

# 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, September 12, 2009**  
**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

## OUR PROGRAM:

Dr. Robert Calmes, a leading neurologist practicing in the Central Valley area, will specifically address sleep issues for People with Parkinson's and their Care Partners. He will also be available to answer other questions concerning Parkinson's disease.

### Chuckle of the Month:

#### **Why Teachers Need Long Summer Vacations**

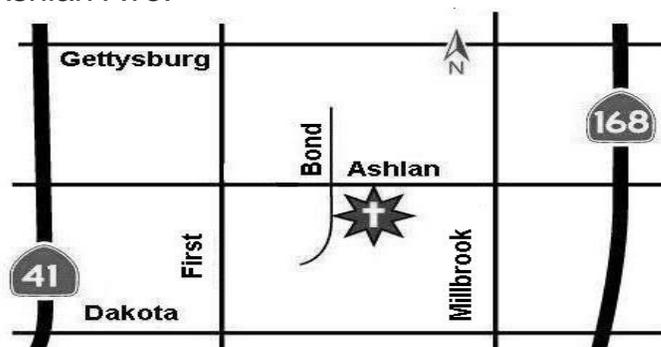
The topic of our seventh-grade science class was Dolly, the sheep cloned in Scotland several years back. We discussed how scientists removed the nucleus from the sheep egg cell and replaced it with the nucleus from the parent cell. The students were fascinated, one in particular. "This is amazing," she said. "I had no idea sheep laid eggs."

Source: *Aimee Caruso, Readers Digest*

**Wayne Foster:** Betty Foster informed us that as of about two weeks ago, Wayne's level of care increased to the point that he is now at **Hy-Pana House Convalescent Hospital**. He would appreciate visitors: 3510 E Shields Ave., Fresno, CA 93726, **(559) 222-4807**, Fax: **(559) 227-9724**. We all wish you the very best Wayne and Betty!

## WHERE:

At THE BRIDGE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH in the Atrium 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.



**The Hazel Hutchman Memorial Neuroscience Center Invites You to a PD Experience: Saturday, Sept 26, 2009, 9am—4pm, at Senior Concerns, 401 Hodencamp Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91360.** Free: morning and afternoon physician presentations; workshops on nutrition, exercise, therapies, and fall prevention; entertainment and music including television writer Mark Solomon (remember the show "Newhart?") You'll love The PD Song! Celebrate the Art of PD with some great artists who just happen to have Parkinson's, including the highly acclaimed artist Jorge Lacoste who will be exhibiting with us. Meet the amazing marathon runner, John Ball, who has PD. Special guest appearance: award winning editorial cartoonist Steve Greenberg.

Senior/Caregiver Resources  
Patricia Dailey, Program Coordinator  
Info Van/Community Outreach  
Fresno-Madera Area Agency on Aging  
(559) 453-4405 or (800) 510-2020 Voice  
(559) 453-5111 Fax, [pdailey@fmaaa.org](mailto:pdailey@fmaaa.org)

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.

## Getting to Know MARGARET DIXON:



Margaret began her life in the humid "Deep South" of Spring Hill, Louisiana, but moved with her parents to the cooler climate of Tacoma, Washington, when she was ten. The Pacific Coast states would be "home" to Margaret for the majority of her remaining years. Graduating from Stadium High School in Tacoma, she transferred to University of Washington where she studied for two years. Mutual friends and family members introduced Margaret to John Dixon, an agriculture student at Washington State. The couple married on August 22, 1959. John had grown up on a "dry land farm" with his family. After graduation,

he pursued a career with Del Monte Foods in Washington, Oregon, and California (including two moves to Fresno). Two daughters were born to John and Margaret: Elizabeth (Libby) in October 1961; and Tracy in August 1964. Margaret was a homemaker with an interlude of working for the Fresno Board of Realtors while Tracy was in high school. Margaret has enjoyed tole painting, bridge, and knitting. She devoted herself to home and church. John loved woodworking as a hobby. Pieces of his fine furniture are enjoyed to this day, and many toys were handcrafted in his workshop over the years and donated to the local "Toys for Tots" program. John passed away in August 2004 from lung cancer.

The Dixon family became members of the Trinity Presbyterian Church after they returned to Fresno. At one point, both John and Margaret served as deacons at the same time. Traveling was also a special pleasure: John took Margaret on a "60th Birthday Trip" to tour Rome, London, Austria, Switzerland, and Paris. Companions on that trip included Margaret's childhood friend and her friend's husband, a friendship that has lasted most of Margaret's lifetime with frequent visits to see one another.

Shortly after Margaret and her family came to Fresno, she became aware of "something wrong with my leg." This was initially misdiagnosed as Essential Tremor. As her symptoms increased, her neurologist made the diagnosis of Parkinson's disease about 12 years ago. Margaret's father also had Parkinson's disease; this was a factor in her agreeing to participate in the current UCLA PD background study.

Ellie, a faithful yellow Labrador retriever, is a special pet for Margaret. Margaret tripped over Ellie early last autumn. That fall resulted in significant injuries and a change of residence for Margaret to The Fairwinds. As a consequence, Ellie is no longer able to live with Margaret, but comes over to visit from time to time. More recently, Grace Merritt has become an aide and friend to Margaret, taking her to appointments and helping her with errands. Small World! Grace is the granddaughter of our Parkinson's disease friends Jim and Betty Norman who attend our GFPSPG meetings.

### 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.](http://WorkingartsMarketing.com)™

### 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](http://www.cfad.org)

Family Caregiver Alliance:

[www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org)

Natl. Family Caregivers Assoc.:

[www.thefamilycaregiver.org](http://www.thefamilycaregiver.org)

Well Spouse Association:

[www.wellspouse.org](http://www.wellspouse.org)

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

**Ellen Jablonski**

(559) 298-4080

Ellen4curePD@att.net or

**Barbara Burmeister**

(559) 322-8076

[bburmeister@sierratel.com](mailto:bburmeister@sierratel.com)

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Clovis, CA 93612

[www.FresnoParkinsons.org](http://www.FresnoParkinsons.org)

**(559) 593-9953**

## **Study Shows Anticonvulsant Zonisamide is Safe and Effective for Parkinson's:**

Dr. Miho Murata of Tokyo's Mushashi Hospital recently told the Movement Disorder Society's International Congress that the anti-epileptic medication **Zonisamide** controls symptoms in long-term treatment of Parkinson's disease without causing its patients to develop disabling dyskinesia. Symptoms such as wearing-off and intractable tremor were found to be improved and maintained for a minimum of 3 years, at which time antiparkinson's drugs were increased in some patients.

**Words of the Month:** The term *tardive* (tär' div) *dyskinesia* (dis' ke nē' zhe) was introduced in 1964. *Tardive* comes from the French word (*tardif*) for *tardy* or *late*, meaning that the dyskinesias appear late in the course of therapy with a drug that blocks dopamine receptors (DRAs). These movements do not occur as an immediate response to the use of the drug. **Dyskinesia** refers to an involuntary movement. The effect of these drugs can be *tardive*, meaning the dyskinesia sometimes continues or appears even after the drugs are no longer taken.

### **People With Parkinson's Need to Avoid Most Anti-Nausea Medications:**

Medications to treat nausea can worsen Parkinson's disease symptoms or negate the benefits of Parkinson's medications. Common anti-nausea drugs such as promethazine (Phenergan) metoclopramide (Reglan®), and prochlorperazine (Compazine®) block dopamine receptors in the brain. Taking an anti-nausea medication while taking a Parkinson's medication respectively cancels the other out. One anti-nausea drug, ondansetron (Zofran®), works on a different chemical receptor and avoids this problem. Be sure to check with your doctor and pharmacist before taking such medications.

### **Pay Less for Medications:**

#### ***Partnership for Prescription Assistance:***

A coalition of pharmaceutical companies, health-care providers, and patient advocacy groups that helps patients get free or discounted medications. Ninety-eight companies provide 2,500 drugs, from Advair to Zolof. Since its launch four years ago, the PPA has helped supply \$14 billion worth of prescription drugs to 5.7 million people. Typically, a family of four earning about \$40,000 is eligible. To find out if you qualify, go to **PPARX.org**. (888) 477-2669

#### ***YourRxCard.com:***

This free prescription drug card program is produced to help all Americans cut their prescription drug costs. Simply go to [www.yourrxcard.com](http://www.yourrxcard.com) and download your FREE Prescription Drug Card and receive savings of up to 75% at more than 57,000 national, regional, and local pharmacies. Benefits of the Card: no deductibles, no waiting periods, no pre-existing exclusions, everyone qualifies, instant activation, and membership is free. (866) 561-1926.

**Is It Hot In Here Or Is It Just Me?:** One symptom that People With Parkinson's might have is changes in body temperature resulting in higher or lower "normal" temperatures. It's important that you track what is now "normal" for you so you can be properly treated should you have an infection.

## **Treasurer's Report by Barbara Burmeister**

**GFPSG:** The July 24 – August 25, 2009, Wells Fargo Bank Statement shows a Beginning Balance of \$335.74. Debited from the account during this period were two checks totaling \$84.67. Credited to the account was a \$20.00 donation made in August, leaving an Ending Balance of \$271.07. Outstanding are two checks totaling \$177.20: a \$77.20 check for documented newsletter expenses (postage, printing, envelopes, ink); and a \$100 check for the July and August stipends to our newsletter editor to compensate/reimburse her in part for the tremendous amount of time, research, and work required to put out a first-class newsletter each month, and for her miscellaneous undocumented expenses incurred as a result of her work for the GFPSG (e.g. internet access, electricity, gas, etc.), leaving an Adjusted Balance of \$93.87.

The GFPSG expenditures for monthly meeting and newsletter expenses paid out of our Wells Fargo checking account for the period of January 2009 through August 2009 was \$1,094.25 for an average of \$136.78 per month. Donations made directly to our GFPSG group and deposited into our Wells Fargo checking account for the same period was \$780.00 for an average of \$97.50 per month. As our monthly expenses exceed our monthly donations, our checking account balance has been slowly depleted over the months. Therefore, the Steering Committee is considering requesting a grant from our Support Group account held at the Fresno Regional Foundation to replenish the Support Group's Wells Fargo checking account used for our monthly expenses.

Although monies donated directly to our Support group are not tax deductible, they do help cover refreshments and Newsletter-related expenses and are greatly appreciated. Donation jars are at the sign-in table and refreshments area. Thank you for your continued generous support.

**Fresno Regional Foundation:** The "Parkinson's Support Fund" Balance as of August 28, 2009, is \$3,733. There was one gift received in the month of August in the amount of \$100.00. Donations and gifts made to our Support Group through the Foundation are tax deductible. Call (559) 226-5600 or go to [www.fresnoregfoundation.org](http://www.fresnoregfoundation.org) for additional information. Thank you!

## **Our Group Depends Quite Possibly On YOU**

Our Group both provides support for and requires the support of many hands. We have been blessed with a great number of People With Parkinson's (PWP) and Care Partners who help in many ways. Of course, worsening of conditions, waning energy, etc. create a continuous challenge to balance their individual work loads and even relieve them from time to time. We would very much appreciate hearing from you if you or someone you know could help with leadership tasks such as upkeep of the library, providing refreshments, emceeding the meetings, arranging guest speakers and programs, tending the sound system, editing our newsletter, updating our website, straightening out rooms after meetings, etc. Thank you!