

# Greater Fresno Parkinson's Support Group

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

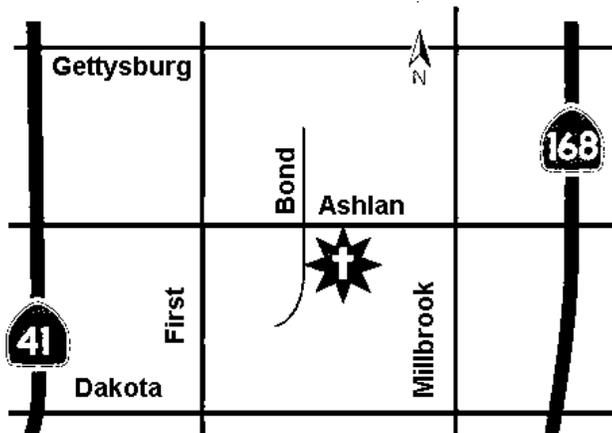
We meet the second Saturday of each month **except August** and **November** or unless otherwise notified.

 Our next meeting is: 

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2012**

**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

at **THE BRIDGE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH** in Rooms 212-213 upstairs via elevator in the **Atrium** at **3438 E. Ashlan Ave., Fresno, CA 93726**, at the southeast corner of Ashlan & Bond between First & Millbrook. Enter the parking lot from Ashlan Ave.



**BRING ON THE CURE!**

## OUR SEPTEMBER 8, 2012, PROGRAM

Our speakers will be **Robert Howk** and **Marcella Downing** of the Law Office of Howk & Downing, LLP. These husband and wife attorneys will be speaking on Elder Law and other laws that might pertain to us. Robert and Marcie are local attorneys practicing exclusively in the area of estate planning and elder law. They will be speaking to us on the ways that planning can improve quality of life while obtaining maximum benefits from Veteran's benefits and Medi-Cal.

Also, Meg Bateman will explain how to order an "Aware in Care Hospital Action Plan Kit." This kit is designed to help people with Parkinson's disease get the best care possible when hospitalized. She will show the kit and how to order it at no cost from the National Parkinson's Foundation.

Refreshments will be provided.

## GET TOGETHER

After the meeting on September 8, there will be a lunch at 12:15 p.m. at Yosemite Falls Café on Cedar Avenue between Ashlan Avenue and Dakota Avenue, on the east side of the street. We welcome you to join us.

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.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT BY BARBARA BURMEISTER**

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

The July 26 – August 23, 2012, Wells Fargo Bank Statement shows a beginning balance of \$592.48. Debited from the account during this period was a check for \$21.57 for microphone batteries. Deposited to the account was \$1,500.00 from the Support Group fund held at the Fresno Regional Foundation (FRF) to replenish the checking account used for Support Group operating expenses. The current statement ending balance is \$2,070.91. Outstanding are 3 checks totaling \$243.83 for July newsletter expenses and the purchase of a new printer. Receipts for August newsletter printing/postage expenses as well as receipts for July meeting refreshments have yet to be submitted for reimbursement.

**Note:** As our Support Group operating expenses often exceed our monthly donations, it has been necessary to request grants out of the Parkinson's Support Group Fund held at the Fresno Regional Foundation twice this year; \$1,000.00 in January 2012 and \$1,500.00 in August 2012.

*Monies donated directly to our Support Group are **not** tax deductible; however, they do help cover the cost of newsletter, refreshment, and operating expenses. Donations made to the Parkinson's Support Group fund held at the Fresno Regional Foundation **are** tax deductible (see information below).*

Thank you once again to those who have provided refreshments at our meetings; this helps keep our expenses down and is greatly appreciated. Also, if you have an email account, but receive a hard-copy of the newsletter, please contact our newsletter editor Ellen Jablonski to have your newsletter delivered electronically. This would reduce the expense of printing and postage, and would also save Ellen valuable time.

**Fresno Regional Foundation (FRF) Fund Report:** There was a \$50.00 donation made to the Greater Fresno Parkinson's Group Fund held at the FRF in August ~ thank you! We started 2012 with a Fund balance of \$4,758.85. Revenue to date includes \$200.00 from Gifts/donations and \$17.33 earned from Dividends and Interest. Expenses/Debits to date include \$58.31 in Foundation Administrative Fees; as well as \$2,500.00 from the Support Group Fund to replenish the Wells Fargo checking account (\$1,000.00 in January, and \$1,500.00 in August). As of August 30, 2012, the FRF Parkinson's Support Fund Statement shows an ending Fund balance of \$2,418.28.

**Attention - Tax Time is Coming!!! Consider making a tax-deductible donation to support our Greater Fresno Parkinson's Support Group.** Donations or gifts to our Support Group through the *Fresno Regional Foundation* are tax deductible and can be made on-line, or by check, Visa, or MasterCard. 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](http://www.fresnoregfoundation.org) to make a gift online.

### **OFFICERS**

#### **Co-Leaders/Emcees:**

Doug Jackson  
Bruce Medlin

#### **Treasurer**

Barbara Burmeister

#### **Hospitality:**

Megan Bateman

#### **Librarians:**

Mac & MaryAnn MacDonald

#### **Membership Committee:**

Sue & Doug Jackson  
Faye Smith

#### **Newsletter Editor:**

Ellen Jablonski

#### **Care Partners Group Leader:**

Anne Guenther

### **STEERING COMMITTEE**

Megan Bateman

Arlene Beard

Bill & Barbara Burmeister

Anne Guenther

Ellen Jablonski

Doug & Sue Jackson

Riley and Linda Jones

Mac & MaryAnn MacDonald

Bruce Medlin

Faye Smith

Bob & Dorothy Starr

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: (800) 510-2020

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)

106 W. Paul Avenue

Clovis, CA 93612

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

**(559) 593-9953**

## GET PD NEWS NOW:

You can receive current Parkinson's disease research news, helpful tips on daily living with Parkinson's disease, and timely notification of breaking news and alerts by subscribing to *American Parkinson Disease Association's* (APDA) free e-newsletter. Go to [www.apdaparkinson.org](http://www.apdaparkinson.org) and click on the "Get e-updates" button on the right side of the home page. It is free, easy, and you can unsubscribe at any time. The website also includes daily news updates about Parkinson's disease from reliable news media, professional publications, and news releases from prestigious academic institutions.

## ORTHOSTATIC HYPOTENSION (LOW BLOOD PRESSURE) AND PD

Orthostatic hypotension is a sharp drop in blood pressure that happens when a person gets up from bed or from a chair. This can cause dizziness or even loss of consciousness, lightheadedness, weakness, difficulty thinking, headache, or feeling faint. Doctors define it as a blood pressure drop of 20 millimeters of mercury (20 mm Hg) in systolic blood pressure (the top number in a blood pressure reading), or a drop of 10 millimeters in diastolic blood pressure (the bottom number), within three minutes after standing up. Normally, when a person rises from lying down or sitting, the blood vessels constrict and send blood from the legs and trunk up to the head. In addition, the heart beats slightly faster and more forcefully. In people living with PD, the heart rate may not increase upon standing, and the blood pressure may drop as a result.

The condition can put people with Parkinson's at risk of fainting, losing balance, falling, and being injured. Orthostatic Hypotension can occur: (1) A.M. hours in general; (2) straining on toilet; (3) having a meal; (4) Parkinson's medication dosing; (5) standing quickly; (6) extended activity; and (7) dehydration.

What to do? (1) Drink more fluids (water, Gatorade, etc.); (2) pump legs before standing; (3) wear compression stockings up to the knee; (4) add reasonable, additional salt to meals; (5) consider prescription medications such as (ProAmatine®), fludrocortisone (Florinef®) or pyridostigmine (Mestinon®).

### Word of the Month

**Dyssomnia** (dis- som'ne-ah) noun, any of various disturbances in the quality, amount, or timing of sleep. Very common for those afflicted with Parkinson's disease.

### Chuckle of the Month

Then there was the case of the procrastinating proctologist who got a little behind in his work.

## "Driving and PD" - Tips and List of Resources

*(Continued from our GFPSG August 2012 Newsletter.)*

(From Robin Riddle, APDA Center Coordinator <rriddle@stanford.edu>, parkinsons.stanford.edu, (650) 724-6090: After the "Driving and PD" webinar hosted by the Parkinson's Disease Foundation (PDF), Steven Russell of Stanford's APDA Information & Referral Center compiled a terrific list of general resources and resources specific to Northern California.)

-Keep a record, and bring that record to each doctor's visit, for any difficulties you or your care partner have noticed in your driving abilities. Note especially the timing of medications, particular medications taken, side effects experienced, etc.

-Healthy sleeping habits. You must be well rested to drive safely. If you are having sleep issues, discuss with your doctor and work with your care partner and medical team on providing a quiet, healthy sleep environment.

-Take care of your vehicle.

-Make certain that your safety systems are in good working order. When taking the car into the shop, ask that all lights, signals and warning devices be tested. In between service visits, have your care partner or a friend help you test these safety systems. Each time you are ready to drive, ensure that the windshield and all windows are clear, that nothing is blocking your view in any direction, and that interior and exterior mirrors are positioned correctly.

-Find the right car and any aids you need for driving.

-Drive defensively. Modern automobiles contain wonderful safety systems but also have many distractions (cell phones, DVD, or CD players, navigation systems, etc.) which can lead to dangerous situations while driving. For those living with Parkinson's disease, it is important that you leave sufficient braking distance and travel at a speed that flows with traffic but allows adequate time for a safe stop. If you double your speed the stopping distance is quadrupled irrespective of weather conditions. There are excellent training programs available online or in a classroom setting. Successful completion of these courses may also lead to lower auto insurance premiums.

-Know your limitations. If you feel uncomfortable in certain situations (a new destination, driving at night, driving on high speed roads or in city traffic), plan ahead to have others assist you or change your plans to be able to drive when you are comfortable.

-Listen to the concerns others may have about your driving. If friends or loved ones begin to talk to you about your driving, it may be time to talk to your doctor, family members or friends.

-Get a professional assessment. An occupational therapist or certified driver rehabilitation specialist can provide a comprehensive assessment of the skills needed to drive and recommend modifications to the vehicle or other tools to keep someone driving for as long as is safely possible. This is an especially helpful step if the family/person with Parkinson's/care partner is having disagreements about driving ability and safety. Most programs will require a medical referral, although some will do a clinical and/or on-the-road evaluation on a private pay fee basis. Note that private insurance, Medicaid, and Medicare do not pay for driver evaluations. Possible sources for coverage include vocational rehabilitation programs, independent living programs, workers compensation benefit payments, or private pay.

To be continued in next month's Newsletter.