My Walking Stick
BY REBECCA McGAVICK

The year 2000 was one of unpredictable changes. I had a plan. My child would graduate, move into a life of her own, and I’d make a few changes in my life also. Well! There were changes: my ten-year relationship ended, my dog died, and I was diagnosed with PD. Fast forward a bit, now I have a son-in-law, a granddaughter and for the last eight years, a new man in my life who came with a dog.

From 2000 to 2012, my life has had many ups and downs. I remember wondering how I would feel the first time people around me told a Parkinson’s joke........It was actually sort of........funny?

I wasn’t very open about the disease in the beginning. I was trying to adjust and didn’t need a lot of input. I didn’t know much. I did, and still do, work on a need-to-know basis. If something new develops in my illness, I seek information from a great team of doctors I’ve accumulated over the years. I still don’t ask too many questions about what might happen next. No one knows the answer to that. We all move at our own pace with our own symptoms. I just wait until something new happens.

Somewhere along the line, I thought we (people with Parkinson’s) should become our own advocates. I started a support group and found that many people are as shy as I am about letting strangers see their symptoms or the effects of them. We know more about what our own symptoms are than anyone else, includ-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
From Boyfriend to Care-Partner
BY RICHARD HOLLOWAY

I didn’t want to do it. I didn’t want to go.

But, since I love my girlfriend, I reluctantly said “yes” to going to a caregiver conference. My girlfriend was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease 13 years ago, but I just don’t see myself in the role of caregiver. There are days when she is able to do more than I am. She has her good days and bad days, but generally, she still gets up and moves on. So when she asked me to go to the conference, I was thinking, I don’t need this now. I was wrong.

I attended the 19th Annual Challenges in Caregiving Conference in Tukwila. I had no idea what to expect, but I was pretty sure it would be a full day of angst, frustration and a sad view of the future I did not want to see. As it is, I get the wind knocked out of me once a month when we go to our Parkinson’s support group here in town. It gets so intense and everywhere in the room I see reminders of things to come. So heading into a conference of 200-300 people, I was defensive; ready for a long, drawn-out, painful day. I was wrong again.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8
Presented by NWPF and APDA

Saturday, November 17, 2012
Seattle Hilton Airport & Conference Center
17620 International Blvd., Seattle, WA 98188

PROGRAM

8:00 am  Check-In

Keynote Speaker: Rich Clifford
Retired NASA Astronaut
“An Astronaut’s Journey with Parkinson’s Disease”

Speaker: Curt Freed, MD
Professor and Head, Division of Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology
University of Colorado School of Medicine
“Stem Cell Transplantation and Other New Treatments for Parkinson’s Disease”

Afternoon Breakout Sessions
(Choose one)

Panel Session #1
Earlier Parkinson’s Stages
Jennifer Witt, MD and Sally Friedman, BS

Panel Session #2
Later Parkinson’s Stages
Lissa Brod, MD and Carin Mack, MSW

Speaker: Ann Zylstra, PT
Booth Gardner Parkinson’s Care Center
Evergreen Health
“The Power of Exercise”
Tai Chi with Karin Collins
Laughter Yoga with Andrew Whitver

3:00 pm  Adjourn

REGISTRATION FORM

Register online at nwpf.org or Call 1.877.980.7500

To pay with check:

Complete and mail this portion of the form to:
Northwest Parkinson’s Foundation
400 Mercer Street, Ste. 504
Seattle, WA 98109-4641

CONFERENCE FEE: $30.00

The conference fee includes admittance to speaker presentations, breakfast rolls, lunch, afternoon snack, vendor exhibits and free parking.

ATTENDEE INFORMATION

Attendee 1:  ☐ Mr.  ☐ Mrs.
______________________________

Attendee 2:  ☐ Mr.  ☐ Mrs.
______________________________

Address ______________________________________

City ________________________________________

State _____________________ Zip ______________

Telephone ________________________________

Email Address ____________________________

LUNCHEON SELECTION

Marinated breast of chicken with roasted tomato and shallot sauce.
Vegetarian: Grilled herbed polenta with savory sun-dried tomato sauce.

ATTENDEE (Pick your food selection)

1  ____________________________________________

2  ____________________________________________

Presented with support from

[Logos of various sponsors]
ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

The power to heal can come from many places. For instance, medication and surgery can treat symptoms and restore many of the body's functions that can be lost from disease. However, modern science and medicine alone may not be enough to heal the whole person. When a disease has no cure and symptoms come and go, sometimes without warning, the mind is on constant alert, monitoring for changes. This alert system, constantly monitoring for a negative change, reminds you daily that you have PD and sets the stage for worry and anxieties about the future. The mind can become so preoccupied with the negative impact of symptoms that living in the moment can become lost. How the mind translates the sensations from the body, so too can the mind translate the power of healing over the body. Our mind can be our strongest asset or biggest obstacle when it comes to feeling better. Taking steps to change our habits for healthier living toward a focus on healing requires a commitment from the mind. The power to heal the whole person can be found within.

Mindfulness Therapy
BY MONIQUE GIROUX

Mindfulness therapy is a powerful technique that can reduce the negative impact of stress and sharpen the mind's potential for personal healing. Psychologist Jan Fite, PhD describes mindfulness as a practice which provides just this, a way to stay in the present moment, engaging in life and living life as fully as you can. Mindfulness is often defined as being present, in the moment, with intention in a non-judgmental way. Being mindful allows the mind to see things for what they are and then to let the thoughts go, instead of letting our thoughts control our body, mind and brain function. So how can this help you?

Being present in the moment helps one become aware of the many thoughts, ideas, distractions and assumptions that drive our behavior and impact our wellbeing on a daily basis. Our mind can become distracted by making assumptions, jumping to conclusions, and forming judgments that can have a negative impact on our thoughts. Becoming aware of these roaming or ruminating thoughts is the first step to living in the moment. Observing your thoughts without judgment helps you become more aware of your body, sensations, emotions and surroundings.

This technique is particularly powerful for people living with conditions such as Parkinson's. For example, when tremor increases you now have one of two choices — react or respond. At first glance these choices may seem very similar, but they are indeed very different in mindset and outcome.

* React. By reacting to tremor you are giving control to the spontaneous thoughts and feelings that affect your behavior and how you feel. Your spontaneous thoughts are unique to you but often include negative judgments such as: tremor is running my life; my disease is worse; I must fix this or stop this now; if only I didn’t have tremor everything would be fine; what if someone sees my tremor. These reactions can lead to a ‘snow ball effect,’ further worsening stress which can then lead to increased tremor.

* Respond. By responding to tremor you are no longer reacting but instead are observing and choosing positive responses such as: this problem will pass; I will sit for a few minutes to let this pass; I have experienced tremor before; my tremor is in my hands but is not me. By choosing your response you gain a sense of control and change the very relationship you have to your disease or symptom.

This does not mean that you have given in to your symptoms or that you enjoy the fact that you have Parkinson’s disease, but it does reduce the downward spiral that can occur with life problems or obstacles. Mindfulness can be an informal practice in which daily experiences and moments are used as an opportunity to be present. The next time you awaken to a sunrise, hear the laughter of a child, or are stuck in traffic you can practice mindfulness.

Mindfulness is also practiced as a formal exercise with meditation. One way to practice mindfulness meditation is to sit quietly and calmly but with attention and awareness. Bringing your attention to your breathing is one way to focus your attention. During this time you will simply observe your thoughts, feelings, sensations and perceptions and let them pass without judging them, labeling them or controlling them. Meditation is a practice, and as such the benefits will improve with time and practice. Mindfulness is not without risk that can come from paying attention to and increasing your awareness of thoughts and behavior. Individuals with psychotic disorders, significant depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder should practice mindfulness meditation under the care of a mental health professional.

Dr. Giroux serves as medical director to NWPF and is the co-founder of Movement and Neuropereformance Center of Colorado.
As a nurse, I consider it one of the “perks” of the job to be an advocate for my patients. Teaching patients and their care partners how to effectively communicate with providers, organize information and take charge of their care is part of the responsibility of this role.

Parkinson’s disease is both chronic and progressive, making it essential to get organized from the start and build an effective working relationship with your neurologist. By taking an active role, you can optimize results from the relatively short amount of face-to-face time at your visits and minimize a feeling of helplessness. If there’s one thing my patients across the board hold important, it’s independence. So, here’s your chance.

Taking an active role begins with awareness. Be aware of your symptoms and the medications or treatments that are prescribed for those symptoms. Be aware of the “what” and “why” when something is prescribed or recommended to you. Do this by fully participating in your doctor visits. Ask questions when your neurologist recommends physical therapy or prescribes medication. What symptoms is this therapy supposed to help? What are some side effects to look for with this medication? Physicians want you to understand your treatment; they know that in order for their recommendations to be valuable and successful, they need to understand you!

Think holistically when it comes to evaluating your current status and treatments. How do your symptoms affect you on a day-to-day, month-to-month basis? Do your symptoms impact you socially or psychologically? Parkinson’s disease is full of up-and-down days. Try not to look at your symptoms on a day-to-day basis, but instead try to answer how you were over all this last month or season. This information can help your neurologist understand what makes you unique from the previous patient and direct their course of treatment specifically for you.

Your active role can be extended to the rest of your Parkinson’s team. It’s important to remember that your neurologist is only one member of this team; others may include your rehab therapists, nurses, counselors, other physicians, caregivers/care partner and family. Make sure they are all in the know about your current status, regimen, and even education about Parkinson’s disease. Believe it or not, there are some things about Parkinson’s disease that your primary care physician may not know. They may not realize that some medications for nausea are contraindicated in the Parkinson’s patient. Your nurse in the hospital might not know why you have to have your medications on time. The National Parkinson’s Foundation has a campaign called “Aware in Care” as a tool for patients to share important information about Parkinson’s to other providers that may be caring for them, particularly with regards to the hospitalized patient. For more information, go to www.AwareinCare.org.

Now let’s talk about getting organized. Start by keeping daily notes of what questions and concerns you have for your neurologist. If you write your questions down before your visit, you are more likely to remember them and get them answered. Be sure to provide your neurologist with a complete list of all your medications including supplements and over-the-counter medications. Include dosages, number of tablets, and times throughout the day the medications are taken. Because Parkinson’s medications can be taken multiple times throughout the day, it is helpful if you keep this information on a grid so your neurologist can get a clear picture of what your regimen looks like. Keep track of your provider’s recommendations and answers to your questions including the reasons those specific recommendations were made. These will be your goals and a starting point for your next visit. Learn more about preparing for visits and organizing your information and symptoms in the book Every Victory Counts: Essential Information and Inspiration for a Lifetime of Wellness with Parkinson’s Disease. It will give you a starting point and may answer questions you have along the way. Or check out the Wellness Center at the NWPF.org website.

Getting the most out of the time you have during your neurologist appointment is a skill, but like learning to live and cope with Parkinson’s, it will come with time. Learning about Parkinson’s is an evolving process. You will need to identify which specific challenges you face, develop working relationships with your providers, and find and adhere to successful treatment plans. By taking an active role you can maximize your outcomes and take charge of living well with Parkinson’s disease.

Amy Cole is an RN at the Booth Gardner Parkinson’s Center at Evergreen Hospital, Kirkland, WA. Ms. Cole’s area of interest and focus is holistic and comprehensive care.
New Team Member for NWPF

NWPF is pleased to welcome Charlotte Moss to our team of dedicated professionals. Charlotte has more than fifteen years experience working for nonprofits specializing in finance, operations and human resources, as well as twelve years as a volunteer involved with fundraising, marketing and volunteer management. She holds a BS degree in Business Administration from the University of Illinois, a Graduate Certificate in Accounting from the University of Washington and a Graduate Certificate in Fundraising from Boston University.

Charlotte lived in Europe when she was young and continues to travel there to visit family. She is an avid hiker and gardener, occasional skier, and continues to volunteer with various nonprofit organizations.

---

Team Parkinson’s Rides Again!

Every year, we count on the dedication and support of cyclists, volunteers and countless contributors to raise awareness of Parkinson’s throughout our community. Whether slogging 200+ miles from Seattle to Portland by bicycle, supporting Team Parkinson’s at rest stops, or donating needed funds for programs and services, each Team member contributes to a better life for those living with Parkinson’s.

This year, 63 Team members raised more than $61,000 through contributions from family, friends and colleagues. We were also proud to have five riders with Parkinson’s make the journey to Portland with us this year. Special thanks go out to our sponsors Teva Neuroscience and Port Madison Enterprises, in-kind donors Cameron Catering and Cherrish, and the design services of Bryan Gough.

However, the road doesn’t end with the ride, nor do the needs of those depending on NWPF for guidance, inspiration and support. Donations in support of Team Parkinson’s can be made throughout the year by going to our website and clicking on Team Parkinson’s. Donations may be made either to the Team as a whole, or to an individual rider.

Volunteers support the riders. Staff photo.

The ride is an incredible event for those living with Parkinson’s, their families and friends. However, the journey doesn’t end with the ride. The needs of those depending on NWPF for guidance, inspiration and support continue throughout the year. Donations in support of Team Parkinson’s can be made throughout the year by going to our website and clicking on Team Parkinson’s. Donations may be made either to the Team as a whole, or to an individual rider.

My Walking Stick

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

My partner, who does not suffer from the shyness I sometimes do, later asked my friend about the stick. My friend said to see him the next day. That day my partner came home with my stick. It is one of my favorite belongings. So here I am, very happy to have a beaded walking stick that is blessed by my tribal friend. Thank you, Mr. Cooper.

Now to the point of this ramble. Whenever I go out with my beaded stick, it draws attention to itself. Total strangers have stopped in the middle of the road to tell me what a nice stick it is. This has caused some disconcerting situations. When the person talking is NOT in the middle of the road, we usually end up having a conversation about the stick and then about Parkinson’s. People’s responses are soft, gentle and curious. I always tell them I’d be happy to answer any questions they have if I can. I think somehow the stick allows them to see me as a person with a pretty stick instead of a person with a disability. It makes me comfortable enough to talk to strangers about our strange disease. It’s a good thing.

Rebecca McGavick lives in Washington and recently tried zip lining, still participates in her local PD support group and is awaiting (eagerly) another grandchild.
TRIBUTE GIFTS

Gifts to the Northwest Parkinson’s Foundation support our educational publications and self-care tools, including this newsletter, weekly e-mail news updates, our website, patient-education programs and our annual HOPE Conference on Parkinson’s.

We are privileged that so many in the Northwest Parkinson’s Foundation support our mission by giving generously throughout the year. To make a donation or for more information, contact Joseph DiChiaro at joseph@nwpf.org. Gifts listed here are from June 1 through August 31, 2012.

Family Funds
Alvorde Medical Director Fund in Memory of Roger Evans
Kristin Kennell
Laurelhurst Gradeschool Classmates
Marjorie Sanders
Mr. & Mrs. Michael J. Strand
Mel Bacher Family Fund
Mary A. Mitchell Memorial Fund
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Cory
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Gray
Laura Lewis
Catherine Meehan
Don Mitchell
Nancy Mitchell
William F. Mitchell
William R. Mitchell
Kathleen Norton
Margaret (Martie) Philbrick
Family Fund
Tina Bell Torrance Family Fund

In Honor
Alfred James Alleman
Alice Alleman
Gerry Allgeier
Marsha Allgeier
James Ashdown
Gene Ashdown
Steve Backer
Drin, Doris & Chris Dickenson
Wayne Blackburn
Tamina Richards
Gail Butler
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Butler
Elizabeth A. Haddon
Jeff C
Cindy Owens
Kenneth Carstens
Amanda Bernardy
Herb Cheerek
Donna Cheerek
Mary G. Massa
Blaine Werner
Rae Cole
Jerry Cole
Bruce & Aisa Collins
Mr. & Mrs. Everett J. Nelson
The Creighton Family
Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Wyatt
James Creighton
Jen Creighton
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Davis
Donna Duerke
Ken Duerke
Scott Edwards
Mark Hausman
Everett Emmons
Mr. & Mrs. Ray M. Nixon
William Lis Ericson Johnson
Linda-Beth Johnson Riggs
Robert Ferguson
Holli Templeton

Ed Fleming
Alice Alleman
Jerry Cole
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Norton
Kristin Steele
Kay Sweeney
Christine Viola-Krause
The Hon. Booth Gardner
Robert A. Roeger
Diana Gluesen
Jane M. Hamro
David R. Hamro
Sarah Hamro
Betty Hoag
Mr. & Mrs. Wolfgang Roekcs
Brian Hoots & Tamya Reistoffer
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Arleth
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Carrier
Mr. & Mrs. M. Donley
Jodie B. Hoots
Robert Koster
Richard Laursen
John Miskulink
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sanborn
Pat Havode
Sandra Hart
Patricia Howard
Heather Townsend
Lise Husted
Sidni Sobolik
Tobias Jean
Jennifer Swinant
Herb Jenkins
Mr. & Mrs. Reginald Amfield
Chris Jewell
Frank Jewell
Ted Kitajo
Jim Kitajo
Chris Knickerbocker
Mr. & Mrs. Talmdge Birdsong
Robert Kole
Alice J. Deodrant
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Krause
Mr. & Mrs. Brad Wöchner
Michael Kurtz
Lori Magaro
Carolyn Lorang & Jerry Schatz
Susan K. Baxter
Theodora Lyons
Shana E. Wendorf
John Manual
Gema Purcell
Kim Mason
Kathy Christensen
Coach Michael McKinlay
Kristen Allen
Rachel Affant
Margaret L. Burich
Allison L. Cox
Vera Miller
Lisa Watson
Marvin Moritz
Mr. & Mrs. Wolfgang Roekcs
Kent Smutny
Mr. & Mrs. Kerstin Smutny
Mr. & Mrs. Thane Sunde
Kevin Murphy
Ray Sweeney
Martin Nathan
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Fawcett Sr.
Hal Newsom
Dr. & Mrs. Stephen Bunch
Dr. & Mrs. Allen H. Johnson
Chad Paint
Dr. & Mrs. Jason Bell
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Lewis
Hal Peterson
Kevin Manjula
Victor A. Peterson
Jeanette Peterson
Antonia & Jack Petrasch
Jesse M. Nelson
Carole Reid
Mr. & Mrs. George W. Oleyar
Jeannette Schimmelbusch
Mr. & Mrs. Andre Schimmelbusch
Marcie Sewell & Tom Sexton
M. Laverne Sewell
Anne Showes
Richard Massey
Paul Sloothoom
Mr. & Mrs. David Sloothoom
Gayle Snider
Sally Sheek
Pam Spino
Mr. & Mrs. Edward L. Gervais
Gerry Sutherland
Mr. & Mrs. Ryan Sutherland
Christine Thorsom
Duane S. Thorsom
Peggy Van Hulsteyn
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Fleming
Susan Wrigley
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Gibson

In Memory
Shirley Ambrose
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald J. Portele
Irene Anderson
Beverley L. Sheldahl
James R. Rall
Tiffany Lindholm
Fern Bartlett
Mr. & Mrs. Donald C. Peters Jr.
Jack Benaroya
Mr. & Mrs. Llewelyn G. Pritchard
Derek Brine
D. Brine
Frank Rusing
Veda Baldwin
Nancy Buttorff
Gail Buttorff
Richard Campbell
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis G. Burgess
Marjorie Jardin Campos
C. Margaret Degroot
Mr. & Mrs. Achley Hollister
Eric D. Kitis, DOS
Mr. & Mrs. Tanner Joe Meyer Sr.
Marquita Moss
Rowena J. Oremba
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Reid
Carla F. Thomas
Lynne Cardinal
Lenora F. Pearl
Margaret Cliff
James P. Cliff

Curt Cooper
Colleen Crowley
John Crowley
Colleen Crowley
JoAnn Sharon Cuthbertson
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Gunther
Mel Rudee Hammions
Lori Wagner
Deborah S. Yarborough
Bruce Dady
Mr. & Mrs. Mherling I. Luce
Neil Dickenson
Mr. & Mrs. Donald L. Done
Angela Dreyer
Mr. & Mrs. Dick Hamilton
Mr. & Mrs. Leon Rightmire
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Schell
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Scott
Ralph Dorfman
Barnaby Dorfman
John Mitchell Durham
Kristin Riley
David Easton
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Kaufman
Robert C. Vinson
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Wilson
Arthur L. Edwards
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Ducey
David Egeland
Mr. & Mrs. Verne Correll
Mr. & Mrs. N. David Goertke
Mr. & Mrs. Ross Hansing
Mr. & Mrs. Ross J. Hansing
Mr. & Mrs. Laurence Hughes
Mr. & Mrs. Craig W. Pleifer
Mr. & Mrs. Paul A. Tomacal
Mr. & Mrs. C. Robert Willardson
Carol Elton
Peter Elton
Neil Farrell
Maureen Ocsalad
Nina Gass
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Garndand
James V. Gordon
James B. Gordon
Joan Greewald
Diane Pearson
Alfred C. Hayes Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel L. King
Kenneth W. Helenstrom
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Eikum
Marvin Knottis
Eric B. Herdman
Ben Himmelmirb
Myra Himmelmirb
Mary Hisington
Dale O. Hisington
John Holstrom
Eichner & Associates PS
Phyllis Dunlap
Lyman Hull
Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Cram
R. Wayne Hunter
June M. Hunter
Clyde V. Jacobsen
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew P. Kerr
Herb Jenkins
Diane Deno
Mr. & Mrs. Delbert L. Hoom
Lilian Johnson
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Thop
Stephen Kastner
Stacy Alexander
Jeanie Kelly
John A. Kelly
Ernest K. Knudson
Mr. & Mrs. Leon Small
Russel Kovalich
Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Karkalik
Mel Light
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph W. Geizer
Jesse Lockeayer
Dorothy Penheeny
Louis Linden Madsen
Harry Hayter
Dorothy Martinson
Mr. & Mrs. George Byers
Bob Massoni
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Rubin
Josephine Maurer
Susan Pilawski
George Moore
Winne Lee Moore
Virginia Thompson
Kathleen Mhyre
Glenn M. Mhyre
Tee Nakamura
Kathy Niihoshi
Jim Norris
Lynn Kunkel
Don Norvell
Mary Lou Stark
John E. O’Heron
Deborah M. Dellicker
Alovika Goodspeed
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Hoppe
Loretta Kline
Kikue Kono
Derald W. Morfit
Nancy O’Heron
Mr. & Mrs. Jonaloz D. Paige
James Robert Paulson
Joan Wittel
Curtis “Lee” Parish
Mr. & Mrs. E.S. Bell
Louis Davis
Gayle A. Morehead
Jeannne Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. George L. Wilder
John R. Petersen
Stephanie M. Alexander
Dohers L. Ching
David W. Clark
Eric Jensen
Mr. & Mrs. Robert A. Jensen
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Nelson
Mr. & Mrs. Donald S. Young
Tony Pfeffer
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Brittain
Mike Reynolds
Jim Newick
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Beaver
Mr. & Mrs. William Lundberg
Ann Sather Strand
Karim Strand
 Gerald “Jerry” Seary
Burrows Tractor
Carrier Transports Inc.
Columbia Basin Cruisers
Mr. & Mrs. W.A. Doppis
Helen Howson
Mr. & Mrs. James L. Jacobs
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Mortimer
Mr. and Mrs. Charlie O’Connor
Thomas O. Pence
Powers & Therriton Enterprises Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Rainford
Rankin Equipment Company
Sheri Bynd
Royal Schleppe
Evelyn Searl
Ruth Stone
Alan Senter
Barbara Kurtis
Corinne Sigl
Craig Sigl
Vernessa Slack
Jennifer Andrews
Horlao Spangler
Stacey Moret
Evelyn Stevens
Tom Stevens
Russ Swanson
Lynnette Vehr
Norman Tinklepaugh
Mr. & Mrs. Lavern Blackburn
Rhoda Delaney
Joel Shroyer
Jessica Tinklepaugh
Stanley Tomich
Patrick R. Tomich
Minnie Clarice Tompkins
Kimmie Macey
R. Wayne Uilt
Garoon Smith Hurd & Miller
Karen Hansen
Margaret Hansen
Marian D. James
Barbara J. Krull
Mr. & Mrs. Duwayne Lydeen
Sylvia Robinson
Dianne M. Tanne
William Walland
Mary Harp
Christopher O’Neill
Dennis Wooley
Mr. & Mrs. Ryan Woodey
Steve Yarnall
Karen L. King
From Boyfriend to Care-Partner

The conference was a big surprise. I was quietly overwhelmed by the love and understanding that came not only from the speakers, but from my fellow caregivers as well. There was a gentleness to the day.

I was able to listen to and share stories that for the moment made me feel better. I saw for the first time that I am not alone in this sad, wonderful journey. I was also pleasantly surprised by the lack of "go-team-go" attitude. You know what I’m talking about. No! Not everything is fine. I found it refreshing that they talked about the hard realities of everyday life but also turned around and gave me tools to work with to make it better, or at least more manageable.

I was given lots of tools and lots of information. There were more phone numbers and websites than I could possibly remember or use. But I came away feeling better about my partnership with the one I love. I just feel a bit calmer.

So, if you are a caregiver for a person with PD — GO! 😊

Richard Holloway moved to Washington from New Jersey. He loves jazz, the old stuff, and collects vinyl records of all sorts. He enjoys road trips to see new places or explore old ones.