

JULY 2008

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

It's that time of year again—hot, sultry summer days in Houston, and those of us who are here are eternally grateful for the modern convenience of air-conditioning. The lazy days of summer, hot as they may be, give us time to pause and reflect on what is important in life, be it family, friends or organizations that have made a difference in our lives.

There are an estimated 17,000 Houstonians, 1.5 million Americans and 6 million people worldwide living with Parkinson's disease. Every nine minutes a person will be diagnosed with the disease, adding an estimated 60,000 new cases diagnosed each year in the U.S. This movement disorder caused by a lack of the neurotransmitter dopamine, can affect every aspect of an individual's life.

Although great strides are being made in treating Parkinson's disease, no breakthroughs have yet occurred in finding a cure. And while certain organizations benefit those with Parkinson's through medical research with the hope of finding a cure, HAPS distinguishes itself by helping people living with the disease navigate the many aspects of what it means to be diagnosed by providing resources that improve their quality of life. As Muhammad Ali so eloquently stated, "We all want a cure, but we still have to live until one is found."

HAPS' service area covers eight counties throughout the greater Houston area. Four full-time staff members, nineteen contract therapists, twenty-one Board members, an Advisory Board, a Medical Advisory Committee and many volunteers are dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals with Parkinson's disease in our community. HAPS is the only organization in the region that provides comprehensive services that address the medical, physical and psychosocial issues specific to Parkinson's disease—for those living with the condition, as well as for those affected indirectly such as caregivers, spouses and other family members. HAPS makes available free of charge transportation, support groups, education, exercise therapy, services for caregivers, referrals and a monthly newsletter. In addition to these programs and the 12,500 service hours of group sessions HAPS provides per year, HAPS also offers subsidized respite care and emergency financial aid.

HAPS is unique and fills an often overwhelming need. Receiving no financial support from national Parkinson's organizations, it depends solely upon contributions from individuals, foundations and corporations to pay for the programs and activities that serve our community. We encourage you to use the envelope provided in this publication to help support our efforts. ***Every gift matters and you can make a difference.*** That difference will be seen in the many lives of those who receive the resources they need to manage the demands of this condition.

As executive director, it is indeed a privilege to help further the mission of this much-needed organization which was established 34 years ago as the first of its kind in the nation. I look forward to a day when our services are no longer necessary; until that time, we at HAPS will continue to work diligently to help make a difference to those whose lives are affected by Parkinson's disease.

HAPS invites you to Dance your way to Better Balance



The slowness of movement, shuffling, stooped posture, stiffness, trouble turning, difficulty performing two activities at the same time, poor coordination and sudden “freezing” (slowing or stopping of movement while walking) involved with Parkinson's that create balance problems often leading to falls, makes dance an unusual choice as a supplemental treatment for Parkinson's.

Yet, a new study of 19 people with Parkinson's disease, conducted by researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis showed significant improvements in balance and mobility for

those taking part in regular tango dance classes for 20 sessions, compared to those who participated in 20 sessions of conventional exercise. (If you would like to read the published article from Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, contact the HAPS office at 713.626.7114.)

The exercise class consisted of one hour of movement, much of it in chairs or using chairs for support. The tango class was more vigorous, and focused on stretching, balance, footwork and timing.

While both groups demonstrated general improvement, only the tango students appeared to do better when it came to balance. When you dance, you follow a rhythm and a pattern which is processed in the brain without thinking about it.

Whether you choose to tango, waltz, jitterbug or cha-cha, moving to a beat or rhythm allows for better coordination and stability. Music has a positive affect on motivation and emotion. Dancing – and laughing about it – also stimulate the release of protective endorphins in the brain...so...

Let's Dance



HAPS will be adding a dance group to its exercise therapy program. If you are interested in participating, please contact the HAPS office by calling 713.626.7114 or by e-mail at hernandez@hapsonline.org.

HAPS Co-Sponsors a Conference for Allied Health Professionals

Houston Area Parkinson Society teamed up with the Parkinson Disease Research, Education and Clinical Center (PADRECC) Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center on Saturday, June 7, 2008 to present "Rehabilitation for People with Parkinson's Disease: Where Are We Now?" This was the fourth conference co-sponsored by HAPS and PADRECC for allied health professionals such as physical therapists, occupational therapists and speech language pathologists. Designed to provide information specific to Parkinson's disease and improve the care of patients with PD and their families in the hospital setting, the outpatient clinic, and/or the home, the all day event offered seven hours of continuing education credits for more than 60 participants who attended.

Parkinson's disease is the most common neurodegenerative movement disorder, which affects over one million Americans. Though the cause remains unknown, new discoveries in research and clinical care are promising and offer hope to patients and their families. The purpose of the conference is to equip allied health professionals with knowledge of PD and evidence-based interventions. Topics addressed deep brain stimulation, speech and voice disorders, balance, falls, gait, activities of daily living, psychosocial issues and resources, and home care. Course content addressed and demonstrated select treatment interventions and mobility techniques as well as provided an opportunity for participants to learn and practice new skills.

Many thanks to all of the HAPS therapists who spent their Saturday with us learning about the most current rehabilitation techniques for individuals with PD.



Speakers Marilyn Trail, MOT, OTR
and Helen Cohen, EdD, OTR, FAOTA



Planning committee members and speakers
Ruth Zabransky, Kathleen Crist, Betty Protas,
Betty MacNeill, Naomi Nelson and Marilyn Trail



Speaker Betty Protas, TO,
PhD, FACSM and HAPS
therapist Cheryl Herring.

NEWLY DIAGNOSED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Saturday, August 16, 2008

**Presentation by Dr. Stanley Fisher
The Methodist Neurological Institute**

Please contact Celeste Guerrero, LMSW, 713-313-1621, for more information.

HELP HAPS HELP

when you grocery shop at Kroger's



HOUSTON AREA PARKINSON SOCIETY

Show the above image to the cashier at your local Kroger, along with your Kroger Plus Card. After they have scanned your KrogerPlus Card you will be enrolled for the current year of the Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Donation Program. Every time you shop at Kroger and use your enrolled KrogerPlus Card, Kroger will contribute a percentage of your eligible purchases to the Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Donation fund. Once a card is scanned with the barcode, it will be active for the remainder of the program year. Recycle this bar code with your friends and neighbors and ask them to make HAPS their charity of choice also. For additional copies of the bar code, call HAPS office (713-626-7114) or print extra copies from HAPS website, www.hapsonline.org.

24-HOUR REQUIP APPROVED

The once daily dosage dopamine agonist, Requip XL, has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration. GlaxoSmithKline said the medication should be available in pharmacies in mid-July.

Those who took the 24-hour Requip experienced significant improvements in Parkinson's disease symptoms, quality of life, depression, emotional well-being, stigma, and sleep. Researchers found the Parkinson's disease symptoms of 42% of those taking Requip were "much improved" or "very much improved" compared with only 14% of the placebo group.

Side effects of Requip include involuntary movements, nausea, dizziness, drowsiness, hallucinations, and sudden drops in blood pressure with a change in body position.

SLIGHTLY USED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT NEEDS A GOOD HOME



**HAPS HAS ONE WHEELCHAIR, ONE
TRANSPORT CHAIR, FOUR WALKERS
AND A COUPLE OF CANES AVAILABLE
ON A FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE BASIS.**

**CALL HAPS AT 713-626-7114
FOR MORE INFORMATION.**



CONTRIBUTIONS

Your donation is much appreciated. Your thoughtfulness helps HAPS continue to provide much needed services to people with Parkinson's and their families.

SPECIAL GIFT

H.K. & Reginald Coffey Feed the Needy Foundation

IN HONOR OF

In honor of Rodney Smith's birthday

Kathleen, Richard, Jay, and Nick Smith

In honor of George A. Bourgeois, III

Mr. and Mrs. George A. Bourgeois, Jr.

In honor of Joe V. Longoria

Anonymous

IN MEMORY OF

In memory of Baine P. Kerr, Sr.

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Kathryn Thoreen
Bruce H. Brodkey
Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Paulson
Amigos de Las Americas – Houston Chapter
Marla and Michael Bordelon

In memory of Rudy Roof

Mary Beth Baher

In memory of Lawrence Pace

Isabel O'Neill

In memory Gary Clark West

George, Sherry, Beau, and Natalie Bourgeois

In memory of Gerry Ellis

Peggy G. Lee

- Your donation is tax deductible -

**Yesterday is a canceled check, tomorrow is a
promissory note, today is cash in hand, spend it wisely.**



HAPS HAPPENINGS

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HAPS HAPPENINGS is published monthly by **Houston Area Parkinson Society** Editor: **Nina P. Brown**

HAPS does not provide diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or pharmacist with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or drug interactions.

