

PSGTC NEWSLETTER

January/February 2010

Editor: Ann Milam

Parkinson's Support Group of Tarrant County is now on the World Wide Web!!

Our website address is: www.psgtc.org

Welcome all visitors to our new web site.

Message from the President



Now that the holidays are over, it's time to rest and refocus. We are all faced with new challenges each day and our PSGTC support group should be a priority in helping us through trying times. I personally have received such encouragement from our members and want to thank each one for their support.

Looking forward to another great year for our Parkinson group.

Helen Robertson, President

Happy New Year



Christmas Luncheon

If you were one of the unlucky members that missed the Christmas Luncheon, you missed some good food and clowning around. Five lucky members won some neat raffle items, including two stained glass hangings made by Ann Milam, a wooden cross by Bob Pace, a \$30.00 gift certificate donated by Chris Sharp, and a "Parkinson for Dummies" book donated by Helen Robertson. We really enjoyed the beautiful piano music provided by Cathy Collier and the table decorations provided by Sally Day and her sorority.

Changes

As you can see, we are starting the new year off with a new look on our Newsletter. We have a different background design. We have lots of color (if you are reading online.) And I hope you will enjoy the new look of our Newsletter. Remember, this is Your newsletter, and if you feel you have information that should be included in our Newsletter, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your continued support.

Ann Milam



Tulip Pins for New Members

Congratulations new members, **Mary Goodwin, Michael Mekna, Bettye Olson, Irene Rowland, Robert Rogers, James Shelton, William Villaneuva, and Claris Warner.**



You are our newest members and have a new Tulip Pin waiting for you at the January meeting.



The Tulip Pin was designed by a Parkinson patient, and has been adopted as a symbol promoting Parkinson awareness.



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

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY MEETINGS

Our January 2010 Meeting will be held January 25 at 1:30pm.

The program will be provided by Medtronic, a foremost medical technology company that provides products, therapies, and services that enhance or extend the lives of those with chronic disease.

We will have snacks provided by Garden Terrace.

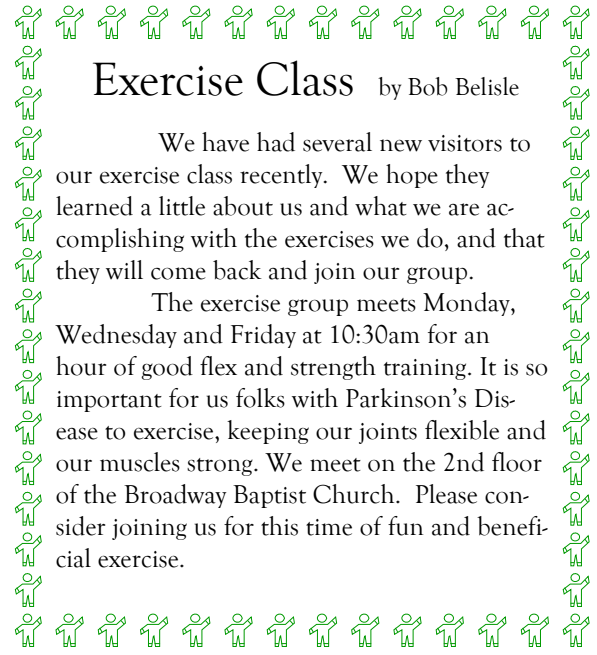
The February Meeting will be held February 22 at 1:30pm.

Dr. Richard L. Fulbright, PhD. will be out speaker. Dr. Fulbright is a Clinical Neuropsychologist and he specializes in brain rehabilitation.

Board of Directors meeting will be at 12:00.

Our meetings are held on the 3rd floor of :

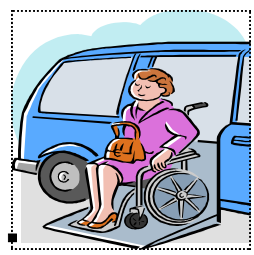
**Broadway Baptist Church—
305 W. Broadway, RM 302
Fort Worth, TX 76104**



Exercise Class by Bob Belisle

We have had several new visitors to 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.



Handicap Equipment Available

- Elsie Wilson has a 2001 Silver Chrysler Town & Country Ramp Van.
- Can be used with manual or electric wheel chair or scooter in driver's or passenger's side. Less than 38K, in good condition. You can call Elsie at (817) 275-1909 for more information.



VALENTINE'S DAY

Don't forget February 14th is a day to express love to your dear ones and by all means ~ EAT CHOCOLATE ~

Chocolate is made from the cocoa bean and that's a vegetable so it counts as one in that food group.

*"Worms will not eat living wood where the vital sap is flowing;
Rust will not hinder the opening of a gate when the hinges are used each day.
Movement gives health and life.
Stagnation brings disease and death."
~ proverb in traditional Chinese Medicine*

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.



"The trouble with today's generation is that they can't stand on their own two feet."

Progression Of Parkinson's Disease May Be Prevented By Widely Used Cholesterol-Lowering Drug

Simvastatin, a commonly used, cholesterol-lowering drug, may prevent Parkinson's disease from progressing further. Neurological researchers at Rush University Medical Center conducted a study examining the use of the FDA-approved medication in mice with Parkinson's disease and found that the drug successfully reverses the biochemical, cellular and anatomical changes caused by the disease.

"Statins are one of the most widely used cholesterol-lowering drugs throughout the world," said study author Kalipada Pahan, PhD, professor of neurological sciences at Rush University Medical Center. "This may be a safer approach to halt the disease progression in Parkinson's patients."

The authors have shown that the activity of one protein called p21Ras is increased very early in the midbrain of mice with Parkinson's pathology. Simvastatin enters into the brain and blocks the activity of the p21Ras protein and other associated toxic molecules, and goes on to protect the neurons, normalize neurotransmitter levels, and improves the motor functions in the mice with Parkinson's.

"Understanding how the disease works is important to developing effective drugs that protect the brain and stop the progression of Parkinson's," said Pahan. "If we are able to replicate these results in Parkinson's patients in the clinical setting, it would be a remarkable advance in the treatment of this devastating neurodegenerative disease."

Parkinson's is a slowly progressive disease that affects a small area of cells within the mid-brain known as the substantia nigra. Gradual degeneration of these cells causes a reduction in dopamine, which is a vital chemical neurotransmitter. The decrease in dopamine results in one or more of the classic signs of Parkinson's disease that includes, resting tremor on one side of the body, generalized slowness of movement, stiffness of limbs, and gait or balance problems. The cause of Parkinson's disease is unknown. Both environmental and genetic causes of the disease have been postulated.

Parkinson's disease affects about 1.2 million patients in the United States and Canada. Although 15 percent of patients are diagnosed before age 50, it is generally considered a disease that targets older adults, affecting one of every 100 persons over the age of 60. This disease appears to be slightly more common in men than women.

Source: Deborah Song
Rush University Medical Center

"If we are able to replicate these results in Parkinson's patients in the clinical setting, it would be a remarkable advance in the treatment of this devastating neurodegenerative disease."

10 Signs of Depression In Parkinson's

1. Excessive worrying
2. Persistent sadness
3. Crying
4. Loss of interest in usual activities and hobbies
5. Increased fatigue and lack of energy
6. Feelings of guilt
7. Loss of motivation
8. Complaints of aches and pains
9. Feelings of being a burden to loved ones
10. Ruminations about disability, death and dying

People with these symptoms should discuss them with a physician.

