

The Resource

Volume 9, Issue 6

Seeing the old year out...

November — December 2010

A Publication of the Parkinson's Resource Center of Spokane



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Page Two (2)

***Ask the Physical Therapist:** Understanding the Body-weight Shift as it Effects Mobility, by Len Norfleet, PT

Page Three (3)

- * Donor Roll Call
- * Board and Staff
- * In Honor
- * In Memory

New for 2011

- * There will no longer be a donation envelope inside each issue of The Resource. Instead, you'll receive a donation request letter twice a year; once in the fall and once in the spring.
- * In January new **Cougar Rx Corner** columns return.
- * The PRC begins its 10th year.

Group News



Kim Stone and Jennifer E. Hauge

Photo by Walt Jakubowski

Tremble Clefs' New Season is Underway

The Spokane Tremble Clefs began their new season in September and are currently preparing for the Christmas program sing-along at the Parkinson's TeleHealth Educational Meeting at St. Luke's Rehabilitation on December 12 at 2PM. They began this season with two outstanding speech-language pathology students—Jennifer Hauge and Kim Stone—in the EWU/WSU *Unified Program for Communication Disorders*. These students conduct the warm-up vocal exercises and then help lead the group in singing old favorite songs specifically selected to help improve the voices of those with PD. Jennifer is an accomplished opera singer and recently mesmerized the group with a terrific solo from Puccini's opera *La Bohème*.

The Spokane Tremble Clefs recently acquired their own Facebook page and encourage you to visit the page and "friend" them! Schedules, photo albums from performances, and other items of interest will be posted on the page.

The PRC is delighted to welcome **Pam Baldwin** as the new music director for the Spokane Tremble Clefs. Pam comes to us with an enthusiastic and caring heart following a lifetime of teaching and choral directing. If you would like to join or visit the Tremble Clefs at one of their sessions, contact Walt at Waltj@SpokaneParkinsons.org or phone 509-473-2490.

Is that your mug?

Walt and Shirley Jakubowski have had special Spokane Tremble Clefs mugs made which they're selling as a fund-raiser to get needed equipment for this great therapeutic support group.

These quality mugs come in two sizes: the standard 12 oz. size (\$8.00) and the "grande" 15 oz. (\$10.00). They are dishwasher-safe, microwaveable, and can be used for any hot or cold liquids. You can even use 'em as planters! The mugs will be available at all Tremble Clefs sessions and at St Luke's Rehab before the TeleHealth educational meeting. If you would like to purchase one or more of these mugs (Christmas is not far away—these would make a great gift!) contact Walt Jakubowski at by email: Waltj@SpokaneParkinsons.org



Here's a real 'mug' shot!

WWPD: Meets the first Thursday of each month at various locations. The December's Christmas luncheon will be at O'Doherty's in downtown Spokane, and husbands and guests are invited. Please call Julie to reserve a seat.

Caregiver's Support Group: Linda Lysne who brings both professional training, and personal experience of having been a long-term a caregiver for her spouse is the group's facilitator. NOTE: The **November date is the 17 at 2:00**

The Parkinson's Support Group: meets at 1:30 each 2nd Wednesday. This supportive, congenial group is for persons with Parkinson's, spouses/partners, family members, and caregivers. Meets in room 267 of the Deaconess Health & Education Center (DHEC) building.

Dance for Parkinson's: meets 11-12:15 in the Gonzaga University dance studio (1108 N Pearl Street) Dates for fall classes 2010 are September 18, October 2, and 16, November 6, and 20, and December 4, and 18. Join any time. Please wear clean soled shoes (not street shoes), comfortable clothing, and be prepared to have a fun time.

DO YOU HAVE NEWS TO SHARE? CONTACT THE PRC 509-473-2490



ASK the Physical Therapist

Understanding the Bodyweight Shift as it Effects Mobility

By Len Norfleet, PT

No matter what your physical status, or the progression of your Parkinson's, this "rule" can dramatically change your balance, improve your posture, and increase your fluidity of movement.

The Importance of Vision

Where are you looking? Your vision often becomes more important as you age. Accounting for 30% of your natural balance, vision allows you to judge where you are in relationship to the external world. Your visual line dictates your direction while moving forward and backward. Often with balance problems one tends to "double check" one's position. Although this is a normal reaction, oftentimes with PD one's gaze tends to remain fixed downward not really looking at anything in particular.

Understanding where to look: First and foremost you must stop that double-checking system that is forcing your visual line down. This downward gaze is the precursor to a shuffling gait (*festinating*) as well as freezing behavior often associated with PD. Next, find your anterior (*frontal*) horizon line by focusing your vision level in front of you. It is important that you look and focus on something along this line in order to judge your speed, distance, balance, and progression as you move forward in your gait pattern. For people with PD a great tool is to mark several distinct reference points related to the visual horizon using color or a distinct object.

The Rule of Opposites

When going forward: Look straight ahead, know where you are going, and focus on your direct line of sight. Lean slightly back with your chest, keeping your chin level, and begin your gait. Remember to stay focused and lean back slightly. This may seem counterintuitive, but it really works.

Going backward: (this is the easy part for some of us!) Knowing that your natural tendency is to look slightly downward, lean forward slightly with your chest, keeping your chin level, and step backward making sure that you extend your leg by bending the knee then touching your toe to the floor as you step back. Do not rock back or lean back onto your heels!

Side to Side: When side-stepping to your right, lean slightly to your left, pushing off with your left leg. Do not shift your bodyweight to the right when going right as this will make you catch the edge of your foot and either fall or have to hop to avoid falling. When side-stepping to your left, simply reverse these movements.

Turning: The key to turning without multiple tiny steps (yes I know you all do it) is to step and pivot opposite. To turn to your left, first step forward with your right foot, then turn left and pivot through, being careful not to step forward and turn to your right.

I hope the "Rule of Opposites" helps you. If you have question please call or email Len Norfleet (509) 838-6060 / lennks@yahoo.com. Please practice the strategies often and always with assistance and direction at first to make sure you are safe. Remember to keep on moving!

Ask the Physical Therapist is not intended to treat or diagnose any condition. Always consult with your doctor before beginning any new exercise regime.

Len Norfleet has 20+ years' experience in physical therapy and is the owner/founder of Neuro-Kinetic Systems, a specialized movement and therapeutic exercise regiment specifically developed for people with movement disorders.



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"Serving to enhance the quality of life of people affected by Parkinson's disease through empowerment, education, and awareness."

Parkinson's Resource Center of Spokane
910 West 5th Ave., Suite 256
Spokane, WA 99204
center@spokaneparkinsons.org

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Phone: (509) 473-2490 / Fax: (509) 473-2495

For inquiries, corrections, or change of address contact:

Catherine "Cate" Paul, M.A.

Director of Program Services & Public Affairs



The Martini Brother's Band rocked the patio at Chaps restaurant for the 2nd annual *Shakin' BUT NOT Stirred* fund raising event on October 1. More than 100 people turned to support the PRC.

Photo by Maggie Beye

Yes, Your Donation Envelope is Missing

As part of our ongoing efforts to use every dollar efficiently, we will no longer be inserting a donation envelope into every newsletter we mail. Instead, look for a letter from us twice a year; once in the fall and once in the spring. In the meantime, we will include this simple form for you to fill, clip out and mail. Remember that you can also donate online with any major credit card at <http://www.SpokaneParkinsons.org> by clicking on the DONATE button and following the prompts. Of course, if you would rather have donation envelopes to use, we'll gladly send them to you. Just let us know.



Parkinson's Resource Center of Spokane
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