Parkinson's Post

PARKINSON'S Support Group of Green Valley

Supporting people with Parkinson's since 1991

Parkinson's Activity Center
555 N La Canada Drive, Green Valley, AZ

Open Monday, Tuesday, & Friday
1:00 PM to 3:30 PM *520-372-2368*

April 2026

Message from the President

Charlene Ostlund
President

It's not unusual to run into someone in Green Valley who comes from a part of the country where you once lived unless you grew up in the Boondocks, which I did. Not long ago, I met a woman at Trivia Night who lived around 25 miles from John and me in Iowa. After some discussion, I learned that she grew up in a small town across the Mississippi River and state line in the same county where I went to high school. Our schools were even in the same basketball conference. Then we discovered the biggest surprise of all, our grandpas lived in the same rural town that was so small that dogs and cats were listed on the population sign. Gail contacted her sister who still lives in that area and gave her my grandpa's name. The sister asked around until she found someone who recognized the name. That person turned out to be one of my first cousins. Gail's sister's hobby is genealogy. She determined that we're 6th cousins. I now have two new social connections.

There's a reason why staying socially connected is part of our group's "Give Parkinson's the SAC" motto. Specialists say that social connections are important to mental health. I will add that they also improve quality of life.

Parkinson's has a way of dissolving old friendships. I invite you to make new social connections by attending our coffees, potlucks, and parties. Even attending exercise class will do the same. To break the ice, ask "Where are you from?" You might be surprised where the answer will lead the conversation.

~Charlene

Thank you, John

The Board of Directors has accepted with regret the resignation of Director John Goulet, who joined the Board in 2021. In just five years, John has had a great impact on our support group. It was because of John that his friend Tom Kidwell purchased the building at 555 N La Canada so that we would have a space for activities. John along with Sue Colley were in charge of transforming a suite that had been the kitchen of a bakery into the activity center that we have today. We will be honoring John at our annual meeting on May 1st.

Thank you, John, for your dedication and commitment to our Support Group.

Mark your calendars!

Spring Luncheon & Annual Meeting
May 1st at Noon
Valley Presbyterian Church

We'll be honoring John Goulet, who is retiring from our Board of Directors. If that isn't enough, The Board has some important information to share with you.

In Memoriam

We miss the following members who recently passed:

Kent Gummerman survived by his wife Velma. Some of you will remember him from boxing class.

https://calvertmemorial.com/obituaries/richard-gummerman

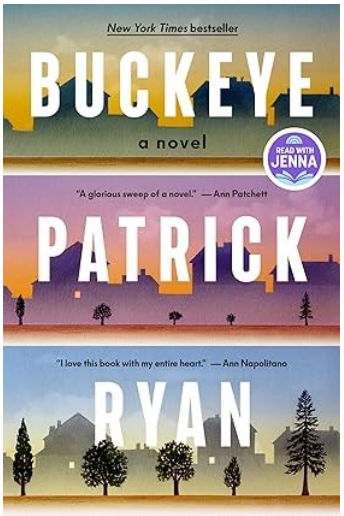
Bob Ogus

https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/gvnews/name/robert-ogus-obituary?id=61045853

Book Club

All members (people with PD, care partners, and past care partners) are welcome to join our book club. The meetings are being held on Zoom at 3:30 pm on the second Tuesday of the month. Watch the daily emails for the link.

April: *Buckeye* by Patrick Ryan
May: *And After the Fire* by Lauren Belfer
June: *The All-Girl Filling Station's Last Reunion* by Fannie Flagg
July: *A Guardian and a Thief* by Megha Majumdar
August: *Wild Dark Shore* by Charlotte McConaghy



April is Parkinson's Awareness Month

How much do you know about Parkinson's disease?

Take a quiz using the link below:

https://www.parkinson.org/parkinsons-awareness-month

PD in the News

For the first time, a stem cell-based dopamine neuron replacement therapy has been conditionally approved for use in Japan. This is different from the stem cell treatments offered by medical spas or private centers in that it has undergone years of laboratory research and clinical trials. This treatment is not available in the U.S., but similar testing is being done here. Read more at https://www.michaeljfox.org/news/stem-cell-therapy-parkinsons-given-limited-approval-japan

April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
PARKINSON'S **Support Group** of Green Valley All highlighted activities take place at the Parkinson's Activity Center *(555 N La Canada Drive, Green Valley)*			1 Golfing Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am	2 Weekly Get Together 9:00 am Senior Cardio 11:00 am Readers Theater 2:15 pm	3 Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Activities at the PAC 1:00-3:30 pm	4 Pole Walking Historic Canoa Ranch 9:00 am
5 	6 Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Coffee & Donuts at the PAC 10:15 am	7 Pole Walking Sahuarita Lake 9:00 am PAC 1:00-3:30 pm	8 Golfing Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Women with PD Zoom—10:30 am	9 Weekly Get Together 9:00 am Readers Theater 2:15 pm Loud Crowd 3:30 pm	10 Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Activities at the PAC 1:00-3:30 pm	11 Pole Walking Historic Canoa Ranch 9:00 am
12	13 Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Coffee & Donuts at the PAC 10:15 am	14 Pole Walking Sahuarita Lake 9:00 am PAC 1:00-3:30 pm Book Club 3:30 pm	15 Golfing Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Group Sharing Meeting FID—1:30 pm	16 Weekly Get Together 9:00 am Readers Theater 2:15 pm Loud Crowd 3:30 pm	17 Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Board Meeting 10:30 am Activities at the PAC 1:00-3:30 pm	18 Pole Walking Historic Canoa Ranch 9:00 am
19	20 Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Coffee & Donuts at the PAC 10:15 am	21 Pole Walking Sahuarita Lake 9:00 am PAC 1:00-3:30 pm SACK Class 1:30 pm	22 Golfing Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Women with PD Zoom—3:00 pm	23 Weekly Get Together 9:00 am Readers Theater 2:15 pm Loud Crowd 3:30 pm	24 Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Activities at the PAC 1:00-3:30 pm	25 Pole Walking Historic Canoa Ranch 9:00 am
26	27 Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am Coffee & Donuts at the PAC 10:15 am Talk at La Posada 2:00 pm	28 Pole Walking Sahuarita Lake 9:00 am Lunch Bunch 12:15 pm PAC 1:00-3:30 pm	29 Golfing Exercise Class & Video 9:00 am	30 Weekly Get Together 9:00 am Readers Theater 2:15 pm Loud Crowd 3:30 pm		

Meet our Members: Richard Twarogal

By Larry Westfall

Richard (Rich) Twarogal has lived in Arizona since 2004 and has been a member of our support group for almost that long. Rich and Debbie have been married for 44 years and have five children and ten grandchildren. Debbie is our group President-Elect and will take over as President in June of 2027. Richard has had Parkinson's Disease for more than 20 years and this is his story.

Richard & Debbie Twarogal

Richard was born in 1958 and spent his first twenty-one years in Chicago, Illinois. His parents were immigrants from Poland, so Rich learned to understand the Polish language early on. Rich was a member of his high school swim team and water polo team. He also played both sports in his first years of college at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle. He had several jobs during these years, including lifeguarding and machinist. At 22, Rich joined the US AirForce and his first post was in Spokane, Washington servicing autopilot and navigational systems.

He had additional posts in Biloxi, MS and Edwards AFB in California. During his years of service, he was able to travel to and serve in international areas such as Guam, Belgium, and Alaska. After seven years of active duty, Rich transferred to the AF Reserves and went to Northern Illinois University where he earned a BS in Electrical Engineering. He then started his career with Motorola as an engineer and stayed in the Chicago area until 2004. Rich had been traveling largely to Nogales, Sonora, MX and he and Debbie decided that they loved Southern Arizona with the beautiful mountains, desert and sunshine.

Rich continued his engineering career until 2020 when he was partially and then totally disabled with Parkinson's Disease. He had been diagnosed with PD in 2006. His primary symptom initially was a tremor in one leg. PD then grew progressively worse until he decided to have deep brain stimulus surgery (DBS.) The DBS has been a major blessing, however it did affect his speech. **Rich's advice to those with PD is to remain positive and not let the disease keep you down.** Rich may have speech difficulties, but he has a strong sense of humor and loves a good joke. As you see in his picture.

Tax Time: Two ways to reduce your taxes

1) The Parkinson's Support Group of Green Valley is an **Arizona Qualifying Charitable Organization** (QCO). All Arizona residents may participate and receive a **tax credit** on their Arizona State Tax. It reduces your tax liability by the amount you donate up to $495 single, married filing separate or head of household; $987 married filing joint. **Our QCO Code is 22119.**

2) **Donate Your "Required Minimum Distribution" from your IRA:** The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 made permanent the option of qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) from individual retirement accounts. This means that persons who take annual distributions from their IRA, can make a gift **directly from their IRA to the Parkinson's Support Group of Green Valley**, and save the income taxes.
You may want to consult your accountant.

Activity Awareness Day Follow-up

By Charlene Ostlund

True confession: I kept losing my place in my notes during the presentation at the Parkinson's Awareness Event, and so I failed to mention some things that I intended to say. Plus, I've learned more since the event. Here are some tidbits:

- I mentioned that it's possible that more men than women are diagnosed with PD because they may come in contact with toxins in their work environments. John G. gave an example when he mentioned that he did welding, and statistics show that welders have an increased rate of PD. I failed to mention that the thick air pollution in London during the Industrial Age may be the reason Dr. James Parkinson started noticing people with the symptoms of the condition that he called Shaking Palsy.

> *The brain compensates for lost dopamine by shifting from pathways for automatic movements to those of intentional movements.*

- 60-80% of dopamine-producing cells are gone by the time of diagnosis. I have learned that within four years of diagnosis, all those cells are gone. The brain compensates by shifting from pathways for automatic movements to those of intentional movements. Automatic pathways require more dopamine. This is the basis of instruction used by Parkinson Voice Project, but for people with PD, all brain activity should change from automatic to intentional—not just speech. Read more at parkinsonvoiceproject.org/.
- The slideshow gave three risks to people with PD: falling, swallowing issues including choking and aspiration pneumonia, and hospitalization. The Parkinson's Foundation sent us copies of their *Hospital Safety Guide*. I highly recommend that you pick up a copy at the PAC (Parkinson's Activity Center). It can also be downloaded from their website www.parkinson.org/.
- Speech therapy can help swallowing as well as improving speech. Daily speech exercises can be found on the website mentioned above.
- Find instructions for giving first aid for choking using the following link. These instructions include giving first aid to yourself: https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/choking-first-aid
- There are two subcutaneous infusion pumps: Vyalev & Apomorphine. Vyalev uses liquid levodopa. Apomorphine is an agonist medication. It does not become dopamine in the body. Instead, it mimics dopamine. It may need to be used in addition to carbidopa/levodopa meds.
- There are two phrases I like about exercise:
  - ◊ **“Use it or lose it.”** This is one of the reasons hospitalizations are risky for people with PD. Studies have shown that PD patients in the hospital do better if they stay active, if possible, and with permission from the nurse/doctor.
  - ◊ **“Motion is lotion.”** Moving our joints helps synovial fluid lubricate joints.

Deep Thoughts
On being Care Partners

Friends, we tried so hard to get out of the Tennessee cold this March! It was also my 75th birthday, and nothing says 75 like a trip to Jamaica! Nancy decided it would be super fun to take an ambulance ride to Montego Bay. So to make that happen, she got a 3 am nosebleed that would not stop. Which meant we got the whole lights flashing and sirens blaring experience, as our ambulance decided the middle of the road was faster. Four nights in the hospital later, her first-in-her-life nosebleed was fully stopped and diagnosed as being a result of high blood pressure, another thing she never had previously. So much more I could say about this strange and often funny experience, but let's leave it with the truth that Nancy is now fine.

Care Partnership is such an important concept to us both. I am quite serious that for those of us who have PD, it is just as important that we remain present for our care partners as they are for us. So let's celebrate being partners!

PS: I'll try to be funnier next month. Even the hilarious British poet Brian Bilston has his reflective moments, so I offer you this:

If I Could Have My Time Over
by Brian Bilston

If I could have my time over, I would do it all differently,

And not treat each precious moment with such disregard and flippancy.

I would use my time effectively,
I would think ahead and plan.

I would reserve my stores of energy,
and take charge when I can.

But it's too late in the journey for regret,
too late to repent—

Because there's not a socket in sight,
and my battery's on one percent.

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Publication

Thanks to these volunteers who made this publication possible.

Curt Ackley
Bonna Cunningham
Michael J. Fox
Charlene Ostlund
Larry Westfall
Lucinda White