



Parkinson's Perspective

Newsletter of the Colorado Parkinson Foundation, Inc. and
the Colorado Springs Parkinson's Support Group
www.co-parkinson.org | (719) 884-0103

Acting President:

Jill Reid [REDACTED]
president@co-parkinson.org

President Emeritus: Ric Pfarrer

Vice President: Jill Reid

Secretary: Patricia Beatty
secretary@co-parkinson.org

Treasurer: Julie Donahue
treasurer@co-parkinson.org

Members at Large:

Janet Adams, Dee Beatty,
Steve Booth, Annette Garcia,
Carole Henrichsen, Bill Hicks,
Karen Mein, Dave Moross,
Mary Sauvain

Committee Chairmen

Programs: Jill Reid

Educational Outreach: Jill Reid

Membership: Carole Henrichsen

Chaplain: Rusty Merrill

Parkinson's Awareness Day:

Vacant

Photographer: Annette Garcia

Lending Locker Coordinator:

Mary Sauvain [REDACTED]

Main Dish Coordinator:

Bill Hicks [REDACTED] or
potluck@co-parkinson.org

Picnic: Carole Henrichsen

and Janet Adams

Media Relations: Mary Sauvain

Medical Advisor:

Dr. Brian Grabert, MD

New Member Table Chairmen:

Janie Shore & Carol Hamill

Sunshine (Cards):

MJ Thompson [REDACTED]

T-Shirt Chairman: Vacant

IT Support: Heather Johnson

Webmaster: Julie Donahue

webmaster@co-parkinson.org

Newsletter Editor:

Kristy Schleiker

Address/Email/Database

Updates and Newsletter

Coordinator:

Contact Julie Donahue at
info@co-parkinson.org or call
[REDACTED]

The Colorado Springs Parkinson's
Support Group (part of CPF) meets
10AM, the first Saturday of each month
at the Central United Methodist Church,
4373 Galley Rd, Colo Spgs, 80915
(with exceptions to be noted in this newsletter)

Next Meeting:

Saturday, February 7th

| 10:00 am – 1:30 pm |

We will be Zooming AND recording this meeting

Location: Central United Methodist Church, 4373 Galley Rd - just east of Murray Blvd.

9:30am - Come early for a group sing-along with music therapist, Heather Johnson.

See more about Heather's business under 'Other Opportunities' later in this newsletter.

9:45am – Everyone else come a few minutes early to
check in, greet other members and ask questions.

First time visitors: Be sure to sign in, get a name tag and proceed
to the visitors' table for some special attention and information.

*Knowledge is power and enables us all to live well, so plan to attend
the meetings at Central United Methodist Church.*

Program: Parkinson's 101

Speaker: Jill Reid, Educational Outreach

Jill will present the annual Parkinson's 101 program. Designed for People with Parkinson's and their family-member caregivers. Parkinson's 101 provides invaluable information for those new to the disorder as well as for those who already have extensive experience with the disorder. It also includes practical advice on coping with Parkinson's on a day-to-day basis. Since the symptoms of each PWP's Parkinson's change to some degree over the course of a year, we present this briefing annually so that each of you can key in on the information that wasn't relevant to you in the past but is now. Knowledge is power and enables us all to live well, so plan to attend the February meeting at Central United Methodist Church or join us on Zoom.

A Potluck will follow the monthly program.

February Potluck – Leftover Ham from Christmas!!

If you would like to sign up to bring a side dish/dessert for the meeting, you can contact Bill Hicks at [REDACTED] or potluck@co-parkinson.org, no later than Wednesday, February 4th and tell him what you would like to bring.

Remember that bringing food for the potluck is voluntary.

We look forward to seeing you there!

The President's Corner | Jill Reid-Acting President, CPF & CSPSG



Have you ever watched a ROM-COM on the Hallmark channel or Great American Family channel? Nearly every one of them is about two people who are falling for each other but who have a nearly-relationship-ending misunderstanding about 20 minutes before the end of the show. Of course, the misunderstanding gets straightened out in the last five minutes or so and they live happily ever after. What does that have to do with us? Well, two huge misunderstandings plagued the Colorado Springs Parkinson's Support Group in the month of January. It's very important that I tell you about them.

Misunderstanding Number One: One of the instructors at the YMCA's Parkinson's Exercise Program (PEP), kindly trying to keep her participants aware of the latest in Parkinson's-related events in the area, sent out an email to all of the Y's PEP students on the Friday immediately preceding our January meeting, erroneously saying that we had cancelled our January meeting and would resume meetings in February. The truth is that we did have our January meeting, but as a result of her email, we had the smallest turn-out at a monthly meeting (30 people) since COVID! There are two lessons to take away from this: 1) please know that **WE NEVER EVER CANCEL OUR MEETINGS NO MATTER WHAT**, and 2) please believe only the information about our meetings that you get from me at the monthly meetings or from emails that you receive from one of our co-parkinson.org email addresses (info@co-parkinson.org, db_mgr@co-parkinson.org, president@co-parkinson.org). Information about our meetings from any other source could be wrong.

Misunderstanding Number Two: I have heard that it was stated during the January's break-out session on the Parkinson's side that there are no Parkinson's specialists in Colorado Springs and that the nearest ones are in Denver. **That is totally incorrect.** We are fortunate enough to have at least five providers (neurologists, PAs, and nurse practitioners) who specialize in Parkinson's and practice right here in Colorado Springs; we publish their names every month in our newsletters. The list does include a neurologist who is not a Parkinson's specialist (Dr. Manhart), but we include her because her Parkinson's patients say she does a great job for them. Similarly, we list Dr. Stander, a neurologist who is not a PD specialist, because he is an expert in dealing with the vision problems that people with Parkinson's commonly experience. All the other MDs, PAs, and NPs listed specialize in Parkinson's. There is absolutely no reason that any of you should have to go all the way to Denver to get care from a Parkinson's specialist.

This month's comedy is the *Long Long Trailer* starring Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. This is classic Lucy slap-stick as she inadvertently messes things up at nearly every step along the way. It's a great comedy about pulling a 40-foot trailer across the country during their honeymoon. Most of us in the RV group that I belong to watch this movie on our first outing of the season. The line that always is funniest to me and that I often quote is, "Turn right now left!!" At that moment, Desi is driving and Lucy is navigating; Lucy, looking at her map, says "Turn right now left" really fast because the new road is upon them, but what he hears and responds to is "Turn right," which he does, and then he hears "now left" after he has already turned right. Of course, that gets them going in the wrong direction on a narrow road that has no room anywhere for them to turn around. It's all fun and worth the watching. Enjoy!

Ask the Doctor!



Dr. Grabert has generously agreed to answer your questions pertaining to Parkinson's Disease each month in our newsletter column called: "**Ask the Doctor!**"

If you have questions you'd like to submit to Dr. Grabert, email them to Julie, our newsletter coordinator at: info@co-parkinson.org.

New Colorado Parkinson Foundation (CPF) Address Addition:

Suite 100 has now been added to the address.
The complete address is:

Colorado Parkinson Foundation, Inc.
1175 Kelly Johnson Blvd.
Suite 100
Colorado Springs, CO 80920

Potluck Favorites – Shakin' & Bakin' Cookbook

The updated cookbooks are here! The price is a donation or free if you can't afford to donate. You can order them from Vicki Patterson at project@co-parkinson.org. The cookbooks are bound so that new recipes can be added in the future. So continue to send in your favorite recipes – old or new family recipes, newly discovered favorite recipes, etc. We only want recipes that you have actually tried and liked – not ones that you think should be good but haven't tried or tasted. All favorite recipes are welcome.

Send them to project@co-parkinson.org.

Note: These new cookbooks are bound in a hard-covered 3-ring binder with a spine that identifies the cookbook when on the shelf with other cookbooks rather than the older soft-covered version with 3 single rings and no identifying spine. If you would like a hard-covered binder to replace your soft-covered older version, you can get one for \$5.



*Thank you
for for helping!*

A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who brought food to share and to those that helped with setup & cleanup at the last meeting!

March 2026 Newsletter Input Deadline:
February 13th

Call or e-mail Julie with your input for the newsletter at:
[REDACTED]
info@co-parkinson.org

February 2026 CSPSG Executive Committee Meeting

February 10th @ 09:30am
(Location: Place to be determined)

Contact Jill Reid at: president@co-parkinson.org, if you haven't been to an Executive Meeting so we will know that you're coming and to get you the address. Leave your email address so Jill can contact you if anything changes.

HAPPY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS!

- Tom Andrew
 - Ron Geist
 - Betty Pope
 - Carol Arthur
 - Laura Hallas
 - Ann Ringler
 - Jan Atha
 - Ann Jaeger
 - Ave Sala
 - Patricia Beatty
 - Amy Kennedy
 - George Spotts
 - Elaine Ceagne
 - Lou Kilzer
 - Timothy Stuehmeyer
 - Jane Cole
 - Linda Koloski
 - Norman Tuinstra
 - Jerry Donley
 - Liz Kovacs
 - Elisabeth Weston
 - Jeff Farrells
 - Ann Grant Martin
 - Cheryl Wilson
 - Kathleen Foster
 - Cindy Page
- Your birthday isn't listed? Fill out the membership form and check BD listed YES!

Recipe of the Month:

Our low carb/good fat ketogenic study showed incredible results. Not only was there remarkable improvement in the symptoms of Parkinson's but also with overall health in general (including the health of caregivers who chose to change their diet along with their Parkinsonian). Since it seems clear that everyone's health would improve exponentially if we all changed our diet to eat this way and since we have potlucks, we thought we would feature an easy low carb/good fat recipe or two in the newsletter each month to promote healthy eating.

If you have a favorite low carb/good fat recipe you'd like to share, please send it to Julie at: info@co-parkinson.org.

SAUTEED GREEN BEANS & MUSHROOMS

- Ingredients:**
- 6 Tbl olive oil
 - 2 cloves garlic, sliced
 - 1 lb green beans, cleaned & blanched
 - 1 tsp chopped fresh rosemary
 - Kosher salt & pepper
 - 1 tsp chili flakes
 - 2 C sliced button & oyster mushrooms
 - Splash sherry vinegar
 - 1 shallot, sliced
 - 1 Tbl thinly sliced fresh mint

- Directions:**
- In a large sauté pan, heat 3 Tbl of the oil over medium-high heat
 - Add the beans & season with salt & pepper
 - When they begin to brown, about 5 minutes, remove from pan & add the remaining 3 Tbl of oil with the mushrooms
 - Brown the mushrooms about 8 minutes, & then add the shallots, garlic, rosemary & chili flakes & cook until softened, about 3 minutes
 - Season with salt & pepper
 - Return the beans to the pan & add the sherry vinegar
 - Stir in the mint & cook until just fragrant
 - Season as needed

Parkinson's Disease Related Providers:

If you are seeing a provider not listed here that has given you excellent care with any Parkinson's issue, let Julie know at info@co-parkinson.org so that they can be added to this list.

The following providers have been recommended by multiple members:

Colorado Springs

- Dr. Bradley Priebe, MD – Neurologist at Peak Neurology, PC; (719) 445-9902
- Steven Swank, PharmD, BCACP – Peak Neurology, Clinical Pharmacist Specialist; (719) 445-9902
- Dr. Aparna Komatineni, MD – Neurologist at Centura Penrose Hospital and UCHealth;(719) 694-3595
- Dr. Andrea Manhart, DO – Neurologist at UCHealth; (719) 365-7300

- Dr. Lael Stander, MD – Neurologist at UCHealth; (719) 365-7300 Note: Does well w/ PD vision issues
- Elizabeth Harmon, PA – UCHealth; (719) 365-7300
- Melinda McClenden, NP – UCHealth; (719) 365-7300
- Dr. Kevin Scott, MD – Neurologist at UCHealth; (719) 365-7300

- Dr. Monica Stanton, MD – Primary Care Physician at UCHealth in Monument; (719) 364-9930
- Dr. David Stevens – Neurologist at CS Neurological Associates; (719) 473-3272
- Bettner Vision – Neuro-Ophthalmology Vision Therapy; (719) 282-0400

Denver

- Dr. Michael Korsmo, MD – Neurologist at UCHealth, Anschutz Medical Campus; (720) 848-2080
- Dr. David VanSickle, MD – Neurosurgeon at Neurosurgery One; (720) 638-7500
Note: DBS expert
- Erin Van Dok, OD – Neurological Optometrist at UCHealth Sue Anschutz-Rodgers Eye Center; (720) 848-2020
- Dr. Victoria Pelak, MD – Neuro-ophthalmology, UCHealth Sue Anschutz-Rodgers Eye Center; (720) 848-2020
- Dr. Trevor Hawkins Neurologist at UCHealth Neurosciences Center, Anschutz Medical Campus; (720) 848-2080
- Dr. Drew Kern, MD – Neurologist whose focus is DBS at UCHealth, Anschutz Medical Campus: (720) 848-2080

Other Local Support Groups:

Parkinson's Caregivers Support Group

All family caregivers of persons with Parkinson's are invited to come and participate in our discussion meetings. They are the monthly on the 3rd Thursday, from 10:00-12:00 at Central United Methodist Church, 4373 Galley Rd, Colo Spgs, 80915.

We're looking for a replacement for Brenda Hicks to head up the Parkinson's Caregivers Support Group.

If you are interested in helping out, call Brenda to find out what the position entails.

You can contact her at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

Ladies w/ Parkinson's Support Group

If you are a fun-idea person, please consider volunteering to lead this valuable group.

If you're interested please notify Julie Donahue at info@co-parkinson.org

or [REDACTED].

Essential Tremor Support Group

Meeting Location: ENT Conf Rm, Pikes Peak Library District; Colo Spgs Library 21c, 1175 Chapel Hills Drive.

Contact Jim Sanchez for meeting dates/times at [REDACTED]

or [REDACTED].

Tri-Lakes Parkinson's Support Group

Meets the 3rd Saturday of the month at 10am at the Monument Community Presbyterian Church, 238 3rd Street, Monument. Contact Becky Farley at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] for more info.

Other Opportunities:

Adult Speech Therapy:

Outpatient speech therapy services.

Personalized speech therapy for restoration of function due to illness or injury.

Treating:

Parkinson's - Voice & Swallowing
- SPEAK OUT!
- LSVT

Contact Jana Hothan, MA, CCC-SLP at slp@janahothan.com or call (719) 338-8165 or for more info.

Parkinson's Sing-a-Long Group:

Square Music Co offers individual music therapy services with Heather Johnson, MT-BC! Individual sessions can be held in person in the Colorado Springs area or via telehealth.

Heather has over 5 years of experience working with neuro populations and hosts a Parkinson's singing group before each support group meeting at 9:30 am as well! Music therapy with Parkinson's works towards vocal strength, control, and longevity, increasing fine and gross motor skills, gait training, and other types of therapeutic goals through individualized music experiences.

To learn more or schedule a free consultation, call Heather at (719) 345-2887 or email heatherjohnson@squaremusic.co.

HELP SPREAD SOME SUNSHINE TO OUR MEMBERS!

If you know of a Parkinsonian or PD caregiver that is having a tough time (illness, surgery, etc.)

or one of our members

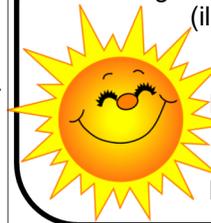
has passed away, please

let our Sunshine Chairman,

MJ Thompson know.

She can be reached

by calling: [REDACTED].



PD Exercise Classes:

Falcon Exercise Group

Mon & Fri: 11:00 – noon, Grace Community Church. For more info contact Catherine Reed at [REDACTED].

UCCS Center for Active Living at the Lane Center

Power Moves group exercise and Balance & Agility classes. For more information call (719) 255-8004 or email CAL@uccs.edu.

NIA Class

Moving to Heal – the art of feeling better; slower movements with joy and purpose. NIA works with balance, breath, cognitive mind/body function, mobility and stability. You can go at your own pace. Stop if you want, sit down and dance while sitting in a chair for a while. All while dancing to music from all genres; Jane, the instructor, often asks what we need that day and works her routine around what can help. She has done a wonderful job making the routines fit our Parkinson's needs.

Cost: \$10 a class

When: Every Friday at 10:30 am

Where: 525 E Fountain Blvd.

MACS–corner of Fountain & Royer

One-on-One Physical Therapy

For people with Parkinson's Disease and all movement disorders. Provided by Danielle (Spivey) Mulligan, PT, MSPT who is a Physical Therapist, Certified Vestibular Therapist, LSVT and PWR for Parkinson's.

Where: 5818 N. Nevada Avenue, Suite 325
Phone Number: (719) 365-6871.

Neuroping for Parkinson's

Table tennis for Parkinsonians who want to improve both motor and non-motor symptoms and avoid mental decline.

When: Tuesdays & Thursdays

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Location: Downtown YMCA

207 North Nevada Avenue

In the Small Gym

To sign up call the front desk at

(719) 473-9622

For more information contact Travis Lerma at (719) 495-5130 or terma@ppymca.org.

Neurologicrehab.com

Rock Steady Boxing – Boxing with Love

New Rock Steady Boxing for folks with Parkinson's Disease at the Boxing with Love Gym Tues @ noon (please come 15 min early if your first time) 1710 Briargate Blvd. Ste 100 (Next to Dicks Sporting Goods).

For more info contact Karen Bishop PT, DPT at love@rsbaffiliate.com.

Max Capacity NeuroFitness

Free Boxing, PWR Bootcamp and Cardio Circuit for people with Parkinson's. Cognitive Cardio class available for \$10/class!

Physical therapist Emily Moncheski at Max Capacity, PLLC, offers individual Parkinson's physical therapy, most insurance accepted Conveniently downtown

525 E. Fountain Blvd. Suite 150

Contact Emily at emily@maxcapacitypt.com or call: (719) 213-3996, fax: (719) 284-4624.

Dance for Parkinson's

Moving with joy, creativity, and community to support people living with Parkinson's.

All are welcome and care partners are encouraged to move with us! Classes meet in person every Tuesday at 11:30 am and every Friday at 11:00 am at Ormao Dance Company, 10 S. Spruce Street.

\$5/class | Free for care partners

You can also join us for this class online.

Visit our website www.ormaadance.org and click on "Dance for Parkinson's" under the "Outreach" tab to get the Zoom link.

Contact Laura at laura.hymers@gmail.com or (719) 640-8478

YMCA PD Exercise Classes

We utilize exercise as medicine to increase quality of life so that you can get better and stay better.

Tri-Lakes YMCA: PWR!Moves;
Tues & Thurs, 1:00-2:00 PM

Briargate YMCA: PWR!Moves;
Mon, Wed, Fri, 1:30-2:30 PM

YMCA at 1st & Main; PWR!Moves;
Mon & Wed, 1:15-2:15 PM

For more info contact Travis Lerma at terma@ppymca.org.

Colorado Springs Rocksteady Boxing

"Let's kick some PD BUTT!" Tues, Wed, & Thurs: 10am–11:15am & 11:45am–1:00pm
Location: Otis Park. 731 Iowa Ave. For more info, call Bill O'Donnell at (719) 243-9422.

Neuro Logic Rehabilitation and Wellness

One-on-one physical therapy and wellness services for people with Parkinson's Disease and other movement/neuro disorders in the comfort of their home with outpatient mobile services. We come to you, to meet you where you are in your treatment & diagnosis!

Board Certified Clinical Specialist in Neurologic Physical Therapy Certified PWR! (Parkinson's Wellness Recovery) Moves Therapist

For more information, contact Ryan Mueller, PT, DPT, NCS at (719) 306-0009 or ryan@neurologicrehab.com

or visit neurologicrehab.com / Fax: (719) 691-7994

Staying Socially Engaged with Parkinson's

By Elena Schmidt (fact-checked by Patricia Silva, PhD), Parkinson's New Today – 11/4/2025

Staying connected with Parkinson's disease can feel challenging due to symptoms that impact your ability to self-express, engage, and relate to others. Low mood and social stigma can drive you even further from your peers.

The impulse to isolate with Parkinson's is normal. But socializing is essential for your health and quality of life, even when you don't feel like it.

Parkinson's connection involves building a social life into your daily routine and seeking activities and people that bring joy and safety.

The importance of socializing with Parkinson's

Socializing is a core part of being human. Researchers describe connectedness as a "social prescription" because it strengthens resilience, provides meaning, and contributes to healthy aging.

When you engage with others, you give your mind and body the stimulation you need to thrive. Social interaction benefits you by providing:

- emotional support that eases loneliness, anxiety, and depression
- cognitive stimulation that helps memory, attention, and problem-solving
- physical activity through group exercise, dance, or active outings
- shared experiences and strategies for managing Parkinson's
- stronger support systems that also benefit caregivers and loved ones

Difficulties socializing with Parkinson's

Some of the Parkinson's connection challenges come directly from the social symptoms that

arise from the neurodegenerative condition. Difficulties relating to others may be tied to how people respond to you.

Facial masking

One common social issue with Parkinson's is facial masking. You may feel joy, sadness, or excitement, but Parkinson's may not allow your face to show it.

When smiles or laughter don't come through clearly, people might mistake you for being cold or withdrawn. That misunderstanding can leave you feeling left out, even when you want to connect.

Speech and communication challenges

Changes in speech can also get in the way of a healthy social life. Parkinson's may cause your voice to become softer, more monotone, or harder to understand.

You may experience dysarthria, which makes speech sound slurred, uneven, or flat. While you know exactly what you want to say, people don't catch your words. This can make conversations frustrating and discouraging.

Motor issues

Beyond communication, motor symptoms such as tremor, stiffness, or fatigue can make social activities harder to manage. Something as simple as eating in public or keeping up with friends on a walk may feel uncomfortable, which can lead you to turn down invitations.

Parkinson's mental health challenges

On top of these changes, low mood and depression often overlap with Parkinson's.

Feeling less motivated or more anxious about social interactions can cause you to withdraw. The more you avoid social contact, the easier it is to slip into depression, which makes the cycle even harder to break.

Social stigma

Stigma can be one of the biggest barriers to staying socially engaged with Parkinson's. Research shows that stigma associated with facial masking is one of the strongest factors linked to lower quality of life, even more than depression.

Stigma happens when people misinterpret your symptoms and see you as less capable, friendly, or engaged than you really are. Bias can also take root internally, leading you to question yourself in social spaces. Over time, you may feel less confident and more likely to isolate.

Relationship changes

Adjusting to Parkinson's can put pressure on even your closest relationships. For instance, role shifts at home can leave you or your loved ones feeling confused and distant.

But these changes don't mean relationships have to weaken. They often require honest conversations, patience, and sometimes new ways of showing care.

Socializing that suits you

Parkinson's connection doesn't have to mean large gatherings or activities that drain your energy. A social life can be as simple as sending an email, making a phone call, or attending virtual meetings.

Consider engaging in activities that match your interests, with people you like, and letting them know that Parkinson's can sometimes interfere with plans. Schedules may need to shift, and that's completely fine.

When possible, try to plan social time around your "on" periods with Parkinson's, when medication makes symptoms easier to manage.

Hobbies and clubs

To stay social, consider continuing hobbies

Continued on the top of page 7...

SAD NEWS:



Robert Carrol Adams, 82, completed his long and faithful journey on December 19, 2025. Born in Clinton, Missouri, Robert grew up on a farm where he learned early the value of hard work, responsibility, and doing things the right way, even when no one was watching. As a model Boy Scout, and later a volunteer forestry surveyor and firefighter, he developed a deep respect for the land, for service, and for quietly stepping up when there was work to be done.

After serving as a Marine, Robert dedicated his life to teaching and coaching. From 1967 to 2011, he taught math and science and coached track, cross-country, basketball, football, and wrestling. Generations of students knew him as "Coach Adams" — a steady, demanding, and deeply fair presence who expected their best and believed they had it in them. For a time in the 1980s, he applied his sharp mind and technical skills at Martin Marietta, contributing to the Space Shuttle and Strategic Defense Initiative ("Star Wars") programs, before returning to the classroom that had always felt like home.

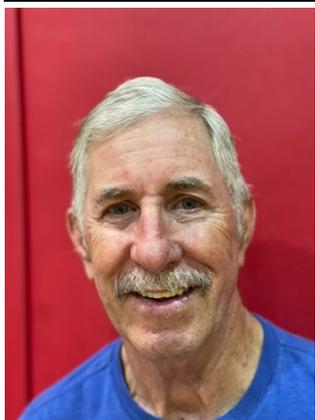
Robert's life took him from Missouri to Colorado in 1971, with chapters written in Tennessee and again in Missouri along the way. Though, no matter where he lived, he carried the same core qualities: self-reliance, quiet strength, and a deep sense of duty. He was a man who never needed to raise his voice; his stature, calm presence, and consistency spoke for him. Those who knew him understood that when Robert gave his word, it could be trusted; and when he chose to speak, those words were said for a reason.

At the center of his life was his family. Robert shared 58 years of marriage with his wife, Janet, walking beside her through every season of life. He was a devoted father to his son, Brian Scott Adams, taking pride not only in his accomplishments, but in the kind of person he became.

Robert is survived by his wife, Janet Adams, and his son, Brian Scott Adams, daughter-in-law, Nichole Adams and his four granddaughters, Chloe Adams Kertesz, Corral Adams, Corrine Adams, and Camden Adams. They, along with the many students, athletes, colleagues, and friends whose lives he touched, carry forward the lessons he embodied: work hard, stand steady, and let your actions speak louder than your words.

Getting to Know You—Michael Patterson

| Ann Grant Martin



Who knew that Mike Patterson spent 10 years in Australia? This man is very interesting. He claims to be 29 and holding, but actually will turn 70 on December 26th. A Christmas baby, he was born in California but at age 11, he began the grand adventure of moving to Australia with his family. He said school was hard but he got a good education. Mike made lots of friends (some of whom he is still in touch with), enjoyed the ocean, and learned to surf. When he returned to the States 10 years later, he intended to return to Australia but fell in love with Vicki and that was the end of that. They've been married 46 years.

The father of two daughters, both of whom are teachers, Mike has 3 grandchildren, ages 17, 14 and 7. He and Vicki moved to the Springs to be near their children whom they see often. Mike stands in as the pet in their "pet-free" home.

Another little known fact about Mike is that he is a retired paramedic firefighter. He took his paramedic training in Denver and worked in Pagosa Springs (27 years) and Farmington, New Mexico (23 years). Mike was never on the forest service crew when there was a fire.

He was the man "in the truck" trying to save structures and lives. The fire he remembers most vividly was on Christmas morning. The residence of close friends, the house was a total loss.

As medical coordinator for Search and Rescue, whenever Mike's pager went off, it usually involved someone he knew. One exception was a guy (an over-confident tourist) who climbed up Treasure Falls outside Pagosa Springs. He climbed up a cliff to about 75 feet from the base of the falls. Eventually the climber couldn't go up or down and clung to the rock face for hours waiting for help. Mike was on that call. He and several others repelled down from the top of the cliff, put a harness on the climber and brought him down the rest of the way. He was hooked to Mike's harness. Picture that! If he had fallen, it would have killed him.

Like many of us, Mike had tremors for 8 years before he was finally diagnosed with PD in 2020. C/L was a good diagnostic since it reduced his tremors. When asked what annoys him most about having PD, he says, "It is loss of my fine motor skills. Trying to deal with a tiny screw drives me nuts!"

Mike is a devoted athlete and spends most of his days playing pickle ball, table tennis in the NeuroPONG program, and golf and working out with his person trainer. His trainer emphasizes balance which is very evident when you watch Mike play ping pong. An advanced player, he is fast and has perfected a serve that is nearly impossible to return. He knows that exercise and lots of it (including core strength-

ening) is the key to maintaining his physical mobility. If you ever want to give Mike a present, he would enjoy anything he has to do with sports. He loves viewing spectator sports like soccer, hockey and football.

Mike really appreciates the assistance he gets from his family. Vicki is his very supportive caregiver. He is grateful to the Colorado Springs Parkinson's Support Group for keeping him informed and engaged in the community. He says, "The NeuroPONG program has really made life better for me."

We all have our talents and gifts. **A humble guy**, Mike's is helping people. He is encouraging, a friendly voice.... Vicki says "He is built to help people and is really good at it." Mike has coached many new paramedics with encouraging words and friendly suggestions.

Books on tape suit Mike's life style these days. The book that stood out for him was Long Road to Mercy, an action thriller by David Baldacci.

Everyone has wisdom to share. What is yours? Mike says, "Follow your passion. It's what keeps us from getting depressed." He reminds us that, "Everyone has their own journey. Don't compare your journey to somebody else's."

Thank you, Mike, for sharing your unique journey and wisdom with us.

We each have a story. I'm looking forward to hearing yours.

If you would like to share your story, please contact Ann Grant Martin,

Aggression Aimed at Caregivers in Parkinson's Linked to Patients' Grief

By Andrea Lobo – Parkinson's News Today, 11/9/22

Aggression aimed at caregivers in Parkinson's disease and related disorders is associated with patients' grief in coping with disease progression and related losses, a new study suggests.

Fluctuations in cognition also play a role, researchers say.

But these behavioral disturbances have serious consequences for caregivers, according to investigators, who suggest that neurologists and movement specialists consider screening for aggression by incorporating the caregivers' perspectives. That will contribute to working with caregivers on strategies to cope with aggressive behavior by patients — "prioritizing caregiver education and wellbeing," the researchers wrote.

"This is an issue that we think is very much underrecognized," Zachary Macchi, MD, who led the study, said in a press release, adding that "this is a factor likely driving caregiver burden for some people."

"I'm hoping to create more awareness toward it ... among clinicians who work directly with people living with Parkinson's disease," said Macchi, an assistant professor of neurology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

Survey Shows Toll of 'Off Times' on Patients, Caregivers**Investigating aggressive behaviors among patients**

Titled "**Aggression towards caregivers in Parkinson's disease and related disorders: A mixed methods study**," the study was published in the journal *Movement Disorders*.

Aggression in advanced stages of Parkinson's disease and related disorders is common and relates to symptoms burden, according to researchers.

This includes verbal abuse, physical harm, or sexual advances. While previous studies have looked into behavioral disturbances and their impact on caregivers, the caregivers' perceptions of being the target of aggressive behaviors

were not considered.

Now, a team of U.S. researchers identified factors associated with aggressive behavior in Parkinson's disease and other disorders. The study mixed quantitative data, obtained from a recent clinical trial, with a qualitative component of caregivers' perceptions, based on interviews.

The initial clinical trial enrolled 592 participants — dyads or related pairs of 296 patients and 296 caregivers — who were recruited from outpatient neurology care in California, Colorado, and Wyoming. The researchers collected the quantitative data every three months for 12 months, between March 2017 and December 2020.

At the beginning of the study, half of the patients (50.3%) had dementia, and two-thirds had idiopathic Parkinson's (66.6%). Idiopathic means the disease is of unknown origin. The average disease duration was nine years, with an average duration of caregiving of five years.

The majority of the caregivers were women (76.6%) who were highly educated — 50% had a college education. More than three-quarters (76.9%) were married to the patient and an even greater number (82.4%) lived in the same house.

Some type of aggression was reported by 22.3% of caregivers. This included physical aggression, experienced by 17.6%, and sexual aggressions, reported by 8.8%.

This is an issue that we think is very much underrecognized

At the study's start (baseline), patients' aggressive behaviors were correlated with lower annual income, longer disease duration, worse severity of motor symptoms, and reduced functional status. Grief and poorer quality of life also was associated with aggression.

A higher resistance to care correlated with physical aggression alone or with either type of aggression combined. Meanwhile, a higher severity of motor

Continued on the bottom of page 7...

... continued from page 5, *Staying Socially Engaged with Parkinson's*

you love and find meaning in, or trying new ones. Research shows that engaging in meaningful activities builds resilience in the face of stressful life events.

If you like to read, look for local or virtual book clubs. If you're into dancing, seek group classes at studios and online. If you like to walk, run, or play sports, join an exercise group or class.

An occupational therapist can also help you adapt your favorite pastimes so you can stay involved without overexerting.

Volunteering and advocacy

Advocacy and volunteering can be one of the most profound ways of building stress resilience and staying connected with Parkinson's.

Volunteering provides purpose and community, whether you help a neighbor, support a local shelter, or get involved with advocacy.

Community groups

Joining groups is one of the best ways to add structure when life feels unpredictable. Groups also provide emotional support and a sense of belonging that fights the consequences of isolation.

You might consider joining local Parkinson's Foundation chapters to

find people and activities you align with.

Family support

Family involvement can be a crucial source of emotional and practical support. If you have close familial relationships, consider allowing your parents, siblings, children, cousins, and others to help with daily tasks, mobility, and encouragement.

Regular family visits also provide time to share meals, play games, reminisce, or simply enjoy each other's company. These moments can ease tension and remind you that you're not facing Parkinson's alone.

Online socializing

Getting out or meeting in person isn't always possible, or desirable, and that's OK. Digital connections, such as online forums and video chats, let you share experiences from home.

For example, PD Conversations, the Parkinson's Buddy Network, and the Mayo Clinic's Parkinson's Disease Support Group all allow you to speak with and learn from others like you.

How connection boosts mental health

Connection significantly boosts mental health by impacting neural net-

works that reduce depression, anxiety, and stress, while enhancing well-being, resilience, and life satisfaction.

When you're isolated, your body's stress system (the HPA axis) ramps up, releasing cortisol. Social contact, even holding a loved one's hand or seeing a thoughtful message, can lower stress signals and protect against the spiral into anxiety or depression.

Socializing also activates your brain's reward system, which often becomes underactive in depression. Interactions you enjoy release dopamine, which helps restore motivation and boost pleasure.

This neural reward increases momentary pleasure and encourages you to keep seeking connection, creating a reinforcing cycle of healthier habits.

Even shared struggles, such as coping with a difficult day with someone else, can activate reward circuits and reduce feelings of threat or disconnection.

Over time, building connection into your life can help you hold onto joy, resilience, and a sense of belonging, even as Parkinson's brings about a new normal.

... continued from page 6, *Aggression Aimed at Caregivers in Parkinson's Linked to Patients' Grief*

symptoms was associated with physical aggression alone.

An increase in aggressive behaviors also was associated with overall symptom burden, including motor and non-motor symptoms. Among the non-motor symptoms were nausea, depression, anxiety, confusion, and hallucinations.

Paranoia was related to sexual aggression alone.

When considering caregiver variables, greater baseline aggression correlated with depression, the overall burden for the caregiver, and the patient's quality of life as perceived by the caregiver.

Former Parkinson's Caregivers Could Help Those Now in That Role

Assessing the impact on caregivers

Following the collection of quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted over 4 months, with 14 of the caregivers who reported aggression. These participants were predominantly spouses (nine caregivers) and shared a residence with the patients (12 caregivers).

"We did interviews with these caregivers, letting them share their experiences, and we were able to begin to understand the triggers, or what we call predecessors to aggression," Macchi said. He noted these predecessors were "the things that were leading up to aggression, as well as the behaviors themselves."

In the interviews, five themes were identified that exemplified aggressive behaviors and their effect on caregivers. These included:

- behaviors ranging from verbal abuse to threats of physical aggression.
- caregivers' beliefs that aggression was the result of patients' difficulties in coping with disease progression and the loss of abilities.
- a belief that aggressive behaviors worsen caregiver stress and mental health, and negatively impact the

patient-caregiver relationship.

- caregivers' feelings that they were ill-prepared to cope with aggressive behaviors.

According to the researchers, several points converged between the identified themes and correlated variables. Grief is a contributor to aggression, mainly related to the patient's frustration with functional decline, the team concluded.

"Our study is the first to show a relationship between patients' grief and behavioral disturbances in [Parkinson's disease and related disorders]," the researchers wrote.

Grief counseling, they suggested, "is one possible strategy for preemptively mitigating interpersonal issues contributing to escalating behavioral disturbances."

Also, cognitive fluctuations, associated with episodic confusion, were shown to contribute to aggression, independently of dementia or global cognitive impairment. According to the researchers, "education of caregivers and medications for cognition ... or mood disturbances ... may help."

Aggression toward caregivers contributes to the overall burden for carers, with a negative impact on their physical and mental health, the study found.

During routine care, screening for aggressive behaviors allows patients and caregivers to access resources to "facilitate early intervention, provide guidance and education to families or loved ones" or "mobilization of protective services when caregivers' safety is threatened," the researchers concluded.

"The next step would be to build what we call a psychoeducation intervention, where we work with caregivers on identifying these behaviors, and then identifying triggers — or potential precursors to these behaviors, and then understanding the consequences of them," Macchi said.

"We want to give caregiver the tools and skillset to be able to manage those, and to foster an ongoing relationship between the caregiver and the clinician," he said.

LENDING LOCKER INVENTORY

If you would like to borrow any equipment listed here, please contact: Mary Sauvain at [REDACTED].

New & Different Items

- * Ramp with rails – 10 foot
- * Portable ramp – 10'x4'
- * Liberty folding, reclining wheelchair with headrest, tray & cushions
- AccVoice TV speaker w/ hearing aid technology
- Air mattress
- Back brace
- Bed canes
- Bedding lifters
- Bed pan
- Bed rails
- Bed risers
- Bedside toilets
- Blood pressure cuff
- Canes
- Cervical traction machine
- Chair-side food tray
- Chair/sofa canes
- Crutches
- Exercise bikes
- Exercise floor pedals
- Homedic massagers
- Hospital beds
- Hospital bed food trays
- Hoyer Lift
- Lazercue for freezing help
- Lift chairs
- Lift-ware tremor compensating utensils
- Monthly med carousel w/alerts
- Pick-up assists
- Punching bag - freestanding
- Ramp (10 foot)
- Shower seats/benches
- Sock helper
- Squatty potty
- Standup assist transport lift
- Standup Walker
- Suction cup hand rail
- Swivel seat
- Toilet arm assist
- Toilet rails
- Toilet seats
- Transfer poles
- Transport chairs
- Tub rails
- U-step
- Walkers with wheels & seats
- Waterproof mattress protector (Twin)
- Wheelchairs

Colorado Parkinson Foundation, Inc.

1175 Kelly Johnson Blvd., Suite 100

Colorado Springs, CO 80920

PARKINSON'S PERSPECTIVE

FEBRUARY 2026

Coming Events

See inside for more information

February 7: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: Parkinson's 101

Speaker: Jill Reid, Educational Outreach

March 7: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: Silver Key Services

Speaker: Jayme Holligan, Director of Volunteer, Events, and Community Engagement

April 4: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: Probate Matters

Speaker: Lynn Vanatta-Perry, Attorney

May 2: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: Breakout Sessions

Moderators: Kathleen Foster – Parkinsonians

Jill Reid & Julie Donahue – Caregivers

June 6: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: Motivation, Learning Tasks, and Behavior Change with PD

Speaker: Ryan Mueller, PT/DPT/NCS

July 4: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: TBD

August 1: Reg Mtg at John Venezia Park–the Barn pavilion – 11 am

Program: Picnic!!

September 5: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: TBD

October 3: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: Scam Prevention

Speaker: Officer Paulette Masias, Colorado Springs Police Department

November 7: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: Breakout Sessions

Moderators: Kathleen Foster – Parkinsonians

Jill Reid & Julie Donahue – Caregivers

December 5: Reg Mtg at Central United Methodist Church – 10 am

Program: Christmas Party!!

Entertainment: The Song Spinners

More useful websites:

<https://parkinsonsnewstoday.com>; www.parkinsonrockies.org; www.parkinson.org; www.nwpcf.org; michaeljfoxfoundation.org;
<http://caremap.parkinson.org>; <https://www.brainhq.com/world-class-science/published-research/active-study>;
www.davisphinneyfoundation.org/living-pd/webinar/videos/cognitive-nonmotor-symptoms-parkinsons; www.parkinsonheartland.org;
<https://www.pdself.org>; https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLkPIhQnN7cN6dAJZ5K5zQzY84btUTLo_C; pmdalliance.org;
<https://www.michaeljfox.org/foundation/news-detail.php?self-care-tips-for-parkinson-disease-caregivers>; laurawayman.com