



# Neuropathy Hope

*Hope Through Caring and Education*

*A newsletter for members of the  
Northern California Chapter of the Neuropathy Association (NCCNA)*

April 2009  
Volume 4, Issue 4

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www.pnhelp.org

## Please Get Your Registrations in for April 27

Hurry! Time is running out to register for our Annual Meeting & Mini Conference in Woodland on April 27. Not only do we want to make sure we have sufficient food for everyone, there is a capacity limit of 100, so we'll have to cut off registrations at that point. This is a free event with lots of good information, so you don't want to miss it.

Dominick Spatafora, President of the Neuropathy Action Foundation and CEO of the LA County Medical Association will speak on "Advocacy for Neuropathy Awareness and Action." Dr. Scott Fishman, chief of the UC Davis Medical Center Division of Pain Medicine, will share on "The Spectrum of Approaches to Neuropathic Pain." After lunch, Mae Denham and Sandra Vinson will lead us in gentle yoga. You can find more about our speakers elsewhere in the newsletter.

The Woodland, Davis, and Sacramento groups are hosting this event, and will have a continental breakfast waiting for you when the doors open at 9:00. Davis group leaders will handle registration. In addition to our main speakers, we will have some get-acquainted time, and the presentation of our annual report, with a time for questions.

To register, please use the form on the last page of this newsletter. You may also call 877-622-6298 and leave the information or go on line to our website [www.pnhelp.org](http://www.pnhelp.org) and use the online registration form. We need to hear from you very soon.

## The Neuropathy Action Foundation Recommends These Bills

Dominick V. Spatafora, President of The Neuropathy Action Foundation, brings our attention to these two bills now in the legislature that would positively affect people with neuropathy and other neurological diseases.

AB 1218 - Jones (D-Sacramento) - Helps with relief from ever increasing co-pays on drugs.

AB 1218 would require health care plans, HMOs, etc to get approval before increasing co-pays or premiums on medications.

AB 1144 - Price (D-Los Angeles) - This bill will help doctors and patients with access to drugs. This bill would prohibit health plans from requiring a patient to use different pain medication than the one prescribed by the physician. In other words, it would prohibit fail-first techniques used by health plans where they deny a drug like Lyrica and make the patient take an older drug for a certain amount of time regardless of whether the patient has tried it in the past. That means a patient must currently try and fail on a series of older drugs before they can get the drug that the doctor feels is best for the patient. This bill is important because it is just for pain drugs and will eliminate a lot of unnecessary pain by making patients try older, less effective drugs first. This is a major bill for Fibromyalgia patients since it is virtually impossible for them to get Cymbalta or Lyrica.

Please consider these bills and how they would affect you. If you want to advocate one way or the other, please send a letter to your Assemblyperson or State Senator or call and talk to a staff member. Many newspapers publish contact information for legislators. You can also find out the name, address, and phone number of your legislator by going to [www.legislature.ca.gov](http://www.legislature.ca.gov). The full text of these bills is also available from this site.

**2009 NCCNA  
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**Please contact  
your group  
leader or check  
your local  
paper to find  
out about the  
topic/speaker  
for the  
upcoming  
meeting.**

# Affiliate News

Listed below is information about upcoming meetings and where to learn more.

## Alturas

Call Judy Briener  
For current information  
(530)233-4733

## Arcata

3rd Thursday, 12:30 PM  
Senior Resource Center  
Of Humboldt  
321 Community Park Way  
Martha Bolt (707)825-9454

## Auburn

1st Monday, 1:30 PM  
Woodside Village MH Park  
12155 Luther Rd., Auburn  
Charlene Amos, (530)823-1504  
Sharlene McCord (530)878-8392

## Berkeley

3rd Monday, 6-8 PM  
1st Month of each quarter  
Lutheran Church of the Cross  
1744 University Ave., Berkeley  
Alan Dampsey, (510) 527-3568  
[adampsey@comcast.net](mailto:adampsey@comcast.net)  
**Come to the April meeting.**

## Concord

3rd Tuesday, 1:30 PM  
First Christian Church  
3039 Willow Pass Rd., Concord  
Enette Rivera, (925) 689-2464

## Crescent City

Forming  
Bev Anderson (877)622-6298 (toll free)

## Davis

2nd Wednesday 2 PM  
Institute for Restorative Health  
1460 Drew Ave.  
Mary Sprifke (530) 756-5102

## Elk Grove

2nd Tuesday, 2 PM  
Elk Grove Senior Center  
8830 Sharkey Ave, EG  
Michael Colozzi, (916) 421-8103

## Eureka

3rd Wednesday, 10 AM  
Humboldt Senior Resource Center  
1910 California Street  
(707) 268-8937

## Folsom

1st Thursday, 1 p.m.  
Journey Church  
450 Blue Ravine Rd., K-2  
Lorraine (916) 983-4023  
Beverly (916) 984-4302

## Fort Bragg

Forming  
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

## Fresno

3rd Tuesday, 11:15 AM  
Carrows Restaurant  
1484 E. Shaw Ave.  
Maria Chavez (559)437-9787

## Grass Valley

2nd Monday, 1:30 PM  
GV United Methodist Church  
236 S. Church St., Grass Valley  
Sally (530) 268-1017

## Jackson

3rd Tuesday,  
10 AM of odd numbered months  
Amador County Senior Center  
229 New York Ranch Rd. Jackson  
Laurie, (209) 223-0442  
Darlene, (209) 296-1760

## Lincoln

3rd Wednesday, 1 PM  
Raley's Event Center  
765 S. Hwy 65, Lincoln  
Diana Borg (916) 408-7017

## Livermore

4th Tuesday, 10 AM  
Heritage Estates  
900 E. Stanley Blvd.  
E. Lorene Stack, (925) 447-6158

## Merced

2nd Thursday, 1 PM  
Central Presbyterian Church  
1920 Canal Street  
(in The Hoffmeister Center  
across the street from the church)  
Susan Baldasano (209)617-6283

## Modesto

3rd Monday, 10:30 AM  
Denny's Restaurant  
1525 McHenry Ave.  
Noreen Jones (209) 846-0954

## Monterey

3rd Wednesday,  
10:30 AM of odd numbered months  
First Presbyterian Church  
501 El Dorado St.  
Don & Ann Trout, (831) 372-6959

## Napa

1st Thursday, 2 PM  
Napa Senior Center  
1500 Jefferson St., Napa  
Ron Patrick (707) 257-2343  
[bonjournapa@hotmail.com](mailto:bonjournapa@hotmail.com)

## Oakland

1st Thursday, 1 PM  
Grand Ave. 7th Adventist Church,  
278 Grand Ave.  
Kathleen Nagel (510) 653-8625

## Placerville

4th Wednesday, 1 PM  
Placerville Senior Center  
937 Spring St., Placerville  
Frank Ruscoe (530) 647-0777

## Redding

2nd Wednesday, 1:30 PM  
Neighborhood Church of Redding,  
777 Loma Vista  
Bill Morehouse (530) 221-3082  
Carol Reeves (530) 549-4351  
Bev Anderson, NCCNA Pres

## Reno, NV

2nd Tuesday, 6:30 PM  
Fire Station #11  
7105 Mae Anne Ave., Reno  
Marsha Campbell  
(775) 851-0499  
[LadyJane2b@sbcglobal.net](mailto:LadyJane2b@sbcglobal.net)

## Roseville

2nd Tuesday, 7 PM  
Sierra Point Sr. Res.  
5161 Foothills Blvd., Roseville  
Mary Lou Ward, (916) 772-5598

## Sacramento

3rd Tuesday, 1:30 PM  
Northminster Presby. Church  
3235 Pope Street, Sacramento  
Anne Fletcher, (916) 391-3317  
Myke Taylor, (916) 487-2903

## San Francisco

Call to be sure of  
the meeting day and time.  
UC-San Francisco Med Ctr.  
400 Parnassus Ave.  
Amb. Care Ctr.  
8th Fl. , Rm A888, San Francisco  
Rowena Mah, RN (415) 502-5064  
[Rowena.mah@ucsf.edu](mailto:Rowena.mah@ucsf.edu)

## San Jose

3rd Saturday, 10:30 AM  
O'Conner Hospital,  
2105 Forest Ave,  
SJ DePaul Conf. Rm., San Jose  
Stan Pashote, (510) 490-4456

## San Mateo

3rd Thursday, 1 PM  
St. Andrews Lutheran Church  
1501 S. El Camino Real, San Mateo  
Bev Anderson (877)622-6298 (toll Free)

## San Rafael

3rd Wednesday, 1 PM  
Lutheran Church of the Resurrection  
1100 Las Galinas Ave., San Rafael  
Barbara Webb (415) 453-9678

## Santa Cruz

3rd Wednesday  
Trinity Presbyterian Church  
420 Melrose Ave.  
Mary Ann Leer, (831) 477-1239  
[maleer@comcast.net](mailto:maleer@comcast.net)

## Santa Rosa

1st Thursday, 10:30 AM  
Santa Rosa Senior Center  
704 Bennett Valley Rd.  
Willie Quarante, (707) 544-3236

## Sonoma

1st Friday, 10:30 a.m.  
Vintage House  
264 1st Street  
Joann Bertolucci (707) 996-8336

## Sonora.

4th Monday, 2 PM  
Sonora Regional Medical Center  
Conference Room  
L.D. Wright (209) 533-2887

*continued on page 3*

# President's Message

by Bev Anderson

If the boy that put his finger in the dike would have passed by thinking "Someone else can do it. I can't imagine myself standing here holding back the water with my small finger," the dike would have burst, the land flooded, and the people drowned.

If no one in a hamlet, town, village, or city had the courage to run for public office, saying "Someone else can do it," we'd have no government. Some may think that would be good, but even rural folk depend on order in the town or county they deal with. If there was no leadership, order, or law, there would be no services, support, or safety.

If someone with neuropathy attends a support group and refuses to take any responsibility saying, "I don't know how. I don't have time. Someone else can do it," many people with neuropathy will never find information and hope. The group may not be able to continue even for the person who refuses to help.

In order to have a support group in any locality, it takes someone who will be the leader. Even better is when there are two or three, and some groups have more. When I go to start a group with an informational meeting, sometimes the group starts right away and I leave them with leadership that will keep the group going. Other places, people don't understand the power of what they can do for people with neuropathy, themselves included, and the group doesn't get off the ground. I keep hoping and don't want to close down any group we've tried to start, but it isn't physically possible for me to cover more than a few bases at a time. To have a viable group, there must be leadership.

Please think again if you are not helping your group in some way. Every Leader needs encouragement, an assistant to help when the Leader has to be away, a person to contact speakers, a person who handles publicity, a telephoner, an e-mailer, a card-sender, a Treasurer, and a newsletter editor if the group chooses to have a newsletter. A sizable number of Leaders are doing all these jobs themselves. Please talk to your leader and ask how you can help. If your group doesn't have a Leader, volunteer to get the group started and add others as the months go by. Getting involved will help you and others with the neuropathy and those who care about them.

**Help With Health Care Challenges**  
If number not in your area, call this one and ask for the right number.

**HICAP**  
Health Insurance Counseling for seniors and people with disabilities. Call Seniors First/SeniorLink at 1-800-878-9222 to make an appointment.

**Health Rights Hotline**  
Serving Placer, El Dorado, Yolo, & Sacramento Counties, regardless where you receive your health coverage. Tollfree (888) 354-4474 or TDD (916) 551-2180. In Sacramento, call (916) 551-2100. [www.hrh.org](http://www.hrh.org).

**HMO Help Center**  
Assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call (888) HMO-2219 or (877) 688-9891 (TDD).

**DRA's Health Access Project**  
Free publications about the health care and insurance rights and concerns of people with disabilities and serious health conditions. For more information, go to <http://dralegal.org/>, and click on "Projects".

## SAVE THE DATE!

Be sure to draw a circle around Thursday, June 25, on your calendar. It is the 3rd Annual Neuropathy Action Foundation Conference. This year it is in Sacramento's Sheraton Grand Hotel. Details are still being worked out. Outstanding speakers are coming. The whole program will be placed in next month's newsletter. You will want to be there.

## DOUBLE TROUBLE...

Many seniors take low-dose aspirin. If you're one of them, avoid ibuprofen, which can cancel out the aspirin's antiplatelet effect and cause a catastrophic stroke. A new study at the University of Buffalo is the first to show the stroke danger.

## Affiliate News...

*continued from page 2*

**Stockton**  
3rd Tuesday, 4 p.m.  
Service First of Northern California  
102 W. Bianchi Rd.  
Bev Mallette (209)944-7815

**Susanville**  
1st Saturday  
10:30 A.M.  
Jackie Woodson (530) 257-4693

**Truckee**  
April thru October  
3rd Monday, 1 PM  
Truckee Pines Apartments  
10100 Estates Dr.  
Bev Anderson

**Turlock**  
Forming  
Ken Selee (209)632-5509

**Ukiah**  
Forming  
Claudia Douglass (707) 468-8174

**Walnut Creek**  
4th Friday, 10 AM  
Rossmoor, Hillside Clubhouse,  
Las Trampas Room, Walnut Creek  
Nancy Ostrander, (925) 930-9524

**West Sacramento**  
3rd Tuesday, 2 PM  
West Sac Fire Station #45  
Community Room  
2040 Lake Washington Blvd.  
Sandra Vinson,(916) 372-6093  
[slivins11@charter.net](mailto:slivins11@charter.net)

**Woodland**  
1st Monday, 3:30 PM  
Woodland Comm. & Senior Center  
2001 East St., Woodland  
Delia Genera (530) 661-3238

**Yuba City**  
April 6, 10 AM  
Fremont-Rideout Medical Center  
970 Plumas St, Yuba City  
1st Flr. Conference Room  
Bev Anderson (530)389-2416  
Bev Anderson, NCCNA Pres

**Yreka**  
2nd Thursday, 2 PM  
Meadowlark Assisted Living Center  
Terry Rees,(530) 842-1577  
Gene Arnold,(530) 842-7744  
Bev Anderson, NCCNA Pres

#### DISCOUNTS FOR NCCNA MEMBERS

Give a call or visit. If you chose to purchase the service or wares of any on this list, pull out your NCCNA Membership Card and claim the discount.

#### **Auburn**

The Footpath, 825 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA 95603 (530)885-2091 Fax (530)885-3074 Mon.- Fri. 9-5:30, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 11-4 [www.footpathshoes.com](http://www.footpathshoes.com) They carry SAS, Dansko, Merrell, Finn, MBT, Keen, Naot, Reiker, Ecco, Teva, Clark, Wolky, Mephisto, and Earth shoes. 10% off the regular price. Bev Anderson is a regular customer for shoes and slippers.

#### **Fortuna**

Strehl's Family Shoes & Repair, Corner of 12th & Main, 1155 Main Street, Fortuna, CA 95540 (707)725-2610 Fax (707)725-0192 Strehl's carries the brands of shoes most kind to neuropathic feet. Marilyn Strehl, C. PED is a Certified Pedorthic. Discount of 10% given. A sizable number of the Eureka PN Group buy shoes here. Marilyn attended a recent meeting and joined NCCNA. She was welcomed.

#### **Elk Grove**

Shoes That Fit  
8649 Elk Grove Blvd.  
Elk Grove, CA  
(916) 686-1050  
20% Discount

## Our Leaders in Yreka

**Terry Rees - Leader** leads the PN Support Group in Yreka. She was born in Longview, WA, but her dad was transferred to the San Francisco Bay Area and they moved to El Sobrante. She graduated from DeAnza High School, went to Contra Costa Community College, and graduated from California State University in San Francisco with a degree in personnel management. From high school through college she worked at Capwell's Department Store. Upon graduation she joined the Personnel Department Staff at Capwells in El Cerrito. She has three children: a stepson, a son, and adopted daughter. She tells people she married one, had one, and bought one.

Her neuropathy began in 1965 when she was pregnant with her son. It disappeared and came back and finally was a regular part of her life – hot feet, electrical jabs. She finally went to the doctor. Since her mother and both sisters now have it, it is deemed hereditary. She takes Mirapex, a drug given to Parkinson's patients, and says it has helped greatly. Several people in their group take it. Terry said that her GP is excellent and knew about neuropathy when she first mentioned her problems. He is Dr. Steve Kolpacoff. Their hospital, Fairchild Medical Center, is excellent and ranked in the top 100 hospitals of any kind in the nation. The McConnell Foundation, established by a family in the community, donates to the hospital where they contributed to its construction and now supply up-to-date equipment and see that it is well-supplied. The closest neurologist, however, is in Medford, Oregon.

Besides working at Capwells, Terry has been involved in theater – acting, directing, and doing secretarial duties including producing their newsletter. For a time when she came to Yreka, she was Executive Secretary of the theater. She has had her own business. Currently she is working part time as Volunteer Coordinator of Hospice Volunteers.

They have speakers and also meetings where they sit around and talk. If the conversation lags, she or Gene, her Co-Leader, asks a question and the conversation picks up. Terry's hobby is traveling. She has been many places in the world, but she and her husband especially enjoy cruises.

**Gene Arnold – Co-Leader** was born in San Jose where his father worked for the California Department of Fish and Game. Each promotion his father received meant they moved to another hatchery. Independence where it was at an old castle built along the stream in the desert at some earlier time. Sacramento-Elk Grove, Mt. Shasta, and Iron Gate Dam near Yreka. Gene graduated from high school in Mt. Shasta, attended College of the Siskiyou in Weed, and graduated from California State University at Chico. Over the years, he taught every grade from kindergarten through high school. His first school had 3 teachers and 59 students. He, with a 5th Degree Black Belt, taught martial arts at Chico State as well. His last job was as Chief of Technology at Siskiyou County Schools Office. After retirement, for a while he had what was supposed to be a part time job at the California Technical Assistance Program serving 28 districts in 9 counties.

Gene has diabetes which provided neuropathy. For about 4 years, he has used a wheelchair to get around but can walk some. He says not taking care of himself well in college years probably is responsible for some of the disability. Getting an insulin pump helped greatly. Neuragen has been of major help to him. He puts it on his feet at night. After a recent bout of depression, his doctor put him on Zoloft and the sharp, shooting pains have stopped.

Gene says that they sometimes have up to 60 at a meeting but getting people involved in helping themselves seems difficult. It is hard for him to understand how people can not want to help themselves.

He and his wife, Adele, Chief Probation Officer for Siskiyou County, like to travel and have done a major amount. One of their most recent was to China, where they spent four months seeing the whole country. He wanted to see the "Three Rivers Dam" that is being constructed. It will be the largest dam in the world when completed. The government has built condos for the people who would be displaced when the dam is complete and the water fills the river valleys. However, the people refuse to move off their land. The government has decided that, tragically, the 40,000 people affected will be drowned if they are still there when the water rises as it will be quite deep.

### TREATMENTS PROLIFERATING...

As we get more information out that many people have neuropathy, treatments of various kinds are being offered. Let the buyer beware. We get reports of some asking for a major sum of money put up before any treatments are tried with no guarantee of success. We would like reports of people's experience in checking out such treatments. What amount of money is asked up front or for payment for treatments as taken? Did you decide to try it? What results did you experience? Did you have reasons for not giving it a try? Please send an e-mail to [info@pnhelp.org](mailto:info@pnhelp.org) or a note to NCCNA, P.O. Box 6985, Auburn, CA 95604

# New Peripheral Neuropathy Literature Review Column

**William B. Donovan MD has volunteered to do a column during the coming year which will review the recent literature on peripheral neuropathy (PN). He will be looking at articles in the following areas: prevention, evidence-based treatment, alternative treatment and cutting-edge research.**

He plans to summarize articles in the above categories coupled with each article's "PMID," PubMed Identification Number. In order to obtain more information on any particular article summarized, its PMID may be entered into the "for" search bar of PubMed—and then click "GO." The PubMed website pictured above is available at [www.ncbi.nlm.gov/sites/entrez](http://www.ncbi.nlm.gov/sites/entrez).

Dr. Donovan has encouraged readers to familiarize themselves with this website—either on their own computer, a friend's, or the public library's. In this way, they will be able to expand on the leads given in his column.

As an example, some of the PMIDs that can be entered include the following:

- 18021866 (prevention of PN due to shingles);
- 15616239 (promotion of nerve regeneration);
- 17696592 (prevention of chemotherapy induced PN).

*Note: Dr. Donovan is a physician retired from the practice of chronic pain management. He is a PN patient and a member of both the Monterey CA and the San Antonio TX support groups.*

## Neuropathy Diagnosis

By Jeffrey W. Ralph, MD

As with any medical problem, the proper diagnosis of a peripheral neuropathy requires that a physician take a history and perform a physical examination. The history must include a review of any currently prescribed medications because some medications can cause a peripheral neuropathy. The physician will also inquire about any relatives that may also have similar symptoms. If they do, there is an increased chance that the patient has a genetic peripheral neuropathy.

In cases in which the cause of the neuropathy is not obvious, bloodwork and potentially an analysis of urine is necessary to help make the specific neuropathy diagnosis.

The physician may also order electrodiagnostic testing. Nerve conduction studies (NCS) require electrical stimulation of the nerves. Responses are recorded on a machine. An electro-myogram (EMG) may also be ordered. This test involves the placement of the needle electrodes into muscles. With the needle inserted, the patient is asked to move the limb. The resulting electrical activity from the muscle is then amplified and displayed for the physician. These tests are very safe but uncomfortable. Some patients do not mind the test in the least; others run for the door after the first nerve is stimulated! It is very helpful for patients to be mentally prepared beforehand that the test involves electrical stimulation and needle placement. Oral pain relievers may be taken prior to the test and do not affect the test results.

## Doctors Want More Detail

Here's how to produce it:

- Write it down: List your chronic conditions, past surgeries, current drugs, and family medical history. This puts the doctor in the picture more quickly. For example, if you have diabetes and neuropathy, your treatment will be different from someone who doesn't have diabetes.
- Be precise: Tell the doctor exactly what happened. For example, say, "On Tuesday, I twisted my ankle, I felt a pop, then I felt pain, and within 10 minutes my ankle began to swell."
- Describe your pain: For example, is it dull or sharp? What side is it on? How long has it lasted? Does it come and go?
- Think through how you feel in advance of your appointment. This helps the doctor help you.

Keep a card index with this info on it:

- Current medication, doses, and any allergies
- Your medical history, e.g. asthma, cholesterol, surgeries, and previous hospitalizations.
- Name and address of all of your physicians

Also, don't hold back. There is nothing your doctors haven't heard or seen before.

*Ranit Mishori, MD, MHS and Sachie Oshima, MD (L.A. PN Group newsletter)*

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Here are current needs for help. If you or someone you know could help with any of these, please call us toll free at (877) 622-6298.

### Newsletter layout:

We email the articles. The person using PageMaker (which we can provide) does the layout and emails it to our printer.

### Enter data in an Excel form:

We need help entering some data into our new software, an easy-to-use web application.

### Board members:

Special needs are in public relations, computer skills, and knowledge of nonprofit organization development, and accounting.

DISCOUNTS FOR  
NCCNA MEMBERS  
(CONTD.)

**Sacramento**

Dr. Tracy Basso, one of our medical advisors and a member of NCCNA, is happy to offer NCCNA members a 15% discount on purchases at Shoes-n-Fee during 2008. Shoes-n-Fee specializes in comfort shoes, many that are stylish, and carries such brands as Actrix, Aravn, Brooks, Dansko, Naut, Finn, Comfort, and New Balance among others. Most, if not all their shoes, accommodate orthotics. Store employees provide great customer service ensuring the shoes you purchase fit properly, provide good support and feel comfortable. Shoes-n-Fee is at 4740 Natomas Blvd, Suite 130, Sacramento, CA 95835 (916) 419-0040

**West Sacramento**

Beverly's Never Just Haircuts and Lilly's Nails, 2007 West Capitol Ave., West Sacramento, CA Tues. - Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-1, closed Sunday and Monday. Walk-Ins Welcome Hair - (916)372-5606 Nails (916)346-8342 The hairdressers and manicurist do great work and are real nice and accommodating. They have a number of older male and female clients, are familiar with neuropathy, and their prices are among the most reasonable around. 10% off the regular price. Sandra Vinson is one of their regular hair, manicure, and pedicure clients.

## Distinguished Speakers Featured at Annual Meeting

Registrations for our April 27 meeting are being received daily. The first 100 can be accepted. Will you be a winner of this race? Here are the bios of our morning speakers. They are rather extensive but it gives you a greater idea of who is coming and the experience they have to offer us. Think of the amount of effort they have given to achieve what you read of here.

### **Dominick V. Spatafora**

President, Neuropathy Action Foundation

Dominick Spatafora received a Bachelor of Science degree from Arizona State University. He also holds a Master of Public Administration from The American University in Washington, D.C. While in D.C. he worked for Congressman J. Dennis Hastert where he assisted with sweeping health care reform efforts. He then joined the Arizona Medical Board in 1998 as the Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Director. In this position, he developed and wrote the standards that govern the practice of medicine for Arizona.

Dominick then moved to California where he formed DVS Governmental Consulting Solutions, a full service public affairs firm specializing in strategic planning and communications, political consulting, and grassroots development. Dominick has been a member of the Health Care Administration faculty at the University of Phoenix and a health care consultant for over six years. He was awarded the 2001 Outstanding Faculty Award for the College of Health Care Services and Nursing at the Phoenix campus.

Today, Dominick is the Chief Executive Officer of the Los Angeles County Medical Association, where he and his team advocate for the rights of the organization's physician members and support programs to ensure the delivery of quality patient care.

Dominick was diagnosed with multifocal motor neuropathy at the age of 30. Shortly after being diagnosed Dominick became a patient advocate, almost by accident, because of his personal struggles accessing appropriate treatment. Dominick's neuropathy is not typical and does not fall neatly into the treatment guidelines established by his managed care company. At one point Dominick went three months without his IVIG treatment before he lost the use of his right hand. After working cooperatively with his physician and others Dominick finally prevailed and resumed treatment which gave him back the use of his hand. Dominick founded the NAF because of his commitment to educate the public on what neuropathy is and most importantly to help other neuropathy patients obtain and maintain appropriate individualized care.

### **Scott M. Fishman, MD**

Dr. Scott M. Fishman is Chief of the Division of Pain Medicine and Professor of Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine at the University of California, Davis. He was formerly Medical Director of the Massachusetts General Hospital Pain Center at Harvard Medical School. His medical degree is from the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Formal clinical training in Internal Medicine (Greenwich/Yale University School of Medicine) and Psychiatry (Massachusetts General/Harvard Medical School). He completed Pain Medicine fellowship training through the Department of Anesthesia and Critical Care at Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Fishman has received board certification in Internal Medicine (American Board of Internal Medicine), Psychiatry (American Board of Neurology and Psychiatry), Pain Medicine (American Board of Pain Medicine) and Palliative Medicine (American Board of Hospice and Palliative Medicine).

Dr. Fishman lectures on all aspects of pain and its treatment throughout the US. He has authored "*The War on Pain*" through Harper Collins Publishers and "*Listening to Pain*" through Waterford Life Sciences. He has also co-authored "The Massachusetts General Hospital Handbook of Pain Management" (Lippincott) and Essentials of Pain Medicine and Regional Anesthesia (Elsevier). He has recently authored "*Responsible Opioid Prescribing*" for the Federation of State Medical Boards which will be delivered to all US prescribers through state medical boards. Dr. Fishman has authored many peer-reviewed articles for medical journals, book chapters, and other scholarly reviews. He is senior editor of the Journal Pain Medicine and serves on the editorial boards of numerous other medical journals.

Dr. Fishman is President and Chairman of the Board for the American Pain Foundation. He is past president American Academy of Pain Medicine and previously served on the Board of Directors for the American Pain Society. He advocates for the field of pain medicine with consumers and lawmakers, having testified in both state and national legislatures. He serves as a consultant to numerous government agencies and organizations such as the Federation of State Medical Boards, The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the Department of Health and Human Services, state medical boards and other regulatory agencies.

Dr. Fishman has spoken about pain widely in the major TV media such as the Today Show, Good Morning

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I AM REGISTERING FOR THE AWARENESS AND HOPE CONFERENCE, MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2009, AT WOODLAND COMMUNITY AND SENIOR CENTER.

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### **Annual Meeting Speakers...** *continued from page 6*

America, and the ABC Nightly News and has been quoted in the major written press such as The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Time Magazine, and Newsweek. He has served as the Pain Expert for [Discoveryhealth.com](http://Discoveryhealth.com) and has a monthly question and answer column for the American Pain Foundation newsletter. Dr. Fishman has most recently been honored with the University of California, Davis Dean's Award for Excellence in Mentoring, the John and Emma Bonica Award for Public Service from the American Pain Society, the American Academy of Pain Medicine/Phillip Pippe Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Social and Political Aspect of Pain Medicine, and as Ambassador of the Year by the National Pain Foundation.

Dr. Fishman's clinical interests include cancer related pain management, peripheral and central neuropathic pain, chronic opioid usage, and spinal injection therapies. His major research interests include models for functional assessment and pharmacovigilence in chronic opioid therapy, legal issues and regulatory policy on pain care, novel analgesic therapies, models of visceral pain, models of hyperalgesia and central sensitization, informatics strategies to serve clinical practice, quantitative sensory testing in acute and chronic pain states, neuronal plasticity and brain imaging in pain.

#### **Mae Denman**

Experience:

Mae Denman has practiced yoga since 1974. She began teaching yoga in the late 1970's. Over the years, Mae has studied Hatha yoga with teachers from the Iyengar, Kundalini, Ashtanga, Svoorpa, Viniyoga and Kripalu tradition. She has also practiced with Zen, Shambhala, and Vipasana meditation traditions. She has taught yoga classes in learning centers, community centers, and homes.

In November 2000, Mae completed a 200 hour teacher's certification program at the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health. She maintains membership in the Kripalu Yoga Teachers Association and continuing education opportunities through enrollment in the Kripalu 500 hour Advanced Teachers Certification. She completed a 200 hour Viniyoga teachers training program in 2007, and continues study towards the 500 hour certification with Dawn Summers.

Mae is certified by Global Learning Partners as an adult education trainer. She holds a B.S. in Natural Resource Planning and Management from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and an M.S. in International Agricultural Development from the University of California, Davis. Her major was Community Nutrition

Currently, Mae is teaching yoga to groups and individuals in Sacramento and West Sacramento, specializing in seniors and individuals with physical challenges (neuropathy, back, hip, knee problems). For more information check the website at [www.bryteyoga.com](http://www.bryteyoga.com)



The Northern California Chapter  
of The Neuropathy Association  
(a California public benefit, nonprofit,  
tax exempt corporation)

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## Mims Cushing's New Book Out

*You Can Cope With Peripheral Neuropathy: 365 Ways for Living a Better Life* is off the press and coming to local bookstores and online retailers. Her website is [www.mimscushing.com](http://www.mimscushing.com).

Norman Latov, MD, author of *Peripheral Neuropathy, When the Numbness, Weakness, and Pain Won't Stop*, has written some portions of this book. Order it at your local bookstore or at your favorite online bookstore.

You can meet Mims Cushing at the June 26 Neuropathy Awareness Conference in Sacramento. She will be one of the speakers. Plan now to be there. Full announcements will come next month.

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### *Hope through caring and education*

Our mission is to provide support, information and referral to people with neuropathy and to those who care about them, to inform and connect with the health care community, and to support research.

Dues - \$30 a year  
(prorated for new members at \$2.50  
per each month left in the year)  
All contributions are tax-deductible

We are supported by dues paying members, contributions by members and friends, and, occasionally, small grants.

*This newsletter is designed for educational and informational purposes only. The information contained herein is not intended to substitute for informed medical advice. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease without consulting a qualified health care provider. The Northern California Chapter of the Neuropathy Association (NCCNA) does not endorse any treatments, medications, articles, abstracts or products discussed herein. You are strongly encouraged to consult a neurologist with any questions or comments you may have regarding your condition. The best care can only be given by a qualified provider who knows you personally.*