



# PANC

# UPDATE

Parkinson Association of Northern California

*Building Community for the Journey -- April 2025*

**PANC SUPPORT GROUPS  
HERE**

April is a reminder that life is a beautiful, ever-renewing cycle.  
*E.E. Cummings*

**Click Here for the Big Day of  
Giving**



## Please Join PANC for the Big Day of Giving

**April 18 to May 1**

Thank you in advance for financial gifts made on behalf of PANC between noon on April 18th and May 1st at 11:59 PM to support our mission of enhancing the lives of people with Parkinson's, their families, and care partners throughout Northern California.

This is our biggest fundraiser of the year. We are an independent nonprofit, and our services and programs are 100% free for participants. Your generosity provides much-needed respite grants for care partners, gifts educational programs and a moving annual conference that empowers many, sustains our support groups that are proven to help those affected by Parkinson's, and so much more.

Please share with others and help us reach our goal of \$75,000 in 2025. Reminder to donate [here](#) starting April 18th to make an impact! THANK YOU!!!

## Yoga is My Parkinson's Medicine and My Peace

*by Shelley Gilbert*

Being diagnosed with Parkinson's at age 60, an otherwise healthy and fit 60-year-old, was certainly a big blow. I remembered watching my grandmother decline as the disease took over her body and mind and I decided definitively that was not going to be my reality. I was going to fight with as much heart and vigor as possible.

My attitude was pretty good, that is until things began to progress. As my physical abilities declined, I became embarrassed to have anyone witness what I thought of as my weaknesses. It was then that I stopped attending the yoga classes that I loved and sustained me. I would shake, sometimes fall, I felt like my postures were no longer graceful, and I had to fight for my balance in every asana (posture). I began practicing on my own so that I could hide from others.



Fast forward, and through a very fortuitous turn of events, I retired from my full-time career and am now a certified yoga instructor! I teach three days a week, including one class on Zoom every Sunday morning for PD-Connect (email [Lisa@PD-Connect.org](mailto:Lisa@PD-Connect.org) to register and for information).

Instead of hiding in my own little yoga space, I am a true yogi (practicing without judgement of myself or others) and teach in front of full rooms of students. They see me shake, they see me fall, and be generally ungraceful, and that's OK by me and them. By adapting my perception of what is the "right way" to practice yoga and go through life, my confidence and acceptance grew insurmountably. I no longer feel the need to hide my PD symptoms during my classes and even in public.

Yoga has many benefits for anyone dealing with Parkinson's, including strength, balance and flexibility. I lose my balance often through each day and I absolutely credit core strength from my yoga practice for the ability to prevent falls. I fight the PD rigidity by working on flexibility and stretching. The meditative part of my practice helps to ease negative self-talk and keeps me grounded and moving forward. I have opted to take this journey medication free, so exercise is both my medicine and my job. Yoga is fun and it really helps. I encourage you to find a teacher who understands Parkinson's and give it a try!



**PANC's Free ParkinsonWISE®  
for Care Partners  
Classes Begin in May  
at 9 Locations!**

**[Register and for Information Click Here](#)  
[Flyer Click Here](#)**

**Citrus Heights, Davis, Elk Grove, Folsom, Redding, Roseville,  
Sacramento, Santa Rosa & Zoom**

Understanding that care partners need quality information to be able to help and support when a loved one faces a Parkinson's diagnosis, and with the help of a grant provided by the Arthur Rupe Foundation, PANC has developed a two-hour care partner training specifically for care partners, spouses, friends, family members, in-home care staff, etc.

There is no cost to attend.

By attending one of these trainings, you'll find tips, compassion, and empowering information for you to help your loved one live well with Parkinson's while also easing your conscience for this sometimes difficult yet rewarding season in life. For both experienced to new care partners, you'll be sure to learn something and find support for YOUR journey with this disease. Topics include:

- Pathology of PD
- Motor symptoms
- Non-motor symptoms (including psychology)
- Deep brain stimulation
- Medications
- Safety and fall prevention
- Exercise
- Transfers
- Q&A
- Resources



## 8th Annual Walk to Cancel Out Parkinson's Success

**Thank you** to the many individuals who helped make the 8th Annual Cancel Out Parkinson's Walk a huge success. PANC was presented with just about \$32,000 which will help to provide services and respite grants to those affected by Parkinson's disease throughout Northern California.

The weather complied perfectly, the Spring blooms were plentiful, and a good time was had by all. We can't thank you enough for the festive and inspirational day. See you next year!

**Thank You, COP Walk Sponsors**

**Captain Sponsors:**



**Sergeant Sponsors:** Higgins Diggins Lions ● McGinness Solutions, Inc.

**Deputy Sponsors:** Auburn 49ers Lions Club ● Boston Scientific  
McIlwain Mobility ● NuMotion Mobility ● Weintraub Tobin

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## New Community PD Events

**Keeping Fit and Engaged: Virtual Round Tables with PD Active Instructors**  
(2-part series via Zoom)

Session 1 -- Movement and Voice Strategies for Wellness

*Thursday April 24th from 5:30pm – 7:00pm*

Vickie Russell-Bell (Yoga), Otto Dittmer (Tai Chi), and Lauren Carley (Tremolos Choir).

Information [HERE](#) Registration [HERE](#)

Session II -- Dance and Movement for Connection and Joy

*Tuesday April 29th from 5:30pm – 7:00pm*

Andreina Febres (Zumba) and Petra Fibrichova (PD Fit Club and Chair Yoga)

Information [HERE](#) Registration [HERE](#)

**Ignite Neuro Fitness is Starting Virtual Yoga Classes**

*Tuesdays and Fridays at Noon*

Ignite Neuro Fitness is expanding their exercise program to include Yoga classes. Classes are catered specifically to people with Parkinson's and are focused on reducing rigidity, improving flexibility, balance, and fluidity of movement.

Information and Registration [HERE](#)

**Mindfulness for People with Parkinson's and Care Partners (6-part series via Zoom) with Donna Rixmann, Mindfulness Meditation Teacher**

*Six Tuesdays, April 29th - June 6th from 3:00-4:15 PM*

Fee: Donations accepted

Spots Available: 14

Information [HERE](#) Flyer [HERE](#)

Join this engaging and supportive introduction to mindfulness practices for individuals with Parkinson's and their care partners. The program offers a holistic approach to enhancing physical and emotional well-being through short talks, meditations, and Q&A. Potential benefits of mindfulness for Parkinson's include reduced stress and anxiety; improved emotional regulation; enhanced focus and attention; increased body awareness; reduction in tremors and rigidity; improved sleep quality; enhanced quality of life; support for care partners. v

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## A Smart Home for a Smart Couple Experiencing Parkinson's

*By Tom Cadman*

I'm starting this article by saying it is not a sales or marketing pitch. It's a personal one about what my

wife and I did in our home to make life a little safer and add convenient systems for the benefit of my wife's safety and my peace of mind.

It all started about 6 months ago when my wife Lynda fell in the bathroom when I was at work. She typically has her cell phone with her on her walker, but for whatever reason, this time she didn't have her phone with her. After she fell, she crawled to the bedroom where her phone was, and she called me. Luckily, this fall did not injure her, but she could not get up off the floor, and that was worrisome. When I received her call, I called our neighbor who immediately went to the house and helped Lynda get up.

Because I work about two days a week, we have tried other safety devices for her including the fall alert necklace, but these did not work for us. Someone recommended that we get an Apple Watch which has fall alert and call functions but with Lynda's PD, the watch controls just seem too small, so this wasn't an option either.

It was at Christmas dinner with our daughter and her husband when we were discussing Lynda's fall event and available options. Our daughter has a mostly SMART house with a lot of voice activated lights etc. Lynda and I were not even aware that products were available. She suggested that we check out ALEXA from Amazon and it sounded like something that might work for us. So, we ordered 3 ALEXA Dots, they arrived the next day, and then the real fun began.

ALEXA Dots are very simple to set up and get working. They need to be plugged into a standard outlet. Once they are plugged in, they search for your home's WI-FI. That's it. There is an App for your phone, so if you download the App and answer the questions, you are easily up and rolling. We placed one of the Dots in the kitchen area which covers our living room, office area and kitchen. The second Dot was placed in the bathroom and the third was placed in our bedroom. All these locations can be reached by voice commands without any problem or having to shout. ALEXA is very sensitive to voice commands.

Then we added a couple of smart outlets in the bedroom which control the lights. They are simple to use, just plug in to your home outlet and plug your light into the smart outlet, then ALEXA will tell you she found a new outlet and ask you what to name it. Our first light was on the dresser, so we named it the "dresser light." I can get up with Lynda a couple times a night and I always need to find the light. Now we just ask ALEXA to turn on the dresser light. WOW what a convenience. She's very good to us!

I was beginning to have even more fun with all of this new technology, so I did research on Smart light bulbs and purchased a couple of those. This too is very simple, just replace your existing light bulb with a smart bulb (ALEXA compatible) and ALEXA will find it and ask you to name it. I also investigated Smart light switches and Smart ceiling fan switches. I have a friend who is an electrician, so I had him come over to install those. Now our living room ceiling fan and ceiling lights all voice activated. Very nice convenience.

The most important reason why we started to do all this Alexa stuff in the house in the first place was for Lynda's safety. Part of the ALEXA programming asks for phone numbers to be input so you can have ALEXA make calls for you. Just last week I got a call from her, and she was on the floor in the bathroom from a fall (non-injury), but she couldn't get up to get to her cell phone. She just said, "Alexa call Tom" and we were able to have a conversation while she was on the floor, and I could get her the help she needed as quickly as possible. The whole reason for doing all this ALEXA stuff worked perfectly!

This is how we handle communications in our house. We also understand if someone were unconscious from a fall this system would not work. One of the other parts of this system is that you can use ALEXA as an in-home intercom to talk between rooms if necessary.

There are numerous things that ALEXA can do, from playing music to providing weather reports or just answering questions. Also, if I am expecting a call from Lynda and I don't hear from her and if she isn't answering her phone, I can call ALEXA and talk and ask if Lynda is around so I can speak with her.

As I said at the beginning, this is not a sales promotion or any type of marketing. I know there are of number of Smart Home options on the market to choose from so checking them out to find what will work best for you in your home is the way to do it. This is just what we did, and we love it and are having fun with it as well. Enjoy your Smart Home!



## Veteran's Parkinson's Support Groups in Elk Grove and Sacramento Starting in June!

PANC is pleased that on top of our other many support groups currently in progress, two new groups will begin in June specifically for our valued veterans and their family members and care partners. If you are interested in participating in Elk Grove or Sacramento, or have questions, please contact Edna Ochoa at 510-364-1219 or by [email here](#). We look forward to serving this community who has so selflessly served us.

## Proclamations and Other Events Celebrating World Parkinson's Day/Month

Yolo County  
Board of Supervisor's  
Parkinson's Month  
Proclamation presented  
to Jim Millam, Debbie Bair,  
and Bernadette Murray



Elk Grove City Council  
Parkinson's Month  
Proclamation presented  
to Tim Lumsden and  
Darren Wilson



Healdsburg City  
Council Parkinson's  
Month Proclamation  
presented to  
Shelley Gilbert



Three local municipalities issued proclamations to celebrate World Parkinson's month in those areas including The Elk Grove City Council, the Healdsburg City Council and the Yolo County Board of Supervisors. Numerous other celebrations were held around the region, state, country, and world!

World Parkinson's Day is observed annually in April and specifically April 11th to raise awareness about Parkinson's disease. April 11 also honors the birthday of Dr. James Parkinson, who first described the disease in 1817. Events, campaigns, and educational activities aim to support those living with Parkinson's, promote research, and reduce stigma through greater public understanding. The red tulip is often used as a symbol of Parkinson's awareness.

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## Persevere Study Opportunity

Now is your opportunity to join a nationwide, NIH-funded research study testing an educational program for family caregivers of people with Parkinson's disease or Lewy Body Dementia that monitors changes in your memory and/or thinking.

Family caregivers will receive weekly educational guidance through a 12-week curriculum that includes short readings, resources, and activities. All participation is virtual, and participants may receive up to \$275 for completing study surveys. They are looking for any of the following:

- For family caregivers who have noticed changes in their memory or thinking in the past 2-3 years
- Caregivers currently caring for a loved one who's had cognitive symptoms or hallucinations for less than 3 years
- Current or former caregivers from underrepresented populations (male, rural-dwelling or non-Caucasian)

View the [study flyer here](#) and/or [email here](#) if you are interested and want to learn more.

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## April Free Webinars

*Wednesday, April 16 at 10 am*

**Navigating the Road Ahead: Understanding Driving and Parkinson's** with the Parkinson's Foundation

Insights into how Parkinson's can impact driving skills, explore options for assessing driving abilities, and learn about practical approaches to planning for the future.

[Register and Info here](#)

*Wednesday, April 16 at 6pm*

**Parkinson's 101: Understanding the Disease, Treatments & Care** with the Parkinson Society British Columbia

For newly diagnose, what Parkinson's disease is, how it impacts the brain and body, and the latest advancements in treatment and care.

[Register and Info here](#)

*Thursday, April 17, 9 to 10:30am*

**How Do You Feel with Parkinson's?** A special webinar on emotions from the Michael J Fox Foundation

Perspectives and tips about emotions and PD.

[Register and info here](#)

*Thursday, April 17 at 1pm*

**Lewy Body Dementia: Future Directions** with the Stanford APDA Information and Referral Center

An overview of Lewy body dementia (LBD), recent research findings and future research that may affect treatment of those with LBD, which is an umbrella term that includes Parkinson's Disease Dementia and Dementia with Lewy Bodies.

At meeting time, click the Zoom link below

- <https://stanford.zoom.us/j/93655565868?pwd=b5mgg5aCPqsYaoR8hvURefFJ3bDeFj.1>
- Join by phone: 833-302-1536

- Meeting ID: 936 5556 5868
- Passcode: 071420

*Friday, April 18, 10am*

**Emerging Therapies 2025** with the Davis Phinney Foundation

Emerging therapies and medications being studied to treat Parkinson's, such as Crexont, Vyalev, aDBS, and Onapgo.

[Register and info here](#)

*Wednesday, April 23 at 11am*

**Learn About PD Related Hallucinations** with the Parkinson's Resources of Oregon

Learn about Parkinson's related hallucinations and delusions, and how you can talk to your healthcare provider about your symptoms and establish a treatment plan.

[Flyer Here Register and Info here](#)

*Thursday, April 24, 9 to 10:15am*

**Meeting Parkinson's as a Teenager: How to Navigate Your Parent's Diagnosis** with World

Parkinson's Coalition for children with a parent with PD and those who are interested in understanding how children navigate Parkinson's

A deep dive into what it means for a teenager to "meet" PD during this vulnerable age. Teens will share how they navigate the experience, how their relationship with their parent with PD has changed over the years, and the most useful resources, as well as tips for teens and for parents trying to support their teenager(s).

[Register and info here](#)

*Saturday, April 26 from 11am to 2pm*

**Parkinson's Symposium: Learn More. Live Better.** with the Parkinson's Foundation

Common PD medications, benefits, potential side effects, and the need for adjustments over time. They will emphasize the importance of a well-rounded care plan that includes exercise and social engagement to combat isolation.

[Register and info here](#)

*Sunday, April 27 at 10am*

Women with PD: **Mime, Music and Art** with Twitchy Woman

Learn a little mime, dance to the music and discover how the speaker is changing the look of Parkinson's through art.

[Register and info here](#)

*Tuesday, April 29 at 4pm*

**Depression and Anxiety with Parkinson's** with the Maryland Association for Parkinson Support

[Register and Info here](#)

Thank you to Stanford Parkinson's Community Outreach for providing information in this section.

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