

Greater Fresno Parkinson's Support Group

"Helping to optimize the quality of the lives of *People With Parkinson's* and their *Care Partners*."

Our group meets the second Saturday of every month, taking the month of August off.

 Our Next Meeting is on 

Saturday, June 13, 2009

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

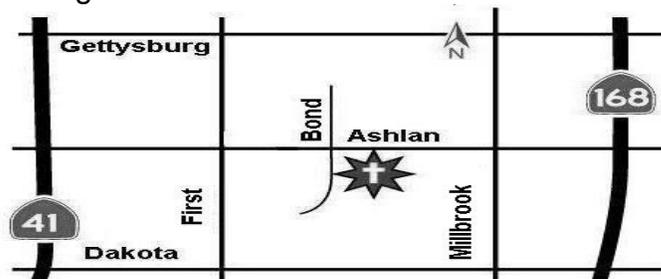
OUR PROGRAM:

Attorney **Kevin Gunner's** presentation will cover several areas of interest to People With Parkinson's (PWP) and their families, such as legal protection of elders/disabled and qualifying with the complex rules that govern eligibility for financial assistance and benefits under Medi-Cal and other government programs. There will be ample opportunity to ask questions.

Kevin is a third-generation native of Fresno. He graduated from CSU Fresno with a Business-Accounting major. He received his law degree at San Joaquin College of Law in 1986. He has practiced in Fresno for over 20 years specializing in Estate Planning, Elder Law, Probate, Trust Administration and Medi-Cal planning. He serves on the boards of several organizations, among them the "Exceptional Parents Unlimited (EPU) for Handicapped Children," the Alzheimer's Foundation of Central California, and the Valley Caregiver Resource Center. Kevin has been married for 27 years to his wife Valerie, and they have two daughters.

After a refreshment break and a chance to check out materials available from our **Group Library, Care Partners** will have an opportunity facilitated by our Group Member **Anne Guenther** to meet in a separate room to discuss with one another their experiences and to provide mutual support. Meanwhile, those remaining in the large group will have an open discussion of their particular needs and questions.

NOTE: Our **June** and **July** meetings will still be held at THE BRIDGE Evangelical Free Church, but in a different room. For the summer, we will hold our meetings in the **Atrium Building** next door to the south of the Chapel (the Chapel, our usual meeting room, is being remodeled). THE BRIDGE is located at 3438 E. Ashlan Ave., Fresno, CA 93726, at the SE corner of Ashlan & Bond between First & Millbrook -- enter the parking lot from Ashlan Ave.



Please Help Save Mailing Costs & Work:

If you have been receiving our *Newsletters* by "snail mail" and you also get or could get our Newsletter by *email* or by going to our website at **www.FresnoParkinsons.org** and clicking on "Our Newsletters," please call us at **our new phone number (559) 593-9953** or email us at **info@gfpsg.org** and let us know we can delete you from our "snail mail" list. To assure you get our Newsletters by *email*, add our email addresses to your "safe recipients" list to avoid having them sent to your "spam" or "junk mail" lists.

EXERCISE CLASSES FOR PEOPLE WITH PARKINSON'S DISEASE

San Joaquin Valley Rehabilitation ("SJVR") Fitness
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at
7033 N. Fresno St., Ste. 101, Fresno, CA 93720.
Call Luis Melgoza (559) 431-2635 about special rates.

About 15 people so far are enrolled in this non-strenuous class that helps counter problems with posture, musculature, and balance due to PD and that provides camaraderie to offset depression.

Please respect the *confidentiality* of personal medical information revealed to one another in our meetings. Always *check with your own doctor* before changing your medications or treatments based on what you read in this Newsletter or hear at our meetings from others, even medical experts, because Parkinson's disease is such a complex disease and our respective bodies react differently to the disease and to the medications and treatments prescribed to treat it. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA online at www.fda.gov/medwatch or call (800) FDA-1088.

Getting To Know **BOB & ORA NEAL:**



Bob is a rare "native Fresnan", having been born in Fresno on January 26th, 1924. Ora was born in Indiana on June 26th, 1925. Bob served in the Army Air Corps in the Philippines during WWII. After returning to California, Bob started his own construction company, doing almost all of the architect work and structural engineering himself. Ora was employed as a cosmetologist.

Bob and Ora met in the summer of 1946 at a friend's party. They married on August 16th, 1947, and then proceeded to raise five children (three girls and two boys). Bob said that for the subsequent twenty years, the family car never cooled off.

Ora has been fighting Parkinson's disease for about four years. Ora and Bob have been attending *Greater Fresno Parkinson's Disease Support Group* meetings since January 2007, sharing tips and empathizing with our Group Members.

Bob has been on dialysis for kidney disease since August 2008.

They are fortunate to have a very good Caregiver five days a week, who is an excellent cook.

The Neals had to move from a five-level, 3,600 square-foot home with a large shop full of antique cars. They now live in a 1,200 square-foot house. They kept only one "Model A" Ford.

All in all, Bob and Ora are very happy to still be together after 62 years of marriage, all with God's blessing.

OFFICERS

Interim Leader/Emcee:

Russell Templeton

Treasurer/Alternate Emcee:

Barbara Burmeister

Membership Committee:

Sue & Doug Jackson

Faye & Jack Smith

Care Partners Group Leader:

Anne Guenther

Co-Librarians:

Bill Houk

Joycelyn Lock

Tony Turano

Newsletter Editor:

Ellen Jablonski

STEERING COMMITTEE

Barbara Burmeister

Allen & Anne Guenther, Emeritus

Bill Houk

Ellen Jablonski

Doug & Sue Jackson

John Klassen

Joycelyn Lock

Max & Shirley Robinson, Emeritus

Dottie Rosenberg, Emeritus

Jack & Faye Smith

Stuart Snider

Russell & Jan Templeton

Anthony Turano

Max & Charlotte Wolfe, Emeritus

WEBMASTER

Frédéric "Fredo" Martin

Workingarts Marketing, Inc.™

PEER COUNSELORS FOR OUR CARE PARTNERS

Anne Guenther: (559) 322-7076

Sue Jackson: (559) 434-7928

Or online:

Caring From a Distance:

www.cfad.org

Family Caregiver Alliance:

www.caregiver.org

Natl. Family Caregivers Assoc.:

www.thefamilycaregiver.org

Well Spouse Association:

www.wellspouse.org

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
TO UPDATE OUR MAILING LIST,
OR TO SUBMIT MATERIALS OR
SUGGESTIONS, CONTACT:**

Ellen Jablonski

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Barbara Burmeister

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Clovis, CA 93612

www.FresnoParkinsons.org

(559) 593-9953

Synopsis of our May 9, 2009, Meeting

We held a “General Meeting” with an opportunity for all who attended to share (or “show and tell”) about items, meds, or discoveries that had made a positive difference for our membership. Some of the items that were presented:

Russ Templeton showed a Timex brand talking pillbox that he purchased that helps him keep track of his PD meds. It has six timers available, along with four pill containers, and can be set to ring an alarm, “talk” to you, or both alarm and talk to remind time for medications. It fits most pockets or purses easily. Russ also demonstrated that rather than a cane, a walking stick is better for PWP to maintain good posture and balance.

Jim and Betty Norman described a checkmark system they use to track Jim’s complicated medicine regimen of pills which he takes every three hours. They also recommend bed rails to improve stability.

Marianne Weil received a *Medication Alert Card* from the **National Parkinson Foundation**, www.parkinson.org, (800) 327-4545, which includes a list of contra-indicated medications. The Medication Alert Card was put to good use when she had unusual symptoms on a recent trip and paramedics were called who would have given her a medicine that could have made her PD symptoms worse.

Several Group Members shared their challenges getting an accurate diagnosis – Barbara Burmeister was told by one doctor that her husband Bill has “tremble-itis.”

Barbara Burmeister recommended PWP use satin sheets to make turning in bed easier. Silky pajamas also help. Others suggested using a satin-covered pillow or an empty plastic bag on car seats to make getting in and out of cars easier. Ellen Jablonski added that a “lazy Susan” device placed on a car seat or other seats in which one could turn is available in many health-related catalogs or locally at **The Bone Store, 343 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno, CA 93710, (559) 226-7500, www.thebonestore.com**.

Ellen Jablonski demonstrated that a 12” diameter half-round shower chair she got is NOT stable enough to be safe for PWP who have balance problems.

Chuckle of the Month:

Our Support Group’s members Bob and Ora Neal shared that they went to church with their niece’s young child one Sunday and were seated. The child needed to use the restroom and after a while returned and announced that “Jesus is out of toilet paper!”

Submitted by Jan and Russ Templeton:

I Needed the Quiet

by Alice Hansche Mortenson

*I needed the quiet so He drew me aside.
Into the shadows where we could confide.
Away from the bustle where all the day long
I hurried and worried when active and strong.*

*I needed the quiet tho at first I rebelled
But gently, so gently, my cross He upheld
And whispered so sweetly of spiritual things
Tho weakened in body, my spirit took wings
To heights never dreamed of
when active all day.
He loved me so greatly He drew me away.*

*I needed the quiet. No prison my bed,
But a beautiful valley of blessings instead.
A place to grow richer in Jesus to hide.
I needed the quiet so He drew me aside.*

Word of the Month

Lewy Bodies: Abnormal smooth round protein structures found in the "substantia nigra" (the place in the brain where dopamine is first released and that controls muscle movement). *Lewy Bodies* are the hallmark signs of Parkinson's disease. They were first seen and linked to Parkinson's disease ("paralysis agitans") in 1912 by the neurologist Frederic Heinrich Lewy (1885-1950). *Lewy Bodies* are often present in the nuclei (nerve cells) of brains afflicted with a variety of disorders including "Dementia With Lewy Bodies" (a form of progressive dementia) in which the Lewy Bodies are found throughout the outer layer of the brain (the cerebral cortex) and deep inside the midbrain or brainstem.

Treasurer's Report
by Barbara Burmeister:

GFPSG: The April 24 – May 26, 2009, Wells Fargo Bank Statement shows a Beginning Balance of \$398.40. Debited from the account during this period were five checks totaling \$163.73 for meeting, newsletter, and postage expenses incurred in May. Also debited from the account was \$25.00 for a Check Card Rewards Annual Fee. This fee is being reversed as the GFPSG did not request nor do we use a credit/debit card. Credited to the account was \$77.00 in donations from the May meeting. The statement ending balance on May 26, 2009, was \$286.67. This balance will be adjusted to \$311.67 when the \$25.00 Check Card fee is reversed and posted. Thank you for your continued generous support. Monies donated at the Support Group meetings help cover newsletter, postage, and refreshment expenses.

Fresno Regional Foundation: The balance in the "Parkinson's Support Fund" as of June 2, 2009, is \$3,658.00. This balance reflects a \$25.00 donation credited to the account in May. There were no expenses debited from the account. Thank you for your contributions to this Fund so essential to our Group. Donations and gifts made to our Support Group through the *Fresno Regional Foundation* are tax deductible.

NOTE: The *Fresno Regional Foundation* moved to 5250 N. Palm Avenue, Suite 424, Fresno, CA 93704 (old address: 5260 N. Palm Avenue, Suite. 228, Fresno, CA 93704). Their phone, fax, and email will remain the same: (559) 226-5600, www.fresnoregfoundation.org.