

Greater Fresno Parkinson's Support Group

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

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

 **Our Next Meeting is on** 

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2010
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Due to scheduling conflicts with our usual meeting site at The Bridge, our support group will NOT be MEETING IN NOVEMBER. As an alternative, consider attending the 8th Annual Senior Citizens' Law Day on Saturday, November 13th, sponsored by the San Joaquin College of Law Alumni Association. Our group member Marcella Downing is a featured speaker. See page 4 for further details.

Ten Early Signs of Parkinson's disease:

1. Tremor or shaking in your finger, thumb, hand, chin, lips, or leg, usually only on one side to start.
2. Handwriting suddenly becomes smaller with words crowded together.
3. Loss of smell, especially of bananas, dill pickles, or licorice.
4. Trouble sleeping, including thrashing, kicking, or punching while asleep.
5. Trouble moving, walking, or an arm not swinging due to stiffness/rigidity.
6. Constipation and needing to strain to move bowels.
7. A soft or low voice or hoarseness not due to a cold or virus.
8. Masked face, usually serious, depressed, mad, or staring look.
9. Dizziness or fainting when getting up, due to decreased blood pressure.
10. Stooping, leaning, or hunching over.

Word of the Month:

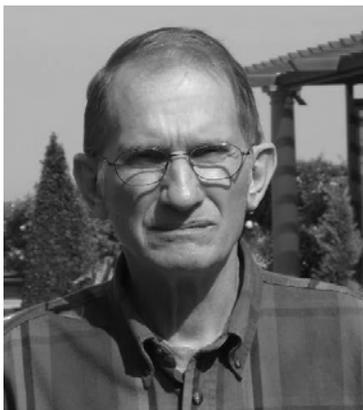
Anticholinergics: an·ti·ko"lin·er'jiks.

Anticholinergic medications decrease the effects of acetylcholine, a chemical in the brain. Acetylcholine and dopamine sit on opposite ends of a teeter totter. When dopamine is decreased in Parkinson's disease, acetylcholine becomes dominant. By opposing the effects of acetylcholine, anticholinergics help restore the balance of dopamine and acetylcholine. These medications are particularly beneficial to treat tremor, although side effects may limit their use. The anticholinergics most commonly used are benztropine (Cogentin®) and trihexyphenidyl (Artane®).

Resource of the Month: www.ohanapacificrehab.com
Kevin Lockette, Physical Therapist, (808) 262-1118, Honolulu Clinic (808) 593- 2610, Cell (808) 228-0340.
A Caregiver's Complete Guide for Safe Mobility and Independence in the Home. Lockette's tips focus on safe care giving. This book has easily referenced chapters on topics such as body mechanics, guidelines for transfers, adaptive and assistive devices for the care receiver, fall prevention, and fall-proofing the home, and information on types of wheelchairs. He also includes exercises for the impaired. A glossary is provided, as are several appendices, which offer information on various caregiver associations, caregiver-specific web-sites, and numerous connected resources.

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, as 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.

Getting to Know: WINSTON LEWIS FIELD, JR.



Winston Field (whose father was named after statesman Winston Churchill) grew up in an Army family that was often relocating to a new adventure in a distant part of the globe. Winston lived in Placerville, California, for his first few years, along with his two sisters. Then the family was off to Japan for three years where Winston's father served on the JAG staff for the War Crimes Tribunal. A series of three-year assignments took the family back to the United States, then to Germany, to Virginia, and back to California.

While the family was living in Virginia, Winston started prep school at Christ Church; and from there, he entered the Army with service in Europe and in the United States. This was during the Cuban Missile Crisis era.

After his years in the service, Winston returned to college to complete his undergraduate degree in sociology. An early employment opportunity came his way working at a state hospital in the mental health department. Some years later, he returned to the classroom and became a Registered Nurse and continued his career working in the mental health psychiatric department. One of his staff team members was what Winston refers to as "the real love" of his life, Nancy, and they were married in 1995. Bright, with a great sense of humor, she was a fine match for Winston. Winston called Nancy his "best friend who happened to be my wife." Nancy was stricken with leukemia in 2000 and died about six months later. 2000 to 2002 were difficult years for Winston, who lost not only his wife, but also both of his parents within such a short time.

Winston was familiar with Parkinson's disease ("PD") because his father also had PD. Multiple symptoms were noted and ignored for at least nine years, but eventually Winston met with a neurologist at Kaiser and was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2009. At this point, he takes no medications but does exercise with the PD class that meets twice weekly at San Joaquin Valley Rehab. He remembers that his father would respond better after getting some exercise, and Winston comments that the class helps him with his posture, energy, and gait. Winston still rides his motorcycles briefly every week or two, but no cross country trips as he did in the past. Winston has one daughter, two grandsons, and one granddaughter (a recent communication grad from the University of Maine).

OFFICERS

Co-Leaders/Emcees:

Russell Templeton
Doug Jackson
Bruce Medlin

Treasurer

Barbara Burmeister

Membership Committee:

Sue & Doug Jackson
Faye & Jack Smith

Care Partners Group Leader:

Anne Guenther

Librarian:

Cindy Ohler

Newsletter Editor:

Ellen Jablonski

STEERING COMMITTEE

Bill & Barbara Burmeister
Anne Guenther
Ellen Jablonski
Doug & Sue Jackson
Riley and Linda Jones
Joycelyn Lock
Bruce Medlin
Jack & Faye Smith
Russell & Jan Templeton
Martin and Marianne Weil

WEBMASTER

Frédéric "Fredo" Martin
WorkingArts Marketing, Inc.™

PEER COUNSELORS FOR OUR CARE PARTNERS

Anne Guenther (559) 322-7076
Sue Jackson (559) 434-7928
Fresno-Madera Area Agency
on Aging: (559) 453-4405 or
(800) 510-2020

Or online:

Caring From a Distance:
www.cfad.org
Family Caregiver Alliance:
www.caregiver.org
Nat'l. 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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Clovis, CA 93612

www.FresnoParkinsons.org

(559) 593-9953

Treasurer's Report by Barbara Burmeister:

Greater Fresno Parkinson's Support Group (GFPSG) Checking Account Report:

The September 25 – October 26, 2010, Wells Fargo Bank Statement shows a beginning balance of \$806.26. Debited from the account during this period were five checks totaling \$296.05 for operational, newsletter-related, and meeting refreshment expenses. Deposited to the account was \$33.00 in donations from the October Support Group meeting. The current ending balance in the Wells Fargo checking account is \$543.21.

Monies donated directly to our Support Group are not tax deductible; however, they do help cover the cost of newsletter, refreshment, and operating expenses. Thank you for your continued generous support.

Fresno Regional Foundation (FRF) Account Report:

The Fresno Regional Foundation (FRF) "Parkinson's Support Group Statement of Fund Activity" report covering the period of January 1, 2010 – September 30, 2010, shows a beginning balance of \$3,971.06 on January 1, 2010, and an ending balance of \$4,350.06 on September 30, 2010.

Donations/Gifts made to our Support Group during this period totaled \$1,195.00 This includes five gifts totaling \$195.00 made to our Support Group Fund through the FRF; as well as a gift in the amount of \$1,000.00 from the FRF Board's "Common Good" fund made to our Support Group. The \$1,000.00 is specifically to assist the GFPSG in making periodic donations to *The Bridge* for the use of their facilities.

Income: Earned during the January – September 2010 period was \$8.97 in interest and dividends.

Expenses: There was one grant in the amount of \$750.00 disbursed from the FRF account on May 26, 2010, to replenish the GFPSG Wells Fargo checking account used for monthly operational expenses. Deducted from the FRF account during the January – September 2010 period was \$74.97 in administrative fees (\$24.99 per quarter), leaving an ending balance of \$4,350.06.

There were no gifts or donations made to the GFPSG fund held at the Fresno Regional Foundation in the month of October. The total ending fund balance remains \$4,350.06.

Donations or gifts to our Support Group through the Fresno Regional Foundation are tax deductible. Donations can be made by check, Visa or MasterCard, or online. Make your check out to the Fresno Regional Foundation and specify that the donation or gift is for the Greater Fresno Parkinson's Support Group Fund. The mailing address for the Fresno Regional Foundation is: 5250 N. Palm Avenue, Suite 424, Fresno, CA 93704. For additional information, you can call them directly at (559) 226-5600 or visit their website at www.fresnoregfoundation.org to make a gift online.

Synopsis of our October 9, 2010, Meeting: Russ Templeton, Doug Jackson, and Bruce Medlin emceed. There were 34 attendees.

Pharmacist Talar Yemenjian, a graduate of the School of Pharmacy at the University of Southern California, gave a Powerpoint® presentation to our Group which included an overview of what Parkinson's disease ("PD") is; what may cause PD; disease progression; and treatments to help reduce the symptoms of PD such as medications and the advantages, side effects, and interactions thereof. Meds that make PD worse include: Valporic Acid; antidepressants such as Lithium and SSRI's; haloperidol; blood pressure meds such as diltazem, verapamil, amlodipine, methyldopa, reserpine; cough medications that contain promethazine; amiodarone; metoclopramide; and phenytoin. Questions and answers were allowed from the floor which included some helpful comments on supplements and vitamins. For further information, call Save Mart Pharmacy (559) 298-1707 or consult your own pharmacist or doctor.

After a pause for refreshments, the Care Partners had a breakout session facilitated by Anne Guenther during which they discussed the necessity of making end-of-life decisions before the need. Meanwhile, those remaining discussed their experiences dealing with PD and medications to treat it.

Eighth Annual Senior Citizens' Law Day November 13, 2010:

This no-cost seminar is sponsored by The San Joaquin College of Law Alumni Association. The *Senior Citizens' Law Day* will be held on **November 13th from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm at 901 5th Street, Clovis, CA 93612.** There will be refreshments served and a door prize drawing.

RSVP (559) 323-2100 with your choice of class or classes. Following is the agenda for the event:

Session I (9:00 am – 10:30 am)

- I. Wills and Trusts, Elder Divorce, Remarriage and Prenuptial Agreements, presented by Richard Hemb, Esq., and Susan Hemb, Esq., of Hemb & Hemb, LLP.
- II. Public Benefits, including Veterans' Benefits and Social Security, presented by Charles Hunnicutt (our local VA Representative) and Mang Her (our Local Social Security Administration Representative).
- III. Living at Home – Maintaining Senior Independence, presented by Marcella Downing, Esq., of The Law Office of Howk & Downing, LLP.

Session II (11:00 am – 12:30 pm)

- IV. Wills and Trusts, Financial Abuse, and Traps Targeting Seniors, presented by Deborah Boyett, Esq., of Walter & Wilhelm Law Group, APC.
- V. Conservatorships, presented by Catherine Sharbaugh, Esq., of The Law Office of Catherine Sharbaugh.
- VI. Identity Theft and Scams, presented by Detective Ryan Swank of the Clovis Police Department.

FDA Cracks Down on "Cleansing Therapy" *Rob Stein* The Washington Post - Federal health officials announced a crackdown on a therapy widely hawked on the Internet and elsewhere as an alternative treatment for conditions such as Parkinson's disease by "cleansing" the body. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said it has sent warning letters to several companies notifying them the substances they sell without a prescription for a procedure known as "chelation" are "unapproved drugs and devices," which makes them illegal. The FDA became alarmed about the growing promotion and easy availability of the products because the substances may cause serious health complications, including dehydration and kidney failure, and possibly be deadly, officials said. "We don't have evidence of a lot of adverse events, but that does not mean there are not health problems associated with them," said Charles Lee of the FDA's division of new drugs and labeling compliance at the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. For decades, doctors have used chelation to treat patients exposed to dangerous levels of heavy metals, such as in cases of lead poisoning. Patients are infused with compounds that bind to the metals, enabling them to be excreted. But the only chelation products that have been approved by the FDA are available with a prescription and should be used by a medical professional because of the risk of complications, the FDA said. The products have various names, dosages and forms, including suppositories, capsules, liquid drops, sprays and clay baths.

Chuckle of the Month: Submitted by Jan Templeton

"I don't make jokes; I just watch the government and report the facts." ---Will Rogers