

Capital Area Parkinson's Society

October 2011 Newsletter



P.O. Box 27565, Austin, Texas 78755-2565 www.capitalareaparkinsons.org 512-371-3373

October Membership Meeting Saturday, October 15, 2011, 2-4 p.m.

Medical Office Building, St. David's Medical Center, 5th Floor Conference Room
3000 N. IH-35 (Check CAPS website for directions.)

Jo Bidwell

American Parkinson's Disease Association and Covenant NeuroScience Institute
will speak on

"Nutrition and Parkinson's Disease."

Our program is followed by exercise and music therapy, a session for care partners,
and a potluck meal. We appreciate your potluck contributions.

Medicine Up Front

Shaky Hands, Trouble Walking May be Signs of Tiny Brain Lesions, not Parkinson's Disease

Shaky hands, a stooped posture, and slower walking are often viewed as normal signs of aging or as Parkinson symptoms, but they may also be signs of tiny blocked blood vessels in the brain. Someone with abnormal muscle function should be assessed for high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol.—See www.nwpcf.org/News.aspx?Item=3798.

23andMe Research

23andMe is a personal genetics company created two years ago to examine how genes and environment are related to Parkinson's disease. In a fraction of the time that traditional research requires, the 23andMe study has already verified many previous genetic associations with Parkinson's. 23andMe is halfway to its goal of enrolling 10,000 people with Parkinson's disease in its research community. Check www.23andme.com/pd for more information on this project.—See www.nwpcf.org/News.aspx?Item=3807.

Treatable Blood Vessel Abnormality May Cause Parkinson's

A potentially treatable blood vessel abnormality in the brain may cause Parkinson's disease in some patients, according to a study published September 8, 2011, in *Neurology International*. Parkinson's symptoms disappeared in a patient who had brain surgery to reposition compressive arteries in the brain. Doctors in

CAPS 2012 Board of Directors

President Deborah Bryson will announce at the October membership meeting the proposed slate for the 2012 CAPS Board of Directors. If you are interested in serving on the Board or as an officer, please call or email Deborah: 512-864-4075 or Deborah.Bryson@FMS-Regional.com.

The slate will be published in the November newsletter, and the election for the 2012 Board will be held at the November meeting.

Pittsburgh then conducted a blinded study of 40 patients and found 78% of those with Parkinson's had arterial compression—See *Neurology International*, September 8, 2011.

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Planning Ahead

Our 100-degree weather makes it difficult to imagine, but the holidays *are* coming! You'll soon be shopping for presents to have on hand for friends and family and to give as hostess gifts. Consider two possibilities that also support CAPS.

The 2012 CAPS Calendar, **Art with Parkinson's**, features art by twelve CAPS members—and costs only \$5, with all profits going to CAPS. The calendar includes information about CAPS and Parkinson's disease, and its monthly entries are testimony to the active lives that persons with Parkinson's disease continue to have. The calendar is not only practical but also educational—and will be on sale throughout the fall at CAPS meetings.

Don't forget that CAPS is in a new partnership with CUP Fundraising. Check the link to CupGives™ on the CAPS website, www.capitalareaparkinsons.org, for a variety of delicious gifts. With every purchase of gourmet coffee, hot cocoa, and other products, CupGives™ will donate a minimum of 25% of the purchase price to CAPS.

Meet Our New Four-Legged Member

CAPS has a new 120-pound, four-legged member, a four-year-old Great Dane who answers to the name Susie and attends meetings with Gary and Elaine Shelton. Susie is the service dog who recently came to live with the Sheltons to assist Gary, who has Parkinson's disease. Her official name is Isis, but she answers to Isis only when Gary uses it—a distinction meant to reinforce the importance of his commands. "When she hears 'Isis,' she knows I mean business—the rest of the time she just acts like an Egyptian goddess," Gary says.

The Sheltons obtained Susie/Isis from Texas Hearing and Service Dogs (THSD) in Dripping Springs; they looked for a "big, strong, smart, gentle dog" for Gary, but dogs to help with Parkinson's patients are difficult to find. The Sheltons had to wait four years for Susie, who may be the first service dog used by a CAPS member. Susie is trained to retrieve items that Gary drops, but more important, if Gary falls or otherwise needs Elaine, he can send Susie to call her—a task that Susie has performed many times since coming to the Sheltons.



All dogs at Texas Hearing and Service Dogs are rescue dogs. If you would like more information about using service dogs, Gary and Elaine would be glad to talk with you. They can be reached at 512-444-3488. However, Elaine stresses that it is difficult to find a service dog appropriate for Parkinson's clients. THSD no longer trains balance dogs.