

# Parkinson Post

PARKINSON SUPPORT GROUP

OF GREEN VALLEY














P.O. BOX 714

Arizona 85622

# FEBRUARY

2009



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1	2 Exercise Program 9AM 	3	4 Exercise Program 9AM 	5	6 Educational Meeting 1-2:30 East Center 	7
8	9 Exercise Program 9AM 	10	11 Exercise Program 9AM 	12 Abraham Lincoln's Birthday	13 Exercise Program 9AM 	14  Valentines Day
15	16 Exercise Program 9AM 	17	18 Men's Forum Ladies with Parkinson's Caregivers 	19	20 Board Meeting Valley Presbyterian Church 	21
22 George Washington's Birthday	23 Exercise Program 9AM 	24	25 Exercise Program 9AM 	26	27 Exercise Program 9AM 	28

*Exercise Classes are held at the Presbyterian Church., Caregivers, Men's Forum, Ladies with Parkinson's, meet at Friends in Deed*

## President's Message

Our **January Meeting** was a great success, thanks to Cynthia Holmes, who gave some hints on how to make sure we keep our speaking voices strong so others can hear us. They include sitting up straight, taking deep breaths, using short words, and exaggerating your pronunciation. Also, Cynthia suggested we let others know this can be a problem for us and give them permission to let us know when our voice is too soft.

Since singing is a good way to practice deep breathing and speaking loud, Joanna Fitzgarrald and Carroll Morris led the group in a fun sing-along accompanied by a Mitch Miller singers. Afterward, Cynthia led a lively discussion on problems members have and what they do to cope. She suggested putting together a box with items that can be used to strengthen finger and hand dexterity, such as clothes pins. Rolling our feet over tennis balls gives a good foot massage and stimulates the vascular system.

Several couples from our group attended Gita Fendelman's **Laughter Yoga Retreat**. This was a delightful event—we all learned a lot of techniques to increase health through laughter. Don't be surprised if one of us greets you with "Ha, ha, ho-ho-ho!" Gita plans to have another retreat soon. We'll let you know the date.



**Volunteers needed!** The annual **Health Fair** will be held on February 4th from 8-12 AM at the West Center. We plan to have a booth at the Fair and do a 50/50 raffle to raise funds. If you would like to man the booth for an hour or two call Gary Morris at 207-2475. The final version of our beautiful new brochures will be available to pass out on that day.

Our **February Educational Meeting** will feature Dr. Joseph Christiano, a neurosurgeon, and Dr. William Lujan, a neurologist, both with Western Neurosurgery in Tucson. They will be giving updates on PD treatments and medications. Joey Gregan of Medtronic will also be at the meeting. Q & A period will follow. This should be a terrific program and one all members will want to hear.

Two couples attended our meeting in January for the first time. **George and Nancy Laro**i from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, and **George and Grita Whitehead** from Green Valley. We thank you for joining us and hope you will be regulars at our meetings.

*Bob Wilshek*

## Caregiver's Corner

Ten Tips for Family Caregivers

Adapted from HelpGuide.org

1. Caregiving is a job and respite is your earned right. Reward yourself with respite breaks often. Remember we have a respite fund you can use for any reason, up to \$300 a year. Contact Shirley Girod if you need respite care for your partner.
2. Watch out for signs of depression, and don't delay in getting professional help when you need it. Casa de Esperanza makes Behavioral Health Services available to the general public through Medicare, insurance benefits, and fee-for-service with sliding scale considerations. Contact Sage at [sbergstrom@casacanhhelp.org](mailto:sbergstrom@casacanhhelp.org) or 625-2273 x841 for more information.
3. When people offer to help, accept the offer and suggest specific things that they can do.
4. Educate yourself about your loved one's condition and how to communicate effectively with doctors.
5. There's a difference between **caring** and **doing**. Be open to technologies and ideas that promote your loved one's independence.

6. Trust your instincts. Most of the time they'll lead you in the right direction.
7. Caregivers often do a lot of lifting, pushing, and pulling. Be good to your back.
8. Grieve for your losses, and then allow yourself to dream new dreams.
9. Seek support from other caregivers. There is great strength in knowing you are not alone.
10. Stand up for your rights as a caregiver and a citizen.

### **Getting to Know You Jerry and Mary Newton**

by Jerry Newton  
with Dick Schneider



Jerry Newton sometimes sees his life as much like that of the luckless Jackie Gleason character in the TV show, "The Honeymooners." But despite not getting his GED until he was 65, he is able to boast of many accomplishments as he persevered against great adversities.

Being born during the world's worst depression on a cold day in 1929 in Buffalo is a tough way to get started. One of his earliest memories is his first day of school when a nun rapped his knuckles with a pointer for writing with his left hand. She sent a note home telling his parents it "was all in his head." It was his first and last day in that school because his parents immediately transferred him.

The family had a hard time during the 30's. His school experiences were generally bad. He describes this period as an "era of hand-me-down clothing which was either too short or too long." Early in the depression Jerry's father lost his job at Bethlehem Steel. They lost their home and were forced to move in with grandparents. After two years

without electricity or running water and using kerosene for light, Mr. Newton finally landed a job paying 25 cents an hour. Eventually he returned to the steel mill and was able to buy a farm near Eden, New York. Jerry and his siblings worked the fields and took care of the animals. The family set up a stand where they sold eggs, milk, fryers and fresh vegetables. He describes these years on the farm as the "best years of my life."

Jerry's experiences in formal education were perhaps typical for that period, as were his job situations. But so many stumbling blocks would try the patience of almost anyone. Continuing to fall behind in school work, he took the advice of a counselor and entered a special school for trades and skills. It didn't help. He found himself in class with "a band of hooligans, rowdies and ruffians who beat the "bleep" our of me, trying to steal my lunch money." The ruffians were expelled.

By the age of 16, Jerry's formal education was finished. His options were limited. The best work he could find when he quit school was a paper route and a Penny Saver distributorship which paid him about \$30 per week. He paid his mother \$5 for room and board. And she saw to it \$10 went into the pot in the buffet for insurance and another \$5 for his savings account. On one occasion, short on cash, he took \$10 from the pot. She quickly spotted the loss and in addition to lecturing him in economics, he was grounded for a week.

When his mother moved to West Seneca, Jerry went along. There he joined the Jaycees and an auxiliary police unit. He worked in several restaurants and got good tips but he wanted something better. In 1951, he found work with the Maritime



Service aboard the SS Alpena, a Great Lakes iron ore carrier. After several years another

problem arose. Both of his parents, now legally separated, became disabled with

heart disease and hypertension. Jerry left the Alpena and moved in with his mother to take care of her and also checked on his father almost daily.

In 1962 Jerry returned to the Alpena. It was the only way to "make a buck." On a trip home he stopped at his sister's home where she was having a Christmas party. Among the guests was his future wife, Mary. They were married in February, 1965.

Marriage to Mary ended his sailing days. After one more season on the Alpena, Jerry knew he would have to find work ashore. The Chris-Craft boat company was hiring and he got on - but not for long. The employees went on strike. Adversity had struck again, but this time things worked out in Jerry's favor. He got a job in the building maintenance section at the Air Force Base at Selfridge Field near Mt. Clements, Michigan. The job lasted 25 years.

March 31, 1966 is regarded as a "double header" day in the Newton household. It was the day Jerry began a job which lasted for 25 years, and it was also the day they poured the foundation for their new house in Algonac, Michigan. Jerry and Mary have two daughters born in 1967 and 1968.

Looking back it is clear that losing the Chris-Craft job started Jerry down the road to a 25-year career. But that road was not without pitfalls. Selfridge Field was in a state of reorganization. Reductions in force for the first six years of Jerry's employment caused considerable anxiety about the permanence of his position. Keeping a low profile, he survived until the Michigan Air Guard found a custodial position for him in an air rescue unit. During his last 16 years as a government employee he felt he was

treated "like family." It was during this time that Jerry, a member of the American Federation of Government Employees, became active in public relations for that organization. It was also during these years that Jerry went back to school to work on his GED. It took seven years, but he did earn his diploma!

One evening in 1977 while watching a TV program about the Central Arizona irrigation canal, the Newtons noted the beauty of the desert, particularly Camelback mountain. They decided to include a visit during the vacation they were planning. They came, they saw, and several years later, they purchased. And they still live in that unit in the Villas in Green Valley.

December 31, 1991 was Jerry's last day on the job. The Newtons owned a mobile home in Michigan and for several years they commuted to Arizona. But they found this could be expensive and soon tired of the damage and thefts that occurred when they rented the unit. In 1997 they sold their Michigan home and moved to Green Valley permanently. In 1998 Jerry and Mary took a 17-day trip to Europe - their trip of a lifetime.

It was 2004 when the bad luck began again for our hero. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. Jerry says that, like the rest of us, he is learning to live with it while waiting for better treatments and hoping for a cure. He and Mary are regulars at the Parkinson's exercise classes. Jerry also works on crossword puzzles to "keep his brain active." Despite having to dodge the rocks misfortune threw at him, especially since those depression era days, this man didn't give up.

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### **Parkinson's Disease Plays Havoc With Common Orthopedic Conditions**

Although Parkinson's disease (PD) is a neurological disorder, according to an article in the January 2009 issue of the *Journal of*

*the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons*, the disease also **increases** a person's risk of experiencing complicated orthopedic conditions. The author recommends that all Parkinson's treatment plans include a multidisciplinary approach

in order to address additional accompanying musculoskeletal health issues.

According to the author, Doctor Lee M. Zuckerman, M.D., SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York, tremors, body rigidity, and problems with movement caused by PD may lead to other secondary, medical issues. One often-noted example relates to the fact that people with Parkinson's often move and walk less than non-suffers and generally stay indoors. Decreased movement may lead to bone loss, and the reduced exposure to sunlight that generally occurs when patients spend little time outdoors is likely to generate a decrease in vitamin D, which is needed to keep bones strong. This is particularly harmful to Parkinson's patients, since the combination of decreased bone density and instability from tremors and rigidity caused by PD greatly increase a person's risk of:

- Falling
- Breaking bones
- Osteoporosis

Although there are surgical treatments for

orthopedic conditions experienced by people with PD, the disease can have a negative effect on recovery. In one example, the tremors associated with PD have been shown to interfere with the repair and rehabilitation of bone injuries. Those who have had a joint replacement are often relieved of pain and initially have improvements in mobility, but these improvements only last about a year. Treatments for PD patients have allowed them to live longer lives with improved quality of life. As these patients age, there are strong predictions that there will be an increased need for medical and surgical interventions for complicated orthopedic issues.

## BIRTHDAYS

- 2 1 Marge Grell
- 2 3 Robert Wood
- 2 7 Marilyn Becker
- 2 7 Richard Schnieder
- 2 10 Larry Hauge
- 2 26 Nancy Grasiani
- 2 27 Ken Bauer
- 2 27 Sandy Murchison
- 2 19 Bob Davison
- 2 20 Jerry Morrell
- 2 22 Rudy May
- 2 23 Carol Stanford
- 2 28 Gary Haselhuhn



## ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 9 1985 Jim & Jean Pfeifer
- 2 14 1999 Allen & Barbara Ogden
- 2 11 Beverly Hauge
- 2 12 Brenda Bauer
- 2 12 Joanna Davison
- 2 13 Carroll Morris
- 2 14 John Sainsbury
- 2 15 Eugene Herzog
- 2 17 Cynthia Holmes
- 2 18 Georgie Bever
- 2 18 Vern Selway

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PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP  
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*Everyone  
needs  
support  
sometimes.*

#### **UPCOMING EVENT**

- **Health Fair, Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup> 8-12** at Green Valley Mall
- **February Educational Meeting, Friday the 6<sup>th</sup> from 1-2:30** at the East Center

Dr. Joseph Christiano, a neurosurgeon, and Dr. William Lujan, a neurologist (both with Western Neurosurgery in Tucson) will be giving updates on PD treatments and medications. Joey Gregan of Medtronic will also be at the meeting. Q & A period will follow.