

DECEMBER 2009

Home for the Holidays

There is no place like home for the holidays. Wouldn't it be great to stay home, skipping the hustle and bustle of crowds, the long lines and the traffic; avoiding the hours of aimlessly wandering around the store wondering "would he even use this?" or "is this something she would like?" or "I hope this isn't what I gave them last year!"

Give to HAPS in honor or memory of your friends and loved ones and celebrate the true spirit of holiday giving. Your gift will increase exponentially in value as these contributions help fund the vital services HAPS provides. Each dollar goes a long way to help improve the quality of life for those living with Parkinson's.

Fill out the enclosed envelope. Include a separate sheet for additional honorees. HAPS will mail everyone on your list the holiday card below notifying them that you have chosen to make a contribution in their honor. Cards announcing your gift will be sent in time for the holidays. You can get all of your holiday shopping done at once without waiting until the last minute and your tax deductible gift will go to a great cause. Thank you for helping HAPS make a difference!



Seasons Greetings

There are other ways you can help. Don't forget to use your Kroger Share card when shopping for holiday meals! If you still need one call the HAPS office, 713-626-7114, and we will mail one to you.



Announcements...

A Note to Nina

As some of you may already know, *HAPS Happenings* editor Nina Brown is taking a short hiatus while she undergoes Deep Brain Stimulation in early December. For many years and with great dedication, Nina has been writing our monthly newsletter and doing a wonderful job. She has worked tirelessly to bring you the latest PD news, helpful hints to make life easier and personal stories of her own journey with Parkinson's. We know that no matter how hard we try we can't emulate Nina's style and talent, but we will try to make her proud. Please "pardon our mess" until Nina returns.

Nina, we wish you the very best and all the success that DBS has to offer. We know you will be back at the computer in no time leading the way as a true role model for hope and an undeniable inspiration to the PD community! Hurry back.

SAVE THE DATE

February 17, 2010

The Parkinson's Action Network (PAN) will present the 16th Annual Research & Public Policy Forum, a day of education and advocacy, on February 17, 2010. Forum participants will learn about the current legislative issues impacting the Parkinson's community and will be instructed on how to advocate for better treatments and a cure by communicating with elected officials. These are significant steps in standing up for a cause and influencing change in Washington, DC.

For the first time, PAN will present a virtual Forum, allowing people to enjoy the full Forum experience without traveling to Washington, DC. The Forum will be presented free via a live, interactive Webcast available through the Internet on your personal computer or via Audiocast available by telephone. This year, HAPS will host the Webcast of the PAN Virtual Forum and invite you all to attend. This is an excellent way to come together with Parkinson's advocates in your community.

When: Wednesday, February 17, 2010

Where: United Way Building ~ 50 Waugh Drive ~ Houston, TX 77007

This will be a free all day event. Transportation will be available to those who qualify and breakfast and lunch will be provided. More details to follow. Contact Kathleen at the HAPS office for more info: 713-626-7114.



Congratulations to HAPS social worker Celeste Guerrero on her recent marriage to Jeffrey Harris on November 7, 2009. May all their days together be filled with happiness and love.



Dance with the Stars!

Saturday, January 16, 2010

12:00 noon

Wortham Theater, Studio 3

510 Preston Street

Based on the knowledge that dance in a group setting could improve the quality of life for people who are living with Parkinson's by improving range of motion, overall mobility and lifting spirits in a way other forms of exercise therapy do not—HAPS embarked on a course to incorporate new and innovative approaches to exercise. Last May, in partnership with Houston Ballet, HAPS began offering a weekly *Dance for Parkinson's* class modeled after the program that the Mark Morris Dance Group and Brooklyn Parkinson Group pioneered seven years ago.

On Saturday, January 16th at 12:00 noon, the Society for the Performing Arts, Houston Ballet and Houston Area Parkinson Society will present a special class led by Mark Morris Dance Group/Brooklyn Parkinson Group *Dance for Parkinson's* class instructors David Leventhal and John Heginbotham along with Houston Ballet/HAPS *Dance for Parkinson's* instructor Krissy Richmond. A discussion will follow with David, John and Krissy. The Mark Morris Dance Group is being presented in performances at the Wortham Center's Cullen Theater on January 15th and 16th at 8pm by the Society for the Performing Arts. Visit www.spahouston.org for ticket information.

This is a wonderful opportunity for the HAPS family and the Houston community to learn from the people who started it all. Please join us! Call the HAPS office at 713-626-7114 if you plan to attend.



Pounding the Pavement for Parkinson's

It seems like we are constantly on the run; running to the next appointment, errand or social event. And when we are at home, there is always something to keep us busy and on our feet. Who says you haven't been training for a marathon? So join us on Sunday, January 17th for the 2010 Chevron Houston Marathon.

As a participating charitable organization, the Chevron Houston Marathon provides an important way for HAPS to raise money and also presents a prime opportunity to raise awareness of Parkinson's disease within our local community and beyond. The Marathon is the single largest sporting event in Houston. It attracts people from all over the country as well as worldwide. This is a chance to encourage people to think about the race that individuals with PD run every day. Living with PD is like living a marathon. You must learn how to set your pace and take everything in stride, overcome setbacks and challenges, stretch your endurance, live with soreness and rigidity, find joy in your accomplishments and never give up.

Just as training for a marathon is important, so is having the support of people around you to cheer you on as you go the distance. HAPS will continue to be there at every mile marker rooting for you as you face each day with Parkinson's disease. No one can do it alone; it takes teamwork. Join TEAM HAPS! Help us as we **Pound the Pavement for Parkinson's**. Walk with us, run with us or be a member of our hoopla station to help cheer on those who are walking and running for you. We are all in this together and we want to get others involved, too. We want them to see the face of PD, to understand the profound impact this disease has on the lives of so many and to see how their efforts in raising money and raising awareness can make a difference.



Ask the Advocate

Q. My medications are so expensive and I seem to always be in the Medicare Part D donut hole. How do I get better prescription coverage?

A. Prior to Medicare Part D, the term donut hole had a much sweeter meaning. Now the term donut hole has a dreaded connotation and it has nothing to do with calories or cholesterol levels. Medicare Part D donut hole refers to the difference of the initial coverage limit and the catastrophic coverage threshold. After the Medicare beneficiary surpasses the prescription drug coverage limit, the beneficiary is financially responsible for the entire cost of prescription drugs until the expense reaches the catastrophic coverage threshold. Costs will vary depending on which drug plan you choose. Some plans may offer more coverage and additional drugs for a higher monthly premium. If you have limited income and resources, and you qualify for extra help, you may not have to pay a premium or deductible.

There is good news and bad news with Medicare Part D. The good news is that you have a choice of plans and you can switch plans every year. The bad news is that you are stuck with the plan for a year which means suffering through months of out-of-pocket expense for the full cost of your medications. So, what do you do? November 15 thru December 31 is open enrollment for your Part D program. Now is the time to change your plan if you have found that your current plan is not the best fit. There are several ways you can do this: 1) call Medicare at 1-800-633-4227, 2) go to www.medicare.gov and use their online tool-Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder, or 3) call the HAPS office and ask one of the social workers for assistance. Make sure you gather all of your medications or list of medications including dosage amounts and frequency, the Medicare card of the person enrolling and most importantly gather your patience; this is not just a five to ten minute process and you will need to carve out some time for this task. Your personal information and information about your medications will be entered into a computerized system that will generate a list of plans that are available to you. Once you have the list of available plans, you can compare plans looking at cost, including monthly premiums and annual deductible amounts; coverage, with attention paid to which medications are covered on the formulary; and graphs which illustrate your estimated cost of monthly prescriptions and which show you how long you will be in the donut hole. From these comparisons you can see which one is right for you. Just like the symptoms of Parkinson's disease, for each person it will be different. If you have any questions, HAPS social workers can help. They can't tell you which plan to choose, but they can help you get all the information you need to make an informed choice and be your own best advocate. Contact Kathleen or Celeste at 713-626-7114.

If you have a question you would like to submit to **Ask the Advocate** please send it to info@hapsonline.org or 2700 Southwest Freeway, Suite 296, Houston, TX 77098.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

GIFTS

Mr. and Mrs. C.W. Bowers

IN HONOR OF

In honor of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas McCue
Dolores Dartez

In honor of M. Sneed Lary
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Brown

In honor of Nina Brown
Marion Rosenwald

In honor of Tom Robb
The Gardenias

In honor of Priscilla Schube
Houston Community Service Club

*In honor of the Post-DBS Support Group
and Will Johnston's Birthday*
Mary Margaret Johnston

In honor of M. Louis Bernell
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Brown

In honor of Celeste Guerrero, LMSW
Cynthia Sikes and Ross Brodie

In honor of George A. Bourgeois III
Mr. & Mrs. George A. Bourgeois, Jr.

IN MEMORY OF

In memory of Garland Yarberry
Doris Rusciano
Paul V. Harris
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Wilson
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Gullo
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Keesler
The Management and Employees of
Farmers New World Life Insurance Company
Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Parsons
Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Keesler
Vicki White
Peggy Leslie
Martha Bohacek
Jack Kephardt
Larry Butler
Oscar Olszewski
Harold Spangler
Peggy Epps
Chandrika Patel
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Payne
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Pennington
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Morse
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Green
Linda Williams

In memory of James F. Tucker II
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Green

In memory of Alfred Plaschke
Hannelore Plaschke

In memory of Emmy Leus
Hannelore Plaschke

In memory of Agnes Cooke
Rosa Guagliardo
Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Heuer

In memory of Robert Volz
Frances Jones
Nancy Kutschke

In memory of William T. Taylor
Catherine Fine

~ All donations are tax deductible ~

HAPS HAPPENINGS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Ellin Grossman, Ed.D.
Vice-President/Secretary: Nina Proler Brown
Vice-President/Treasurer: M. Sneed Lary

Ron Bernell
Joe A. Brown
Robert Casey, Jr.
Meredith Cullen
Frank Donnelly, Jr.
James A. Ferrendelli, M.D.
Ted Gilbreath

Kathy Grady
Dick Gregg, Jr.
Mary Hart
Eugene C. Lai, M.D., Ph.D.
Liz Lary
Dan Lauck
Anne Martin

Quin McWhirter
Marti McWhirter
George Puig
Richard K. Simpson, Jr., M.D. Ph.D.
Binky Stephenson Strom
John Strom

ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chris Bell
M. Louis Bernell
June Bowen
Leanne Burnett, M.D.
Roy H. Cullen
Robert Cruikshank
Virginia Elverson

Chairman: Aubrey Calvin
John E. Hankey
Harriet Hart
Harriet Latimer
Robert A. Martone
W. O. Neuhaus III
Malcolm Pettigrew

Jeff Rosenberg
Marion Rosenwald
Terry Satterwhite, M.D.
Ambassador Arthur Schechter
Joyce Proler Schechter
Koyne D. Smith

STAFF

Anne Thobae, Executive Director
Kathleen Crist, LMSW, Director of Social Services
Alfonso Hernandez, Director of Therapeutic Services
Celeste Guerrero, LMSW, Social Worker

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.