

# PSGTC NEWSLETTER

March/April 2010

Editor: Ann Milam

Welcome all visitors to our new web site.

## Message from the President



Helen Robertson, President

So much snow this winter, but spring is just around the corner. And speaking of Spring, don't forget to change your clocks March 14<sup>th</sup> for Daylight Savings Time. That's also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke detectors. Banish your late-winter doldrums by setting aside five minutes a day just to appreciate the beauty around you and look for those first signs of spring, like hearing birds chirping.



## Happy St. Patrick's Day

*And Old Irish Blessing*

*May the road rise up to meet you  
May the wind always be at your back  
May the sun shine warm upon you face,  
and rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the palm of His Hand.*



Easter is April 4 this year. For those of you who celebrate Easter, we hope you have a blessed holiday, and if you will be traveling to visit family or friends, do travel carefully. Enjoy the spring weather and as the days warm, look for those first blooms to appear and add some much welcome color to our landscapes.

From your editor: Ann Milam

## Attention!

Annual Dues are Due April 1, 2010

Dues are as follows:

Individual & Family (patient and partner annual Dues.....\$20.00

Professional Member annual dues.... \$30.00

Life members One time fee.....\$200.00

Please mail your dues along with a membership application form , so the dues will be credited to the correct person/family.

Your prompt attention to this is greatly appreciated, and keep our Support Group going.



**For Support Group information call our Help Line at (817) 275-1909**

## MARCH & APRIL MEETINGS

### Annual Caregivers Luncheon

Our March 22, 2010 meeting will be held at 11:30am and will be our **Annual Caregivers Luncheon**. This is a time when we show our appreciation to the people in our lives that donate so much to our care. Whether it be in our everyday lives, or occasionally seeing after our needs, we do appreciate them and all they do. Lunch will be catered, and is free to our **caregivers** and is \$9.00 for all others. **Please call Ann Pace at 817/292-1644 by March 12th to confirm your reservations.**

Our speaker for the day will be **Dr. David Capper**.

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### Reflections Choir

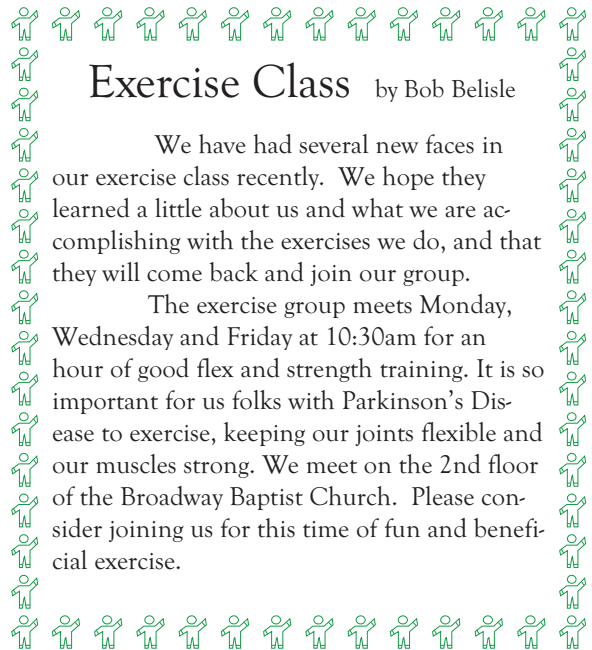
The April 26, 2010 meeting will be held at 1:30pm. We will have refreshments and a wonderful concert from this very talented choir of amazing young people.

Additionally, we will be having a raffle to give away money!



Our meetings are held on the 3rd floor of :

**Broadway Baptist Church  
305 W. Broadway, RM 302  
Fort Worth, TX 76104**



### Exercise Class by Bob Belisle

We have had several new faces in our exercise class recently. We hope they learned a little about us and what we are accomplishing with the exercises we do, and that they will come back and join our group.

The exercise group meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 10:30am for an hour of good flex and strength training. It is so important for us folks with Parkinson's Disease to exercise, keeping our joints flexible and our muscles strong. We meet on the 2nd floor of the Broadway Baptist Church. Please consider joining us for this time of fun and beneficial exercise.

### Our January & February meetings brought many new faces.

Our visitors were: Ray & Priscilla Coleman; Bob Griffin; Cheryl Tuckett; Carl Peterson; Eugene Kroeger.

We welcome our new members:

Sean Duncan (our speaker from January); Charlie Duran; Rhonda Alexander; Lillian Pacheco and Barbara & Jim Hildebrand

So good to see each of you and we hope you will come back again soon.

## Caregivers Corner

Loretta Belisle and Martha Jane Saxon

The caregivers meet on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month. We meet at 10:30, the same time as the Parkinsonians are exercising in the adjoining room. It is an excellent time to gather with other caregivers and share experiences and helpful tips. We welcome all caregivers to join us, whether your patient is able to exercise with the group or not. It is an informal meeting. Please join us.

### On the lighter side

Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit;  
wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.



Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.

Call Ann Pace by March 12 at 817/292-1644 to make your reservation for the Caregivers Luncheon.

# TREATMENT FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE

ARTICLE FROM [WWW.MAYOCLINIC.ORG](http://WWW.MAYOCLINIC.ORG)

People who are only mildly affected by Parkinson's disease may need no treatment at first. As symptoms progress, various treatment approaches are available.

**Medication** Medication selection and dosage are tailored to the individual. The doctor considers factors such as severity of symptoms, age and presence of other medical conditions. Every patient responds differently to a medication or dosage level, so this process involves experimentation, persistence, and patience. As the disease progresses, drug dosages may need to be modified. Sometimes drugs are combined. Patients need to receive care from doctors who have extensive experience treating all stages of Parkinson's disease – increasing the effectiveness of treatment at every stage of the disease. Levodopa, a substance normally found in the body in limited amounts, is usually the first medication prescribed. Taken orally, levodopa can be converted by the body into dopamine the body needs. Another class of drugs, dopamine agonists, is also useful at reducing symptoms and can be used singly or in conjunction with levodopa. Dopamine agonists were introduced 20 years ago. Agonists are chemical substances capable of combining with part of a cell and initiating a reaction or activity. In 1998, the first in a new class of Parkinson's disease drugs (COMT inhibitors) was approved by the Food and Drug Administration. The COMT inhibitors prolong effects of levodopa therapy by blocking an enzyme that can break down levodopa.

**Surgery** In severely affected patients, surgical treatments such as ablation, deep brain stimulation, and pallidotomy may control some symptoms.

**Ablation** This procedure locates, targets, and then ablates (destroys) a clearly defined area of the brain affected by Parkinson's. The object is to destroy tissue that produces abnormal chemical or electrical impulses that produce abnormal movements. This approach is done less frequently, in favor of deep brain stimulation.

**Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS)** DBS targets areas in the brain where uncontrolled movements originate. The targeted region is inactivated, not destroyed, by an implanted electrode. The electrode is connected via a wire running beneath the skin to a stimulator and battery pack in the patient's chest. **Mayo Clinic has extensive expertise in determining which patients would benefit from the surgery. Read more about [deep brain stimulation](#) on the internet.**

**Pallidotomy** Pallidotomy, (named for the pallidum area of the brain) is a delicate surgical procedure that targets a precise area to control certain symptoms. A fine probe measures abnormal electrical activity. Another probe delivers small electrical shocks. The patient, who is awake during the surgery, describes the effects to pinpoint the area for treatment. The surgeon then burns a tiny hole in the cells. Results are almost immediate.

**Cerebral Transplantation** Dopamine-producing cells are implanted into the brain. The cells used for **transplantation may come from fetal cells or embryonic stem cells. At present, this surgery is experimental and much research needs to be done before it can be considered routinely. Mayo Clinic currently does not offer this surgery.**

## **Complementary Treatments**

Numerous therapies and nutritional supplements may help relieve symptoms and improve quality of life.

Physical therapy can help strengthen and tone underused muscles, and give rigid muscles a better range of motion. The goal is to help build body strength, improve balance, overcome gait problems and improve speaking and swallowing. Simple physical activities such as walking, gardening and swimming can foster a sense of well-being. For some patients, soothing massage may provide relief from muscle rigidity and may have other neuromuscular benefit(s).

*(As always, take the advise of your Neurologist. They are trained in the care and treatment of Parkinson patients.)*



# PARKINSON SUPPORT GROUP

## ACTIVITY

### MARCH 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Exercise 10:30	2	3 Exercise 10:30	4	5 Exercise 10:30	6
7	8 Exercise 10:30	9	10 Exercise 10:30	11	12 Exercise 10:30 Caregivers 10:30 Dead line for Reservation for Caregivers Luncheon	13
14	15 Exercise 10:30	16	17 Exercise 10:30 St Patrick's Day  	18	19 Exercise 10:30	20
21	22 Exercise 10:30  <div style="border: 1px dotted black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">           PSG Meeting 11:30 Caregivers Luncheon         </div>	23	24 Exercise 10:30	25	26 Exercise 10:30 Caregivers 10:30	27
28	29 Exercise 10:30	30	31			

# PARKINSON SUPPORT GROUP

## ACTIVITY

### APRIL 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Good Friday No Activity Today	3
4 <i>Easter</i> 	5 Easter Monday No Activity To- day	6	7 Exercise 10:30	8	9 Exercise 10:30 Caregivers 10:30	10
11	12 Exercise 10:30	13	14 Exercise 10:30	15	16 Exercise 10:30	17
18	19 Exercise 10:30	20	21 Exercise 10:30	22	23 Exercise 10:30 Caregivers 10:30	24
25	26 Exercise 10:30 1:30 pm Program Mtg. Reflections Choir 	27	28 Exercise 10:30	29	30 Exercise 10:30	

Meetings are held at:  
Broadway Baptist Church  
305 W. Broadway, Room 302  
Fort. Worth, TX 76104  
For info about our group call our  
Help Line (817) 275-1909



PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP  
OF TARRANT COUNTY  
P. O. Box 939  
HURST, TX 76053

## PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP OF TARRANT COUNTY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL FORM

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Spouse/Family Member/Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Preferred Type of Membership: \_\_\_\_\_ Family (patient and partner (\$20.00 per year)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Professional (\$30.00 per year)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime(\$200.00)

Make check payable to PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP OF TARRANT COUNTY (or PSGTC)

Mail to: Merry Ann Bench, P. O. Box 939, Hurst, TX 76053

The contents or opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of individual writers and do not constitute an endorsement or approval by Parkinson's Support Group of Tarrant County.