

# Friends of Phil Brennion - It's your turn to help



Former AAW President Phil Brennion is an inspiration to many in the woodturning world. You may know Phil from his five productive years as an AAW board member and two years as AAW president. Or perhaps as the accomplished turner and teacher from Chino Valley, Arizona. Or maybe as a co-owner of Van Gogh's Ear, a successful crafts gallery in Prescott. Or from one of his sparkling articles in American Woodturner or WOOD magazine. Or maybe as someone who enjoyed hiking, canoeing, and hunting with Phil in western states.

One thing for sure: If you know Phil, you know a person who makes the most of each day. And you no doubt have been inspired by his determination.

Phil's mobility challenges began in 1982 with an ill-performed chiropractic procedure (the chiropractor soon abandoned his practice). Since then, Phil has endured eight surgeries on his neck and hips.

A weaker soul would have thrown in the towel, but not Phil. He found the strength to soldier forward and continue his giving back to the woodturning community, often to the detriment of his own career.

An ominous ninth surgery in July 2007 brought Phil once again to life's edge. A surgical team at Barrow Neurological Institute in Phoenix performed an emergency 10-hour procedure to de-tether his spinal cord. Following his latest surgery, Phil was paralyzed from the neck down. He then spent 107 days in the hospital and neurological wing floor. Five hours of therapy consumed large chunks of every day.

He is now at home and spends nine hours a week with occupational and physical therapists who are working with Phil to regain movement. Because he is a quadriplegic with little hand movement, Phil has a high-tech wheelchair that he steers with his head by sensory pads.

Phil's family is optimistic that he will regain movement in hands and legs with time (doctors say it can take up to two years to see what movement will be regained). In recent weeks, Phil has had occasional mobility in his left arm and sporadic movement in both feet, which is encouraging.

Friends of Phil: It's your turn to help - In spite of healthcare insurance, the uncovered medical and therapy expenses have exhausted the Brennion's finances. For example, by the end of May, Phil will have depleted the therapy allotments for 2008. To help meet expenses not covered by insurance, a "Friends of Phil" checking account has been setup at a Chino Valley bank.

If you're able to help this generous and caring woodturner, please send a check (payable to Brennon, Account 778853713) to: Chase Bank AZ1-0536  
31 Butterfield Road  
Chino Valley, AZ 86323

