graduated to walking with braces, and finally began to walk on her own again.

This story really underscores why vaccines were such an enormous medical breakthrough. In her epilogue, Kehret reminisces about how she was moved to tears when her own children received their polio vaccines. She also lets readers know how life turned out for herself and all the patients she met, so there is a sense of closure to the book.

This story is told simply enough for elementary age children to read, and yet I (far from being a child!) was so engrossed by Kehret's storytelling that I stayed up late reading it. It reminded me of "The Plague and I," another fantastic personal memoir by Betty MacDonald, about her experiences with tuberculosis.

Annika C says

This book Small Steps, is a great book. I suggest this book to people who like auto-biographies. This book is about a girl named Peg Kerhet. Peg has polio and was diagnosed with it when she was about 12 years old. You would have to read the book to know about her journey through polio.

The Reading Countess says

When a student tucks a copy of his book that was required reading in third grade in your hand urging you to read it yourself, you steal time away from your own leaning tower o'books. The chapters are written in great detail explaining blow by blow how Peg was diagnosed at twelve with three kinds of debilitating Polio, the

excruciating treatments available to patients in the mid-19th century, as well as the slow climb back from the brink of paralysis. This is an important text for our young readers because it reminds us about not only how far we've come, but how far we have strayed. Peg's close knit family and community seems a distant memory in today's closed door, fast-paced world.

Mary says

it was the best book ever

Shelley says

Author Peg Kehret's autobiography of her experience with polio in 1949-1950. It's amazing how much still resonates--the "nice lady" therapists who say it's okay that I'm hurting you because it will help you vs. the kind, helpful therapists who push without hurting, the world is still not set up for people with disabilities to move around independently, etc. It's amazing how horrible her early experiences were, with nurses and doctors who talked around her and ignored her needs and hurt her, and yet how lucky she was compared to her four roommates later on. I appreciated how she explained how she was able to shift her mindset and allow for compassion, in a really accessible way for kids to understand how empathy can work and how to see things from other perspectives.

I really loved her roommates. I think it's marvelous that Dorothy and her family ensured she finished high school (even if the school couldn't build a ramp, seriously?), and her marriage and big family. Peg's family was incredible supportive, and she was so damned lucky. I suspect that her roommates' stories of sporadic family visits and months and years of physical therapy was by far the norm, rather than Peg's weekly visits and 7 months of rehab.
