

ALS: How it was

by [Marda Messick](#) in the [April 7, 2021](#) issue

The diagnosis.

The C9orf72 gene.

The telling, the children, the mother.

The hiking stick, the cane, the rolling walker.

The lift chair, the gait belt, the ramps.

The hospital bed.

The power wheelchair banging the door jambs.

The reclining shower chair, the Hoyer lift.

The oxygen concentrator, the baby monitor.

The G-tube, the kangaroo pump.

The Medicaid machine.

The hospice nurse.

The grinding, the measuring.

The changing of sheets in the night.

The pointing at letters of the alphabet.

The range of motion, the curled right hand.

The night in the Emergency Department.

The decision to withdraw food and water.

The courage, the vigil, the thirst.

The sixteen days.

The visions.

The breath stopping.

The Blessing of the Dead.

The bathing of his body.

The rose on his chest on the gurney.

The beauty of his face.

The taking away and the moon.

The autopsy, the fire.

The delivery of ashes.

The funeral, the burial.

The widow, the wailing.

The five years.