

# PN News

Yolo County

VOL. 5, NO. 9

SEPTEMBER 2007

The mission of the Yolo Neuropathy Groups is to insure, through Information, Empowerment and Mutual Support that all may have hope and no one faces their peripheral neuropathy alone.

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success." Henry Ford

Martha Chandley, Editor (916) 371-1125 [kairoschandley@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kairoschandley@sbcglobal.net)

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## Yolo Neuropathy Group Plans September is Diabetic Neuropathy Month!

\*\*\*\*\* NOTE SCHEDULE CHANGES \*\*\*\*\*

**Woodland Neuropathy Group: Mon., Sept. 10 at 4:30 pm,**

**"A Dialogue on Experiencing Diabetic Neuropathy," Martha Chandley, MA, PNe**  
Woodland Community & Senior Center, 2001 East Street Call Delia at (530) 661-3238

**Davis Neuropathy Group: Wednesday ., Sept. 12 at 2:30 pm**

**"Proper Foot Care for Neuropathy Patients," Tracy Basso, DPM,**  
Institute for Restorative Health, 1460 Drew Avenue, Suite 300 Call Martha at (916) 371-1125

**West Sacramento Neuropathy Group: Sept. 26 and 27 at 2 pm**

**Wednesday: "Understanding Diabetic Neuropathy," Elizabeth Yeh, RN, MSW**

**Thursday: "Proper Foot Care for Neuropathy Patients," Tracy Basso, DPM**  
A. F. Turner Library, 1212 Merkley Avenue Call Sandra at (916) 372-6093

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### **Diabetic Neuropathy Clinical Trial (from [www.dpnstudy.com](http://www.dpnstudy.com))**

***"The pain of Diabetic Neuropathy can be intense. Trying to find better ways to relieve it is the point of our research study. Join us.***

You may be eligible to participate in a clinical research study of an investigational oral drug for hand, foot, and leg pain caused by diabetes-related damage if you:

Are at least 18 years of age; Have been diagnosed with Type I or II diabetes with stable blood sugar levels for the last four weeks; Have had painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy DPN (which is nerve damage to the limbs) for the last six months to 10 years; Have not had a stroke or heart attack within the last year.

Study participation lasts 6-11 weeks and requires 8 office visits. All study related office visits, medical evaluations, and study medications will be provided to qualified study participants at no cost."

**Interested? Call (916) 484-0500 for an initial eligibility review.**

## September is Diabetic Neuropathy Month because:

Many “boomers” and other aging Americans have been diabetic for many years, or are now being defined as “pre-diabetic” in the context of their metabolic syndrome, or are now suddenly diagnosed as having clearly defined diabetes. We’re not so surprised if one is over weight or obese, but one could also be quite thin and still develop Type II diabetes. The problem is that some 40% of all diabetics will eventually develop forms neuropathy that can have life and limb threatening consequences. So, this issue is relevant for many of us. Though we may not have diabetes now, we may very well develop it in the future, or now know others with this serious disease. With empathy for others, we all need to understand more about this particular type of neuropathy. All three of our September speakers have direct experience with the condition: Martha, as a DPNer herself; Dr. Basso is a podiatrist treating many DPNers and other PNers with serious foot problems; and Liz, an RN, is a volunteer ombudsman and advocate for nursing home patients, many of whom are needlessly suffering with diabetic neuropathy.

**DPNer Martha Chandley, BA, MA**, has been living with and studying neuropathy since 1998 when her symptoms first began as carpal tunnel syndrome, partly as a result of her heavy computer work job and newly diagnosed Type II diabetes. She gained control of her “blood sugar” and grew out of her general PN despair thanks to **John Senneff’s** wonderful groundbreaking **Numb Toes...** books on neuropathy and the original **NeuroHelp** supplement program from which her classic DPN symptoms pretty much disappeared, only to be later replaced with **radiculopathy** from spinal damages, with different neuropathy distress. In the context of coping with her neuropathies and pursuing a program in gerontology studies, she became a voracious reader of internet and other resources on all types of neuropathy and pain management issues. Having founded all three Yolo neuropathy support groups, she created and continues to edit **PN News**, coordinate PN outreach services in Yolo County and the NCCNA bus poster project as the voice for the **Neuropathy Hotline** in her evolving identity as a neuropathy educator and advocate - in spite and because of her neuropathies.

**Podiatrist Tracy Basso, DPM**, is board certified in podiatric surgery and has been in practice in Davis since 1990. He is a graduate of UC Davis and the California College of Podiatric Medicine having completed his residency as Chief of Surgical Residency in foot and ankle reconstruction at the Mesquite Physician’s Hospital outside of Dallas. This second generation podiatrist performs surgery in Davis and Woodland hospitals and is trained in all types of foot and ankle surgery. He frequently lectures on podiatric and surgical aspects of diabetes, geriatrics and sports medicine. Dr. Basso is available for home visits for his homebound geriatric patients. He is the current past-president of the California Podiatric Medicine Association and I hope we can learn about his achievements in that realm. As the personal podiatrist for many of us PNers, he and Tracy Ferrragamo, DPM are the two Davis providers of anodyne therapy services. Dr. Basso has been a longtime supporter of the Yolo Neuropathy Support Groups, having spoken twice for us at the Davis library in our early years and provided printing services for several of our fall 2006 newsletters, when our funds were short. We are most grateful for his and his staff’s generous support and care for many of us and for his once again being available to speak to two of the Yolo groups this month, concluding his lecture tour in Woodland on October 1.

**Elizabeth Yeh, RN, MSW** was born in China to two physician parents and immigrated to the Boston area in her early teens where she later completed her nursing training at Women and Brigham Hospital, later moving to California. She and her husband, Yin Yeh, Ph.D., have lived in Davis for many years, where he is an internationally acclaimed researcher at UC Davis. After working for many years in acute care hospital settings, Liz became committed to geriatric nursing, becoming an educator and advocate for nursing home care reforms to improve patient services. Her MSW from Sacramento State University has empowered her patient advocacy work over the years in a variety of

health delivery settings. In 1996, she published her first book (***How to Achieve Quality of Life Care in Nursing Homes***) and is co-editor of another book used in training nursing home staff. Since her retirement, she has become a volunteer investigator of patient care problems at long term care facilities in Davis for **Ombudsman Services of Northern California**. She finds many nursing home patients suffering with diabetic neuropathy and potential amputees because of inadequate medical care due to poorly educated medical personnel, as well as limited formulary and other treatment options. We're hoping she can repeat her power point presentation to the Davis and Woodland groups in coming months, as well as assume some potential leadership role with the Yolo Neuropathy Groups in 2008!

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## With heartfelt thanks to so many.....

Special blessings and thanks to Delia Genera, has led the Woodland group for some two years. We hope she can continue with her family and health crises overcome and the demands of her City of Sacramento job still with her. She is a jewel in group dynamics and has a marvelously warm, caring spirit that nurtures her group.

Congratulations to our dear friend, **Diane Cecchettini**, immediate past manager of the **West Sacramento UPS Store**, who blessed our newsletter operations over the last couple of years with excellent printing services at a significantly discounted rate. Diane has left UPS for a better job, but we're glad to report that her successor has promised continued printing discounts. We couldn't have made it without that community service generosity, for which we are most grateful and now wish Diane the best in her new job! She was delighted to receive an hydrangea plant on behalf of the Yolo Neuropathy Groups, which she'll eventually plant in her front yard.

What a joy it was to encounter **Richard and Beverly Schubarth** the other day. They had played an essential role in the early years of the Woodland group as they hosted our evening meetings at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**. They had "disappeared" for a while with family and health issues taking them away from our meetings and we hope they can now return. Several of the other original members have continued, like **Beverly Matteoli**, who has continued as our Yolo treasurer from the beginning, and **Diana Treadway**, who is listed as a contact person on the NCCNA brochures. With our varying neuropathy and other health problems and demands of family care-giver roles, we have both good and bad days. Sometimes we can attend meetings, sometimes we can't. We wish everyone the best of possible days; we're always delighted to see folks when attendance is viable and understand when it is not.

Thanks to NCCNA's new board member, **Laura Niznik**, who is now formatting our regional newsletter, newly named **Neuropathy Hope**. It has taken on a whole new, very attractive and professional look that is most welcome. (Maybe someday she or someone else can help us redo the format for **PN News** too!) And thanks to **NCCNA president, Bev Anderson**, for her list of ways we can help with the growth and development of the regional organization that can be so important for the well-being of PNers throughout our area. Thanks to the **Board of NCCNA** for developing their **Strategic Plan for 2007-2009**, copies of which can be transmitted by email upon request. Congratulations to newest board member **Red Banes**, who held the key to making the bus poster project work!

One of the articles featured in the September issue contained photographs of **neurologist Eric I. Hassid, MD** and **naturopath, Marco Vespignani, ND**, in a salute of deep gratitude for their generous presentations, not only to the Yolo Neuropathy Groups, but other groups in the area, as well. We are also grateful for the many times that **psychologist Dr. John Leonard, compound pharmacist Jerra Banwarth, R.Ph., and medical pain specialist Kayvan Haddadan, MD**, who have also made many presentations over the last two years. **And thanks for "use of the hall" to IRH and Physical Edge, for our meeting over the last year.**

## Some Notable Neuropathy News Odds & Ends

**CORRECTION:** Apologies have been sent for my error in the last newsletter regarding **Dr. Jonathan Katz's** institutional affiliation. Rather than being at UCSF, he is at California Pacific Medical Center, also in San Francisco, which needs to be part of our official record in the event that some of our readers would like to arrange a consultation with him.

Some of us old timers were startled to hear and read of Dr. Katz's rather neutral/negative perspectives on taking **alpha lipoic acid (ALA)** and **Vitamin B-12** supplements, based upon his assertion that there have been few if any clinical studies to prove their efficacy for helping with neuropathies. While that attitude is typical of traditional practitioners of allopathic medicine, many of us have known, from **John Senneff's *Nutrients for Neuropathy*** and many other resources, that there is a very large body of solid research showing that use of large doses of injected or sublingual B-12, and capsules of ALA and other antioxidants, can make a significant difference in managing our pain levels and sense of well-being. Your local health food store or the **Institute for Restorative Health** are good resources for learning about and acquiring supplements that have been well established as being helpful with neuropathy.

An anecdotal instance of B-12 efficacy recently came via the Google Neuropathy Alert service. A wife whose veteran husband had been exposed to Agent Orange and developed DPN reports on their experiments using **sub-lingual methylcobalamin (a kind of high potency Vitamin B-12) lozenges** purchased at a health food store. Her husband tried 6 lozenges at one sitting, with an immediate relief, calming his weak, shaking legs. Continuing through the week, he stopped for a day with the return of the shaking, but once again reduced with resumption of the lozenges. The literature referenced in the article reports on positive results of ultra-high doses of methylcobalamin for diabetic and other types of neuropathy. While high doses of Vitamin B-6 are toxic and can cause neuropathy, there is no indication of the same with B-12. The woman says they are seeking a doctor who can prescribe large doses of injectable methylcobalamin with the hope for significant nerve regeneration, as has reportedly occurred with others. For more information about these studies, go to this site: [http://alternative\\_treatments-info2.blogspot.com2007/06/alternative-treatment-for-peripheral...](http://alternative_treatments-info2.blogspot.com2007/06/alternative-treatment-for-peripheral...)

A recent issue of our friend, Bill End's daily column on diabetes referenced an article published in the **August 2007 issue of Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry** that is relevant to this month's special focus. A 57 year old man with **diabetic neuropathy** had been confined to a wheel chair with significant pain and muscle weakness. Five days of **IVIG infusions** led to a remarkable improvement. Three weeks of no treatments saw a return of problems that were reversed with a second course of IVIG treatment and the man was able to walk for the first time in ages. (While IVIG infusions are commonly used for a variety of other neuropathies, such as CIDP, they have not been commonly used with diabetic neuropathy; however, it should be noted that CIDP and diabetic neuropathy sometimes coexist.)

The **Google Neuropathy Alert** service led to another fascinating article by psychiatrist **Richard Petty, MD** about two studies using **acupuncture for diabetic and idiopathic neuropathy** for reducing pain/distress as measured by improved nerve conduction (NCS) readings and subjective assessments. A study comparing Chinese and Japanese forms of acupuncture with DPN found that while both reduced pain, only the Chinese style produced an objective measure of improved sensation with the NCS test. The second study involved people with idiopathic neuropathy, some receiving acupuncture with the rest receiving general medical care, but no PN specific treatment. 76% of the acupuncture group improved symptomatically and objectively as measured by the NCS, while only 14% of the control group improved. Dr. Petty remarked that if the findings were to be confirmed with larger and more rigorous studies, the medical community would have to rethink the traditional conclusion we hear so often that neuropathy is "untreatable and irreversible." What a great encouraging word!!!! Go to [www://richardpettymd.blogspot.com/my\\_weblog/2007/07/acupuncture-2.html](http://www://richardpettymd.blogspot.com/my_weblog/2007/07/acupuncture-2.html). There are several practitioners of **Chinese acupuncture** in our area, but you might want to

check out our old friend, **Brian Dempsey** at the **Davis Holistic Health Center (530) 758-7525** and new IRH staffer, **Rasa Sammy**, who can be reached at **(530) 758-4474**.

Summertime TV reruns brought two **Grey's Anatomy** neuropathy related segments to us that bear comment. It should be noted that in neither case did the story lines ever use the term neuropathy, but should have. One involved a construction contractor with diabetic neuropathy who had developed wounds on his foot/lower leg without treatment. He could no longer walk on the foot and ended up in ER. Christine, ever the surgeon, immediately proclaimed that the limb would have to be amputated. He of course protested, but submitted. Give the surgery focus of the show, it would have been impossible to consider or do an alternative treatment. **But we know that had the man received a course of anodyne therapy of undefined length, his leg might well have been saved.** The second show featured an elderly man who crashed into people at an outdoor market, potentially fatally injuring a young pregnant woman. Turns out the man's daughter had taken away his keys, but his wife submitted to his pleas and returned them. The diagnostic procedures include an MRI/CT scan showing spinal stenosis with pressure on nerves extending into the legs and feet, causing the severe numbness, which should have prevented his driving. **Had the man received anodyne therapy on his numb limbs, sensation might have been restored and prevented the driving accident** that proved to be so disastrous to two families. So, if you're suffering with neuropathic wounds or severe numbness, do consider giving anodyne a try for accelerated healing and restoration of sensation.

Some of us are very familiar with the pain relieving attributes of **Neuragen**, the essential geranium oil based topical homeopathic produced by our Canadian friends at **OriginBioMed (OBM)**. Our colleague and fibromyalgia educator and advocate **Sue Alexander** (who will be speaking to the Davis and West Sacramento groups in October), sent over an article reporting on the effectiveness of a topical geranium oil product used for Post Herpetic Neuralgia (PHN). The study results found that the geranium oil produced a significant reduction in both spontaneous and evoked pain, noting that PHN pain can be severe, disabling and treatments are less than ideal. **Topical capsaicin** (which is accepted by allopathic medicine) relieves pain gradually over two weeks, but it's often abandoned because of the intensity of its own pain producing attributes. Proponents of alternative medicine are more inclined to recommend the geranium oil product as it relieves pain in minutes and is well tolerated. Based on their own studies, and anecdotal data, OBM recommends Neuragen for pain from DPN, PHN, other neuropathic pain, fibromyalgia and spinal problems. **It is available at two locations in our area: Prescription Specialists at 250 West Main Street, Suite 103 in Woodland and Elliott's Food Store in Citrus Heights.**

We have touched on **autonomic neuropathy** briefly in past newsletters, but this is a very complex condition that deserves extensive treatment in a very patient-friendly format. Until such time that becomes possible for our groups, those Interested in the issue would do well to look over a phenomenal 55 page article on **Diabetic Autonomic Neuropathy** originally appearing in **Diabetes Care 26:1553-1579, 2003** by **Aaron I. Vinik, MD, Ph.D., et al.** (To see the quite comprehensive article, go to <http://care.diabetesjournals.org/cgi/content/full/25/5/1553>). Dr. Vinik is one of the foremost clinicians and researchers of diabetic neuropathy and has been an advisor for **The Neuropathy Association**.

The article begins by saying: "**Diabetic Autonomic Neuropathy (DAN)** is a serious and common complication of diabetes. Despite its relationship to an increased risk of cardiovascular mortality and its association with multiple symptoms and impairments, the significance of DAN has not been fully appreciated." DAN can affect many organ systems throughout the body (e.g. gastrointestinal, genitourinary, and cardiovascular) producing a wide range of very serious functional difficulties. If you are experiencing any of the following -- orthostatic hypotension (dizziness on rising), constipation, diarrhea, gastroparesis, erectile dysfunction, urinary or fecal incontinence, sudomotor dysfunction (too little or too much sweating), impaired neurovascular symptoms (limited blood

circulation in the peripheral nerves), erratic glucose control, etc -- you may wish to review this article yourself and/or refer it to your primary care physician. But be forewarned, this is a very complex, wonderfully inclusive article on a complex issue that many of us need to know much more about as more and more of us are reporting that we're contending with one or more DAN problems. And it should be noted that autonomic neuropathy is by no means confined to DPNers, as it is found with a wide variety of other forms of neuropathy with quite similar clinical dynamics.

Some years ago, NCCNA conducted a survey of its members on what they'd found helpful in dealing with their neuropathy. **One DPN lady in the Sacramento group responded that LOSING WEIGHT had improved her symptoms!** Many folks scoffed at her assertion, but she was probably right on in her conclusion, as weight loss can lessen diabetic symptoms and thereby lessen DPN symptoms. Whether you're diabetic or not, but are struggling with being overweight or obese, our friends at **IRH and Physical Edge** are offering a **Healthy Weight Loss Program** originally conceptualized by our IRH psychologist friend **John Leonard, Ph.D.** using a mind-body communication system, known as **My TrueBody**. The program has proven to reduce food cravings, induce healthy food choices, increase the desire to exercise, create the sensation of an already lean core body and eliminate common barriers to weight loss and management. **An introductory meeting on the My TrueBody program will be held at 6 pm on Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup> at the IRH/PE facility at 1460 Drew Avenue in south Davis. For more information about the meeting and the program, call Beth Rothveel, RN, Clinical Coordinator of IRH Programs at 530/758-4474.**

The **Ask the Experts** column in the latest issue of *Neurology Now*, contains a response by **Dr. P. James R. Dyck** (Peripheral Nerve Laboratory at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN) to a question about **how one knows if one's neuropathy is getting worse?** Dr. Dyck says, "Just because the pain gets better, it doesn't mean your neuropathy has improved; a decrease in pain can mean your neuropathy is getting worse." As nerve fibers worsen and die, there is less pain but increased numbness. **"The most reliable measure for a worsening condition is greater weakness and if you have increased numbness and loss of sensitivity, your neuropathy is probably getting worse."** Thanks for the clarification, Dr. Dyck! Wonder if our doctors are aware of these realities!!!

A paper presented at the 67<sup>th</sup> Scientific Sessions of the **American Diabetes Association** in June of 2007 reports that **Statins and Fibrates Prevent Diabetic Neuropathy by 48%!** Both types of drugs are commonly prescribed for people with Type II diabetes to help prevent heart attacks. The study was conducted over eight years in Australia. Preventing diabetic neuropathy has traditionally been defined as maintaining tight glucose control, so this study suggests a breakthrough alternative means. For more details, go to <http://www.billend.com/daily/a0717072.htm>. (While this may be incredibly good news for many, some statins have been shown to induce myopathy, or severe disabling muscle weakness and neuropathy.)

And finally, our friends at the **American Chronic Pain Association** issued a fascinating report in March of 2007 on a global survey showing that **effective patient-physician communications are critical for accurate and timely recognition of neuropathic pain.** In some countries patients wait up to 19 months on average and visit as many as two doctors before receiving an accurate diagnosis. Countries surveyed included the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Korea, Mexico, Spain and Finland, involving 700 patients and 700 doctors. The responding general practice doctors explained that they had difficulty in distinguishing between neuropathic and other types of pain. While researchers have developed screening tools, only Mexican doctors commonly used them. Go to [http://www.theacpa.org/news\\_viewitem.asp?id=165](http://www.theacpa.org/news_viewitem.asp?id=165) for more information on the study. In reading this article I thought about the typical American experience in which we usually see many more than two doctors in pursuit of a valid diagnosis for far more than 19 months. And many of our doctors appear to have no interest in nor comprehension of our pains, much less what to do with our neuropathic symptoms. **Alas, we have so very, very far to go with the American medical system when it comes to neuropathy. But thanks for the ACPA and the international Neuropathic Pain**

**Network that is doing so much to educate the public about neuropathic pain!**

## **THANKS TO SOME OF OUR SUMMER SPEAKERS!!!**

Alas, the continued spinal disabilities and pain, while improving considerably, have precluded a full representation of all our summer lectures. Please accept these minimalist statements about our June and July lectures/discussions with encouragement that you contact our speakers and take advantage of their offered products or services as may be appropriate for the sake of your good general and neuropathy health. We'll get to the August speakers in the next edition.

### **Joe Lansberger on the Liquid Advanced Zeolite Product**

The June Woodland meeting featured a presentation arranged by **Beverly Matteoli**, on an extraordinary product that has helped in her overall health. Joe explained that Zeolites are a group of 40 different natural minerals formed when molten lava mixed with sea water millions of years ago that have the ability to trap and bind with various toxins, heavy metals and viral particles and other impurities to remove them safely and naturally from the body. The FDA has given the LAZ liquid product a GRAS (generally recognized as safe) status and the product is protected by a US patent. It is a natural dietary supplement that does not ADD nutrients to the body, but REMOVES deadly toxic and other health destroying substances from the body. If you would like to know more about the product and how it has been beneficial for Beverly, give her a call at (530) 662-7631.

### **Jan Polin, Certified Qi Gong Instructor on Qi Gong and Meditation seaofchi@comcast.net or (916) 646-6767**

The June West Sacramento group was enthralled by the delightful stories shared by Jan about the philosophy, history, practices and styles of **Taoism** and **Qi Gong**. She explained that Qi Gong is the ancient Chinese practice of gentle rhythmic movements and breathing which strengthens the body and relaxes the mind. In her classes, one can learn both sitting and standing forms of Qi Gong/Tai Chi, acupressure and easy methods of meditation and relaxation, including use of the Himalayan Singing Bowls. With a delightful illustrated handout, Jan demonstrated some of the ten classic movements with such enticing names as Opening Arms of Breath, Antiers Pushing, Shoulder Roll, Half Lung Breathing, Rowing Across Sea of Qi, Flying Forward and Rolling Upright, Arms Pushing Down, Pianists Playing, Divers Clap and Gathering Heavenly Qi. She also invited us in to Taoist meditations and movements to open the heart to love of oneself and others. In addition to her Saturday class at the Hart Senior Center in midtown Sacramento, she also holds classes at the East/West Bookstore and the Asian Community Center. If interested in giving Qi Gong a try as part of your de-stressing self-care program, you may contact her by phone or email as above.

## **THANKS TO JOE AND JAN FOR THEIR FASCINATING PRESENTATIONS!**

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**MAT MOORE, MPT & NICOLE RAVERET, DPT, ATC**  
**Physical Edge, The Physical Therapy and Fitness Center**  
**1460 Drew Ave., Suite 200, Davis, CA 95618 (530) 753-9355**

It was a truly extraordinary occasion to have some 25-30 old timers and newcomers in attendance that wonderful June day in Davis when Mat and Nicole enchanted us with their wisdom of the body human and demonstrated numerous exercises as ways to keep us flexible and strong as

we contend with our various difficulties with neuropathy and other degenerative conditions.

They had prepared a fabulous multi-page illustrated handout and managed to keep making enough copies to accommodate all those who had come. They were assisted in the planned demonstrations by the phenomenally agile Hank Spivey, who had just been released from the hospital the previous day. We were astonished to realize that he was up to some 90% of the prescribed movements. Hooray for you, Hank!!!

Nicole has a Doctorate in Physical Therapy and began the presentation with a lecture on the types of exercises appropriate for older adults with disabilities and particularly neuropathy as referenced in several specific articles and websites included in the handout. You might want to check out Haupt's article, "**Exercise Prescription for Nerve Pain**" at [www.neuropathynow.com](http://www.neuropathynow.com). Nicole emphasized the need for cardio, strength training, and stretching exercises for all of us. With Hank's help, she demonstrated how to do bridges, clamshells, straight leg raises, heel raises, toe raises, rowing, bicep curls, back stabilization stretches, marches and single leg balances, and calf and hamstring stretches.

Mat has a Master's in Physical Therapy and is co-founder and co-owner of the two Physical Edge facilities at Lake and Covell in west Davis and adjacent to the IRH in south Davis, which offers a broad variety of physical therapy and exercise services, including a warm wading pool, and a very special ten session back therapy class which he leads. From time to time, they also provide group classes of tai chi and yoga sessions in "our" meeting room through the week. Their goal is increase functionality of those dealing with weakened muscles, balance and gait problems, pain reduction with touch and electrical stimulation therapy and the broad range of fitness exercise equipment.

He explained that insurance is accepted for many of the physical therapy services, although this is more likely with PPO policies. Membership in the facilities is moderately priced and the facility is open seven days a week to maximize member access to a well rounded program. Do come by to check out the wonderful facility. Talk to your doctor about a referral to Physical Edge for any physical therapy you may need or for guidance on an appropriate exercise for yourself.

**THANKS SO MUCH, MAT AND NICOLE, FOR YOUR EXTRAORDINARY LONG AWAITED PRESENTATION AND THE WONDERFUL EXERCISE GUIDE FOR US PNERs!! And thanks to Hank Spivey for being our model!!**

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**ILONA IRELAND, MA, Sound Advice, on "Caring for the Caregiver"**

**Integrative Holistic Medical Consultant, Reiki Master, Reconnection Therapist,  
Sound and Movement Therapist, and Certified Massage Therapist**

**For individual sessions or classes, you may contact her at (916) 921- 0642 or by email at [Ilonaeire@creativei.com](mailto:Ilonaeire@creativei.com)**

Ilona is the most truly extraordinary energy healer I know, but she'd have to explain what that means. As a Reconnection Therapist, she recently took me to a significant new stage of healing for my back injury that has allowed me to sit up enough to create this issue of **PN News! Yea Ilona!!!**

She came to all our Yolo meetings in July to do sessions on "Caring for the Caregiver," in recognition that virtually all of us are, at some level, caregivers for one or more persons, if only for ourselves. We can all experience some level of burnout at times, and so need some tools for reviving our bodies, minds and spirits. In her own delightful style, she led us through a series of reflections and movements that varied with each group's dynamics and circumstances. The following summarizes the general aspects of her presentation:

Stress is a natural part of life, but unremitting chronic pain is over the top stress that raises our

blood pressure, keeps us awake, and depletes our emotional, mental and physical resources. When we are stressed we tend to overeat, over medicate, drink too much, and take our pain out on others. She invited us to take up the alternative response of STOP, not only to stop one's frantic response but also "Self-Training Observing Patterns" of learning new ways to respond in the midst of our panic or paralysis, fight/flight patterns, so that we can make positive, healthful responses. Conscious breathing and present moment awareness begin to free us from the frenzy in our minds. Different forms of relaxation, meditations and visualization styles were demonstrated. Other means suggested were guided imagery on tapes/CDs, quiet music and solitary quiet times.

Massage and "energy" work can be very helpful for many with the use of acupuncture, acupressure, Bowen therapy, physical therapy, Reiki and therapeutic touch. (Ilona had demonstrated the latter techniques at several support groups in the past). She introduced us to the concept of intentional Self Energy Work in which one builds energy in one's own hands and places them around a painful place or breathes into the painful places. **Energy Follows Thought** and we have the capacity, with mind-body techniques, to be something of our own healers. Ilona invited us into a "crystal bubble" exercise in which we identify a place of pain and, in our mind's eye or imagination, place the pain in the bubble, giving it a color, a texture, a word or sound and filling the bubble. We then move the bubble out in front of us and let it explode, sending our pain into oblivion! Give it a try!

Relaxing exercise, such as pool walking, yoga, tai chi/qi gong, and walking or dancing mindfully are also helpful for de-stressing. Proper nutrition is essential for ongoing well-being and you may work with a nutritionist, choose to stay away from white flour and white sugar, and take nutritional supplements as the B vitamins, potassium and magnesium. Aromatherapy can also help evoke a relaxed state.

**THANKS, ILONA FOR YOUR WONDERFUL GUIDANCE ON HOW TO BETTER CARE FOR OURSELVES SO WE CAN CARE FOR OTHERS!!**

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**HELP WANTED: How YOU can help the Yolo Neuropathy Groups grow.**

Help Martha with clerical chores, like developing and maintaining various data bases for membership and other projects – **very urgent need**. This is foundational to accepting the offers of several folks who have offered a variety of helps and for a long delayed fund raising project to sell the TNA pins to support groups across the US.

Be an assistant leader for Martha for the Davis and for Delia for the Woodland groups to help with moderating meetings, planning programs, and recruiting speakers.

Be a publicity person, writing articles for the local newspapers about upcoming meetings and distributing flyers to targeted agencies/facilities for placement on public bulletin boards or tract racks, at least one person for each group.

Be a reporter, writing up our meeting presentations for the newsletter.

Be a researcher, reading internet or other resources and write up brief summaries of articles about Neuropathy, for future Odds and Ends columns.

Be callers for each of the groups to remind folks about upcoming meetings.

Help with a much needed future phone survey to find out what folks are wanting and needing.  
Help plan and staff future outreach efforts in each of our communities to share information about neuropathy and invite other PNers to our meetings.

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**PN News** is a major resource of information about neuropathy, not only for Yolo “members,” but also for others outside our area who subscribe to it, and others who read excerpts in NCCNA’s **Neuropathy Hope** which has an even broader readership across the region. Your editor loves doing the newsletter, but there other activities that need her attention as well. **HELP!! Call (916) 371-1125!**

## September is Diabetic Neuropathy Month

\*\*\*\*\* NOTE SCHEDULE CHANGES \*\*\*\*\*

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**Davis Neuropathy Group: Wednesday ., Sept. 12 at 2:30 pm**  
“Proper Foot Care for Neuropathy Patients,” Tracy Basso, DPM,  
Institute for Restorative Health, 1460 Drew Avenue, Suite 300 Call Martha at (916) 371-1125

**West Sacramento Neuropathy Group: Sept. 26 and 27 at 2 pm**  
**Wednesday:** “Understanding Diabetic Neuropathy,” Elizabeth Yeh, RN, MSW  
**Thursday:** “Proper Foot Care for Neuropathy Patients,” Tracy Basso, DPM  
A. F. Turner Library, 1212 Merkley Avenue Call Sandra at (916) 372-6093

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### **Diabetic Neuropathy Clinical Trial (from [www.dpnstudy.com](http://www.dpnstudy.com))**

You may be eligible to participate in a clinical research study of an investigational oral drug for hand, foot, and leg pain caused by diabetes-related damage if you:

Are at least 18 years of age; Have been diagnosed with Type I or II diabetes with stable blood sugar levels for the last four weeks; Have had painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy DPN (which is nerve damage to the limbs) for the last six months to 10 years; Have not had a stroke or heart attack within the last year.

Study participation lasts 6-11 weeks and requires 8 office visits. All study related office visits, medical evaluations, and study medications will be provided to qualified study participants at no cost.”

**Interested? Call (916) 484-0500 for an initial eligibility review.**

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Yolo Neuropathy Groups  
c/o Martha Chandley  
1399 Sacramento Avenue, Unit 108  
West Sacramento, CA 95606

TO:

