

MS patient tells Self Culture of miraculous improvement

Mothers Self Culture Club had a special guest at its Nov. 2 meeting held at the United Methodists Church with Theobelle Collins hosting. Approximately 25 members and friends attended.

Phyllis Burdge, sister of Karen Benson of Cherokee, and her assistance dog, Justice, was the speaker. Since the mid 1980s, she has had multiple sclerosis. At her lowest point in the '90s, she became completely dependent on her physical assistants and her first dog, Alex. She described the horror of being unresponsive, unable to talk, see, move or help herself be understood in any way, listening to emergency room workers trying to find out if she was to be revived or not.

Sometime later, in the spring

of 1998, a miracle began. She noticed a light lessening of the



PHYLLIS BURGE and her assistance dog **Justice**.

continuous fatigue and a small difference in how her hands were clenched. This was the beginning of "spontaneous remission," but it took months and intense physical therapy.

Now she can stand and deliver a message. She told about her adventures with assistance dogs, as well as her work with the Kansas legislature to pass laws to allow these dogs the same public access as those which accompany the visually impaired. Alex, her first dog, was the first such dog in Kansas.

On Nov. 20, 1998, she took her

first steps in 12 years. On Nov. 20, 2005, she and her dog will begin the PB&J American Walkabout, traveling throughout the country to share her story.

Her message is that everyone has gifts to share and should treasure every day.

The afternoon concluded with refreshments and visiting with the speaker.

The next meeting will be at 1 p.m., Dec. 7, at Cherokee Station with Karen Hawkins hosting. The program will be the annual greeting card exchange.

Cherokee Station