



Neuropathy Hope

Hope Through Caring and Education

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

November 2009
Issue 11
Volume 7

Modesto Group
Participates In
Major Health Event

Dr. Fink Speaks
On Small Fiber
Neuropathy

Affiliates Listings

President's Message

Strategic Plan
Development Begins

The NA Announces
Awardees For Its
Scientific Research
Grants Program

Peripheral Neuropathy
Literature Review

Ask Dr. Jeffrey Ralph

Your Experience With
New Treatments



NCCNA
PO Box 6985
Auburn, CA 95604
Tel: 530-389-2416
info@pnhelp.org
www.pnhelp.org

MODESTO GROUP PARTICIPATES IN MAJOR HEALTH EVENT

On Friday, October 9, the Modesto PN Support group led by Mary Hudson had a booth at the Health Aging Fall Prevention Summit at Modesto Centre Plaza from 8:00-2:00. The Healthy Aging Association and the Area Agency on Aging organized the health fair. Among the free health screenings were diabetes, cholesterol, bone density, blood pressure, body mass index, depression screening and spinal cord screening. There was also a section by The Fall Prevention Coalition which included Home Modification Demos, Balance Coordination, Fitness Assessments & More. Flu shots were available.

Over 1,100 attended the fair. Mary estimates that they met and talked with over 250 people who stopped by their booth. This is her report:

The helpers on that auspicious day were: April Semple, Priscilla and Adrian Pino, Ralph and Roberta Kitchell, Patty and Joyce Johnston,

Henry and Marge Howard, Noreen Jones and Marilyn Timpe. April put us in touch with Walgreen's Store Manager and Pharmacy Manager that day. We were elated when she came marching back to introduce Tim Reardon, Walgreen's Store Manager, to us. He left and returned with Michael Federico, the Pharmacy Supervisor. They were both open to allowing us to display brochures, and Michael said to call him when we want a pharmacist as a guest speaker.

Ralph, Roberta, Priscilla and Adrian came in the day before and set-up our booth. The booth was grand, especially with colorful banner and the huge, beautiful gift basket that Noreen made. Henry and Marge helped with making rounds, as did Joyce and I. What fun we had. I even ran into my personal physician, who now has a bunch of our brochures in his office. Patty was our charming (always a big smile) customer service person, although Joyce and Marilyn did their share also. We all took turns greeting the public, making the rounds, and closing up the booth at the end of the day.

- Continued on page 4

DR. FINK SPEAKS ON SMALL FIBER NEUROPATHY By Penni L. Smith

More than 75 people gathered at the Shriners Hospital for Children in Sacramento to hear Dr. Ezekiel Fink, a UCLA neurologist specializing in pain management, speak about Small Fiber Neuropathy (SFN) on the afternoon of October 20. Earlier that day a similarly-sized audience heard him in Woodland. Martha Chandley set up the event, and NCCNA's Yolo County PN Support Groups (Woodland, Davis, and West Sacramento) and the Sacramento PN Support Group helped with the arrangements.

Dr. Fink began his lecture with an overview of peripheral neuropathy, noting first that our brain and spinal cord are our central nervous system. All the rest are peripheral nerves of one of three types, sensory, motor, and autonomic, each conveying different information. He said that as the nerves leave the spinal cord they are in a bundle but when they get to the point in the body where they

are to work, the bundle separates and the nerves spread out to work separately.

Small fiber neuropathy only affects a specific part of the nerve. Though we think of peripheral neuropathy as a disease, Dr. Fink says it is a symptom.

There is something "upstream" causing it. Neurologists try to find out the cause. A genuine small fiber neuropathy cuts down the list of possible problems. But a pure SFN is not that common. Many neuropathies that start as small fiber may come to involve the large fiber nerves as well. SFN primarily affects pain mediation, thermal sensation, and autonomic functions.



Dr. Ezekiel Fink

- Continued on page 7

Affiliate News

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

2009 NCCNA Board of Directors

Bev Anderson
President

Laura Niznik
Vice President

Penni L. Smith
Treasurer-Secretary
Technology Director

Amy Considine
Administrative Director

Michael Green
Director

Wayne Hewlitt
Director

Karen Polastri
Director

Casimir Sammanasu
Director

Sandra Vinson
Director Emeritus

Dick Ward
Director Emeritus

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

Newsletter Design by

 Diane Blakley
Designs

Alturas

Call Bev for information
Bev (877) 622-6298

Antioch-Brentwood (Forming)
Will meet in January
For information call:
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

Auburn

1st Monday, 1:30 PM
Woodside Village MH Park
12155 Luther Rd.
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.
Alan Dampsey (510) 527-3568
adampsey@comcast.net
No meeting in November

Castro Valley

2nd Wednesday, 1:30 PM
First Presbyterian Church
2489 Grove Way (next to Trader Joe)
Judson Leong (510) 331-6697

Clearlake (Forming)
Rosebud Community Library
Barbara Dryden (707) 994-2202

Colusa

Joining with Yuba City until further notice

Concord

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

Crescent City (Forming)
Sutter Coast Hospital
800 E. Washington Blvd.
Judy Wolfe (707) 464-3008

Davis

1st Tuesday 3:30-5:00 PM
Davis Senior Center
646 A Street
Mary Sprifke (530) 756-5102

Elk Grove

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

Eureka

3rd Wednesday, 10 AM
Humboldt Senior Resource Ctr.
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)

For information call:
Bev (877) 622-6298

Fresno

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

Gilroy (Forming)

For information call:
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

Grass Valley

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

Jackson

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

Lakeport (Forming)

Monday, Nov. 9, 10:30AM
Lakeport Senior Center
507 Konociti Ave.
Roberta Millard (209) 263-6891

Lincoln

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

Livermore

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

Madera (Forming)

Madera United Methodist Church
500 Sunset Ave.
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

Merced

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

Modesto

3rd Monday, 10:30 AM
Trinity United Presbyterian Church
1600 Carver Rd., Rm. 503
Noreen Jones (209) 846-0954

Monterey

3rd Wednesday, 10:30 AM
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.
Ron Patrick (707) 257-2343
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.
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

Reno, NV

2nd Tuesday, 6:30 PM
Fire Station #11
7105 Mae Anne Ave.
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

Roseville

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

Sacramento

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

Sacramento - Central

2nd Thursday, 2 PM
The Chateau on Capitol Ave.
2701 Capitol Ave.
(starting in January 2010)
For information call:
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

San Francisco

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

San Jose

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

San Mateo

3rd Wednesday, 1 PM
St. Andrews Lutheran Church
1501 S. El Camino Real
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298 (toll free)
No meeting in Nov. or Dec.

San Rafael

3rd Wednesday, 1 PM
Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
1100 Las Galinas Ave.
Scott Stokes (415) 479-5659

- Continued on next page

Santa Cruz

3rd Wednesday, 1PM
Trinity Presbyterian Church
420 Melrose Ave.
Mary Ann Leer (831) 477-1239
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

2nd Tuesday, 2:30 PM • Nov., Jan., Mar., May
Sonora Regional Medical Center
Conference Room 1 & 2
L.D. Wright (209) 533-2887

Stockton

3rd Tuesday, 1 PM
St. Andrew Lutheran Church
4210 Claremont Ave. (at March Lane
Bev Mallette (209) 944-7815

Susansville (To be announced)

Susan Ellen Houston (530) 257-3864

Truckee

Call for schedule : April thru October,
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

Turlock

2nd Wednesday, 10 AM
Covenant Village Adm. Bldg.
2125 N. Olive St.
Dee Muhlenbruch (209) 667-0042

Ukiah (Forming)

Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2PM
Ukiah Senior Center
499 Leslie Street
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

Walnut Creek

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

West Sacramento

2nd Tuesday, 1:00-3:00 PM
Arthur F. Turner Comm. Library
Community Room
1212 Merkley Ave.
Sandra Vinson (916) 372-6093
slvins11@charter.net

Woodland

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

President's Message

By Bev Anderson



The Modesto PN Support Group demonstrates the impact a community-active support group can achieve. NCCNA majors in support groups as that is where the power to effectively accomplish our mission lies. When you read the lead article in this newsletter, you can see how much information about neuropathy was distributed, the community medical community members contacted, and the resources achieved for speakers are formidable. How many people they contacted that will become active with the group and members of NCCNA is yet to be seen, but no matter what, we all have gained a great deal. The more people know about neuropathy, the more support for research and knowledge of where to refer people they know with neuropathy develop. We can know that many more than stopped at the booth learned about neuropathy. This includes their medical community contacts.

These two health fairs in which Modesto wanted to participate had entry fees, as many do. They contacted NCCNA's Board and asked for help. After being sure of the relationship of the health fair to neuropathy and that the Modesto PN Support Group would definitely have the people to design and populate the booth, the NCCNA paid the entry fees.

We want all groups to know that if they are planning a special project that advances our mission and needs some financial support, please let us know the particulars. If the Board knows you have planned how you would do this and have people committed to follow through, it may well be something that can be funded.

Another type of project that is welcome is a fundraising event with proceeds going toward research. We are looking for a type of event that could be our signature event that a number of support groups would promote or several groups working together could produce.

– Continued on page 6

Affiliate Listing – continued

Yuba City-Marysville

2nd Tuesday, 10:30AM
St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
1390 Franklin Rd. (next to Winco Shopping Center)
Ken Lux (530) 673-3479

Yreka

2nd Thursday, 2 PM – Odd numbered months
Meadowlark Assisted Living Center
Terry Rees (530) 842-1577
Gene Arnold (530) 842-7744

Help With Health Care Challenges

If number not in your area, call the one listed 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, (916) 551-2100. www.hrh.org.

•••

HMO Help Center

Assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week. (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".

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT BEGINS

NCCNA's board of directors met with leaders and members of several support groups on September 26 to kick off development of NCCNA's strategic plan for 2010-2012 with an all-day planning meeting.

Karen Polastri, a new board member who has extensive board and leadership experience, served as a facilitator for the day, explaining the strategic plan process and guiding everyone through the various activities.

Participants separated into breakout groups dealing with six major areas of concern: health care community relations, publicity, group development, fundraising, membership, and board development. Each group had at least one board member and one to half a dozen others involved. The groups established some goals in their areas, which were later presented to everyone and voted on.

A drafting committee of a couple board members, several of the people at the Strategic Planning Day, and a few additional members, will soon be meeting to draw up the first draft of the new plan. This plan will guide the NCCNA's direction for the years ahead.

The Board thanks everyone who participated: Ann Chiles, Roseville; Jerry Elliot, Stockton; Jim Fulcomer, Lincoln; Mary Hudson, Modesto; Ralph & Roberta Kitchell, Modesto; Ken Lux, Yuba City; Charles Moore, Sacramento; Ron Patrick, Napa; Georgia Richardson, Sacramento; Marilyn Timpe, Modesto; Dick & Mary Lou Ward, Roseville.

Also, a special thanks to Karen for facilitating the day and Vice-President Laura Niznik for preparing lunch.

If you have not yet taken our survey, please do so at <http://www.pnhelp.org/happenings/survey.html>.

If you are interested in being part of the drafting committee, or have any ideas you would like to present, please contact us by e-mail at info@pnhelp.org or call (877) 622-6298. You may also write to us at our PO Box.

If you are curious about what we are up to as an organization, check out the About Us section of the website, www.pnhelp.org. You can review summaries of the board meetings, find out what's on the agenda for the next one, and even read up on our policies and procedures.

◀ INDEX

Modesto Group Participates In Major Health Event - *Continued from page 1*

The winner of the raffle for the gift basket was a lady from Turlock. When I called her that afternoon that she had won, she was ecstatic. I had spoken to her when she and a friend were completing the ticket. She told me where she lived, and I told her I would deliver it to her if she won, and that my mom lives in Turlock, so would give me a reason to stop and see Mom. Lo and behold, she won. I picked Mom up and we showed up at her front door with the basket. When she opened the door, we said "Publisher's Clearing House". What a good time we have had.

Now to the contacts we made (that I know of) among the vendors, etc., were: Turlock Adult Day Health Care Center, GENTIVA, Turlock Acupuncture Treatment Center, Anthem, Assured Care, Inc.,

DMC Foundation, CVPM (Central Valley Pain Management), DRAIL, Empowered Success, Blakemore Center for Hearing & Balance, Neuragen, Comprehensive Obesity Management. Home Instead Senior Care, Kaiser Foundation, Family Health Center, Oticom, Modesto Senior Citizen's Center, Senior Swim, Susan Burris Indoor Pool, Sutter Gould Medical Foundation, Walgreen's.

Coming Up: The Modesto group will also be staffing a booth at the Diabetes Info Fair on November 13, 8:00 - Noon. Free admission. Free Diabetes screening. Flu shots, \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. Free foot exams. Location: Modesto Centre Plaza, 1000 K Street. By-the-way, they have said the NCCNA booth will be right next to the Foot Screening booth.

◀ INDEX

BOOK YOU CAN ASK SANTA TO BRING

Order through local bookstores or online book sellers.

PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY: WHEN THE NUMBNESS, WEAKNESS AND PAIN WON'T STOP

by Norman Latov, MD, PhD. A guide for patients and families that defines neuropathy, the function and organization of the nerves, understanding the symptoms, evaluation and diagnosis, causes of neuropathy, management of neuropathy and sharing stories and experiences.

THE NEUROPATHY ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES AWARDEES FOR ITS ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAM

Every year, The Neuropathy Association--the leading national non-profit organization dedicated to finding cures for peripheral neuropathies--awards two scientific research grants, each for \$80,000 over a two-year period.

This year's grant recipients--Dennis Paul, Ph.D. and co-principal investigator, Harry J. Gould, M.D., Ph.D. of Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center New Orleans and Glauca C. Furtado, Ph.D. of Mount Sinai School of Medicine--were chosen from thirteen applicants involved in neuropathy research at medical institutions across North America.

Drs. Dennis Paul and Harry Gould--co-investigators on the proposal, Sodium Channels, Sodium Pumps, Inflammation, and Diabetic Neuropathy--are investigating the concomitant role of diabetes and inflammation in the development of diabetic neuropathy. They are hopeful that by studying the biological and physical manifestations of diabetic neuropathy--and specifically, the role of nerve cell death by lysis (or bursting)--they will better understand the pathogenesis of one of the most common, and debilitating, complications of diabetes.

Dr. Paul notes, "Understanding the mechanism of nerve cell survival after inflammatory or neuropathic insult will lead to new treatments and preventive strategies for diabetic neuropathy."

Dr. Glauca Furtado's proposal, Role of CCR7 in Peripheral Neuropathy, is based on the hypothesis that the lack of CCR7--protein receptors normally found on white blood cells (or WBCs) of the immune system--induces an autoimmune demyelinating neuropathy. CCR7 receptors are responsible for guiding migration of WBCs to and within lymph tissues, where they initiate an immune response.

Dr. Furtado explains, "Besides providing new clues for how the immune system works, this study will help us identify therapeutics that block the development of autoimmune neuropathies."

Thomas H. Brannagan, III, M.D., the Association's medical advisor affirms, "We continue to invest in critical research that builds on our understanding of neuropathy's many forms, hopeful that our investments will lead to more effective treatment and cures."

About Peripheral Neuropathy

Peripheral neuropathy is one of the most common chronic diseases in the U.S., affecting more than 20 million Americans. Neuropathy results from injury to the peripheral nerves--the motor, sensory and autonomic nerves--connecting the spinal cord to the muscles, skin, blood vessels and internal organs. It usually affects the hands and feet, causing weakness, numbness, lack of coordination or pain.

Approximately 30% of neuropathies are "idiopathic," meaning of an unknown cause; 30% are caused by diabetes. Other causes include autoimmune disorders, tumors, heredity, nutritional deficiencies, infections, trauma, and toxins.

About The Neuropathy Association

The Neuropathy Association is the leading national nonprofit organization providing neuropathy patient support and education, advocating for patients' interests, and supporting critical research. The Association has more than 50,000 members and supporters and a nationwide network of 135 patient support groups, 5 chapters (including NCCNA), and 12 Neuropathy Centers of Excellence.

For information about peripheral neuropathy and The Neuropathy Association, visit www.neuropathy.org. Contact Tina Tockarszewsky at (212) 692-0380

Source: The Neuropathy Association

RESEARCH TRIAL OPPORTUNITY

Northern California Research (Sacramento area) is looking for people with pain resulting from having shingles. The shingles event must have occurred in the last five years. If you think you may qualify, call 916-484-0500. If you know anyone who might qualify, let them know they can call this number to get information. This organization has ongoing studies in neuropathic issues, and may have additional studies upcoming, so even if you don't meet the criteria for this one, you may want to contact them periodically.

DISCOUNTS FOR NCCNA MEMBERS

The following companies or individuals have agreed to give NCCNA a discount to NCCNA members. Give them 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
www.footpathshoes.com
NCCNA Discount:
10% off the regular price shoes.

Elk Grove

Shoes That Fit

8649 Elk Grove Blvd.
Elk Grove, CA
(916) 686-1050
NCCNA Discount:
20% off the regular price shoes.

Fortuna

Strehl's Family Shoes & Repair

Corner of 12th & Main
1155 Main Street
Fortuna, CA 95540
(707) 725-2610
Marilyn Strehl, C.PED
is a Certified Pedorthic.
NCCNA Discount:
10% off the regular price shoes.

Sacramento

Shoes-n-Feet

4740 Natomas Blvd.
Suite 130,
Sacramento, CA 95835
(916) 419-0040
NCCNA discount:
15% off the regular price

-- Continued on page 6

DISCOUNTS FOR NCCNA MEMBERS

Continued from page 5.

West Sacramento Beverly's Never Just Haircuts and Lilly' Nails

2007 West
Capitol Ave., West
Sacramento, CA
Hair – (916) 372-
5606 Nails – (916)
346-8342
NCCNA discount:
10% off the regular
price

Additional Discounts

Do you know a business that might offer our members a discount? Tell them that they will be listed each month in our newsletter and on our website so our members will know of their generosity and patronize their business. Call (877) 622-6298 or e-mail info@pnhelp.org. We'll mail an agreement form to the business, and once we have it, we'll get them on this list.

PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY LITERATURE REVIEW

By William B. Donovan MD

So much of the information we receive in our support groups seems to be anecdotal personal testimony, hearsay or economically motivated. My bias in referencing what appear to be the most interesting articles from the current medical literature is to provide the PN sufferer with scientific data. Hopefully you will find pertinent articles you can share with your doctor or implement on your own.

As previously described, click on the following link, or enter it in the address bar of your browser: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez to access PubMed. Type the PMID of the article that interests you after the "for", click "Go" or press ENTER on your keyboard.

Here are the latest PMIDs:

- 19499849 A Neapolitan study of 112 with carpal tunnel syndrome revealed significant improvement in symptoms and function when multivitamin controls were compared with a combination of alpha-lipoic acid 600mg. plus gamma-linolenic acid 360mg. daily.
- 19141719 A randomized study of diabetic neuropathy patients, 89 treatment cases and 78 controls, demonstrated that silicon orthotics protected the feet from the development of painful hyperkeratotic lesions.
- 19246421 In a double blind crossover study in Taipei of botulinum toxin type A for diabetic neuropathy, there was significant improvement at 3 months post-injection.
- 19406920 A study of over 5000 participants from community surveys in Singapore demonstrated that peripheral neuropathy incidence increased gradually with the level of fasting blood sugar, even at levels below the threshold for diabetes mellitus diagnosis.
- 19277838 An Italian study of CT-guided pudendal nerve block for pudendal neuralgia achieved relief of anoperineal pain, 92% at 12 months.
- 19555786 Chronic abdominal wall pain due to peripheral nerve impingement, often mistaken for intra-abdominal pathology, can be diagnosed by local anesthetic block of trigger points, and relieved by surgically releasing the nerve that is trapped by the muscle sheath
- 19432499 In a double-blind placebo-controlled multinational trial with post-herpetic neuralgia, improvement of pain, allodynia, quality of life and sleep was achieved with 5% lidocaine plaster applied up to 12 hours daily.

President's Message - *Cont. from page 3*

In group development, I've looked at a continuum of growth. First is the Information Meeting. Sometimes there are people present at such a meeting who are willing to lead the group from that point. This happened on October 10 in Garberville. Patty Anderson, a recently retired high school teacher who knows the community well, volunteered. Helen Stowe said she would help.

Most of the time, it takes one or two more meetings for this to happen. This was true of

Lakeport and Clearlake in October. However, there are others where people willing to help launch a group don't come forward. These usually have people who joined NCCNA and receive the newsletter so a group is possible and they are counted as a group in waiting. Also, there are active groups that have leadership that suddenly have to resign due to health concerns or moving out of the area. This has happened in several groups recently. I will be working with them in months ahead to develop new leadership. I appreciate all your prayers and good wishes for what I call "miracles" to happen.

ERROR CORRECTION:

In the October newsletter, in the headline, no less, I made a mistake. I wanted to be sure of Origin's official name in congratulating them for matching our contributions for the mid-year fundraising letter in the amount of \$5,000 which we met so we get the entire \$5,000. I took the name off of a sample bottle I've had for some years. I said it was Origin Biomedicinals, Inc. The President of their corporation let me know they had changed their corporate name several years ago. It is now Origin BioMed, Inc. I see that is what is on a recent purchase of Neuragen. We again thank Origin BioMed, Inc. for their great help to us. – Bev Anderson



The Northern California Chapter of The Neuropathy Association

A California public benefit, nonprofit,
tax exempt corporation

P.O. Box 6985, Auburn, CA 95604
530-389-2416 • 877-622-6298 toll free
info@pnhelp.org
www.pnhelp.org

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 25
AUBURN, CA 95603

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 (due each January)
(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.

ASK DR. JEFFREY RALPH, UC-SF

Question: My doctor wants to do a lumbar puncture. Explanation of the reasons and the impact on me is not forthcoming. Do you recommend lumbar punctures? If so, for what reasons and what do you expect to learn from it?

Answer: A lumbar puncture may be indicated if physicians are concerned about an inflammatory neuropathy (e.g. chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy). In that condition, the protein concentration is high in the spinal fluid, but the cell count is normal. There are other potential reasons for doing the lumbar puncture. A lumbar puncture is not needed for the majority of neuropathy patients, but in some cases it is indicated.



TELL US YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH NEW TREATMENTS

We constantly get information about new treatments. It seems that a coalition of chiropractors has a treatment that they say cures neuropathy. Knowing that people with peripheral neuropathy can be desperate for help, they usually charge a sizable amount of money up front with nothing returned if the person is not cured. We say that "the buyer must be aware." which means proceed very cautiously.

There are other treatments out there. Some are on our list as possibilities, but new ones come along regularly. If you find something that works for you after a period of time when you can see that it does help on an ongoing basis, please send an e-mail to info@pnhelp.org or send a letter to Newsletter Editor, NCCNA, P.O. Box 6985, Auburn, CA 95604.

It's Your Official Early Invitation

Your first official invitation to pay your 2010 dues will come in early November. Please watch for the letter and then send in your dues if at all possible so you have that out of the way. Dues are due on January 1st. Paying early helps spread the load for those that are inputting the information for over 800 members. It also means you are one of those we celebrate as we don't have to keep reminding those that pay early. A sizable number of people have already paid their 2010 dues either because they thought about it and followed through or are new members who joined for this year and the next.