

Capital Area Parkinson's Society

December 2011 Newsletter

P.O. Box 27565, Austin, Texas 78755-2565

www.capitalareaparkinsons.org



December Membership Meeting

Saturday, December 17, 2011, 2-4 p.m.

A program of holiday fun and good cheer!

Holiday Greetings

*Bring an ornament to exchange. Purchase holiday gifts and sample coffee.
Games. Caroling. Photo booth.*

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

Our program is followed by a potluck meal. We appreciate your potluck contributions.

2012 CAPS Board of Directors

At its meeting on November 19, 2011, CAPS elected the following members to the 2012 Board of Directors. Officers will be elected by the Board at its meeting on December 13th.

Jenny Bankston
Lydia Blanchard
Deborah Bryson
Donald Carnes
Herman Caviel
Kara Daugherty
Melvin Eckhoff
Juli Fiocca
Tereasa Ford
Fran Gerling
Maggie Glazener
A. J. Hernandez
Kitty Hoskins
Jaime Johnson
Maureen Kratzer
Mark Lamkin
Betty Mailloux
Joyce Massey
Claudette Porter
Susie Lightfoot Scherr
Emily Schmitz
Julie Shasteen
Yulah Sisler
Tyler Sutliff
Shirley Uzzell

Thank You to Retiring Board Members

Three members of the 2011 Board of Directors are retiring: Patricia Bordie, Wynnette Harris, and Barbara Metzger. Their valuable service to CAPS will be missed. To fulfill its mission, we depend on members like Patricia, Wynnette, and Barbara.

Patricia Bordie has served for four years on the Board of Directors. Through her work with the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, she has been able to refer CAPS care partners to respite services; she wants to continue to be engaged in that work. "I tell everyone that CAPS is an exemplary model for a support system that works for both care partners."

Wynnette Harris joined CAPS in 1992, after she and her husband Lee, who had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 1984, moved to Austin to be near their daughter. She has been a member of the Board since 1994, twice serving for three-year terms as secretary, most recently from 2002-2005. During 2006-2008 she maintained the membership data base. Wynnette also served as chair of the Mail Team for three years and twice as chair of the Nominating Committee. Looking back over her service to CAPS, Wynnette expressed great pleasure. "It's unbelievable to see an organization grow as CAPS has grown," she said. She intends to remain active in CAPS.

Barbara Metzger joined CAPS after her husband Don was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 1994. "I wanted to find out as much as possible about the disease and what I could do to keep my husband at home," she said. Barbara has served CAPS in a number of volunteer positions, including service on the Board of Directors and the Mail Team; she was also coordinator of parking from 2008-2010, when CAPS met at Seton Hospital. Barbara is taking a break from CAPS, but plans to return.

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How to Speak Like a Bat, and Other New Therapies

Scientists at Texas A&M are collecting bats from several Texas locations to study how bats raise and lower their voices as needed, the *Journal of Experimental Biology* recently reported. The research could lead to improved speech therapy for people with Parkinson's disease. The ability to "speak up" is gradually lost in people suffering from Parkinson's, and effective therapies to help patients improve their communication skills have eluded researchers.—*Parkinson's News Update*, Oct. 28, 2011.

The Power of Thought

A new technique could improve the quality of life for patients with Parkinson's disease, according to research led by Cardiff University. Patients with the early stages of the disease were trained to control areas of the brain by using the power of thought alone, according to a study published in *The Journal of Neuroscience*. A clinical evaluation later found their movement had improved by up to a third.—*Parkinson's News Update*, Nov. 11, 2011.

Humor in "Most of Me"

A new book by Robyn Levy, *Most of Me*, considers how humor helped the author deal with a double diagnosis of Parkinson's disease and breast cancer. In an interview with the Vancouver *Sun*, Levy was asked, "Can you tell us a little about how you used humour in your life?" Her answer, in part: "Humour . . . reconnects me with people, . . . protects my emotional fragility, . . . distracts me from my health issues, and . . . challenges my creative mind."—*Parkinson's News Update*, Nov. 4, 2011.

23andMe

[23andMe](#) has identified a genetic factor in a gene called SGK1 that may protect against Parkinson's. The LRRK2 gene is a significant risk factor for Parkinson's disease. Of the approximately 1 in 10,000 people who carry a mutation called G2019S in the LRRK2 gene, about half develop Parkinson's disease. But there are many people with this high risk mutation who have not developed the disease. By comparing these people to those with the LRRK2 mutation who did develop Parkinson's, researchers were able to discover the potentially protective nature of

SGK1. 23andMe has partnered with The Scripps Research Institute to study the connection between SGK1 and LRRK2 further.

23andMe Research Team,
Oct. 27, 2011.

Local Support Group for DBS

A new DBS support group begins in January 2012 at Neurology Solutions, the office of Dr. Rob Izor, for those who have had or who are contemplating deep brain stimulation or are otherwise interested in DBS. Contact Susie Lightfoot Scherr for more information, including time and date: 345-1380 or lightfoot_78759@yahoo.com

In Loving Memory
Don Metzger
George Nokes
Howard Reed