

Dear AFE board and members,

This is Yvonne Babb, writing from Bend, Oregon. After surviving his second brain stem stroke last November, Geoff is now at inpatient rehab and making progress every day. He is out there scooting down the hallways with his porcupine hairdo, with the therapists in awe of his determination. Just like an old gopher tortoise.

This brain stem stroke left him with very weak swallowing muscles in his throat and weak in all limbs. He is getting good at ice chips. The speech therapist said he needed to make 80 swallows a day for about 80 days to get back to real food. Yeah, that is Geoff's biggest challenge and favorite pleasure.

If you check out his website on Caringbridge.org under Geoff Babb, you will see images of him working out and can read regular updates. We take for granted our core muscles that help us lean forward and back or just for sitting in an upright position.

Oh yeah, his middle finger still works. So, if you don't stay on track, just imagine him lifting his crumpled hand and pointing it at you! Of course, Geoff doesn't flip people off, he stretches it out to shake your hand. He reaches out to every new doctor or nurse and tries to learn their first name and get to know them...even if he can barely talk.

Thank you all so much for your love and support and for honoring Geoff with an award at the last conference. We filled the hospital room with cronies from work and then he kicked them out because they got too rowdy and he was tired. Then the room got quiet and your call came in and Geoff could hear your wonderful tribute. Your love will spill over into our lives and into all the others we meet along the way. We are so grateful.

His real side passion right now is designing off-road wheel chairs so folks with less mobility can get into the wild. Stay tuned—his designers are still working on it while Geoff recovers. It is called the Advenchair.

When you are out the in the field measuring trees or burning the woods or sparing the snags for wildlife, please take a look out into the wild and think of Geoff because he would rather be there with you. Just know that when I read this to him, he will be thinking of all of you and giving you that gentle nod of gratitude for all you do and for sharing your life and contribution with us. Hands together we bow to you, tears balling up in our eyes and rolling down our face with joy and gratitude.

Yvonne and Geoff Babb



Geoff standing in a device called a Sit-to-stand, which supports the knees and helps lift him to a standing position. Hopefully, he will gain enough strength to transfer without that device in a few weeks.



Geoff scooting down the hall with his occupational therapist.