



WESTERN NEUROPATHY ASSOCIATION

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Neuropathy Hope

Hope through caring, support, research, education, and empowerment
A newsletter for members of Western Neuropathy Association (WNA)

UC DAVIS RESEARCHER WILL TEST NON-ADDICTIVE DRUG THAT COULD LEAD TO A NEW WAY TO TREAT PAIN

By Cathie Anderson, The Sacramento Bee

UC Davis Professor Bruce Hammock has spent a 50-year career studying insects. He probably wouldn't be the Ph.D. considered most likely to shake up the multibillion-dollar prescription painkiller market.

Nonetheless, he has developed a medication for chronic pain that he said has proved both effective and non-addictive in animal trials.

Could his discovery put an end to the devastating death toll caused by opioids such as fentanyl, oxycodone and hydrocodone, drugs that racked up \$24.5 billion in sales in 2018?

Veteran pharmaceutical researcher William Schmidt told The Bee that he thinks so. He said he found Hammock's novel drug candidate so promising that he volunteered to work at no charge until they can move the technology out of the university and secure financing for Hammock's company, eicOsis.

"We have a drug candidate lacking the side effects of both opioids and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs that can potentially lead to an entirely new way to treat chronic pain," Schmidt said.

Hammock and Schmidt cleared a key regulatory hurdle with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration just last week, they said, and they expect to launch human trials by August or September. The clinical studies already have received more than \$4 million in support from the National Institutes of Health, they said, and this week Open Philanthropy Foundation announced that it would invest \$5 million toward the human clinical trials.

The foundation supports causes that can have deep and broad impact on mankind, that have been neglected by other funders, and that clearly cite how an investment will contribute to progress.

"Chronic pain is an enormous emotional and economic burden for more than 100 million people in the United States alone," Hammock said. "The extreme and poorly treated pain that I observed as a medical officer working in a burn clinic in the Army, is a major driver for me to translate my research to help patients with severe pain."

In a news release on Hammock's research, officials at the University of California, Davis, noted that as many

as eight out of every 10 adults in the United States suffer from chronic pain, three out of four patients consider their therapies for pain ineffective, and as many as a third of patients prescribed opioids misuse them.

Hammock traces the genesis of his drug back to the 1970s when he was trying to keep tiny brown moths from consuming as much as half of the world's food supply. One way farmers could overcome this problem, Hammock said, was if they could disrupt the reproductive process.

His lab discovered that an enzyme facilitated the moth's transformation from corn earworm to winged insect, Hammock said, and if they could remove that enzyme, the caterpillar would die before it ever developed to a stage where it could breed.

It turned out that there were more cost-effective ways to control brown moths, Hammock said, but his team's discovery proved valuable in controlling flea and mosquito development.

Hammock's team had a scientist's natural curiosity, though, and they began to wonder whether plants and animals and humans had this same enzyme. They looked, he said, and they found they all did. Then they asked: What role does this enzyme play in humans? As it turned out, he said, it played a role in how much pain humans experience.

That finding led them to a group of compounds that naturally occur in the body and that reduce pain. Typically, these compounds are rapidly broken down in the body, Hammock said, but his team figured out a way to block their destruction.

The compounds do not prevent the warning of pain, Hammock said, so people will know if they put their hands in hot water, but the compounds can keep people from feeling pain that is out of proportion to the degree of the injury.

After figuring out how to prevent the compounds from breaking down, Hammock said, his team came up with a drug formulation that worked so well in animal trials that he questioned the results.

"I wanted to consult with an expert in the research of pain medications," he said. "I looked up all the pain

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Roster of Our WNA Information and Support Groups

2019 WNA Board of Directors

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(888) 556-3356
admin@pnhelp.org

Please contact
your group leader or
check your group
page on the
WNA website –
www.WNAinfo.org
to find out about the
topic/speaker for the
upcoming meeting.

Bev Anderson
Editor

Newsletter Design by



CALIFORNIA

Auburn

1st Monday, 11 AM
Woodside Village MH Park
12155 Luther Road
Sharlene McCord (530) 878-8392

Castro Valley

2nd Wednesday, 1:30 PM
First Presbyterian Church
2490 Grove Way (next to Trader Joe)
Joy Rotz (510) 842-8440

Concord

3rd Thursday, 1:30 PM
First Christian Church
3039 Willow Pass Road
Wayne Korsinen (925) 685-0953

Davis

2nd Tuesday, 3:30-5:00 PM
Davis Senior Center, 646 A Street
Mary Sprifke (530) 756-5102

Elk Grove

2nd Tuesday, 1 PM
Elk Grove Senior Center
8830 Sharkey Avenue
Roger White (916) 686-4719

Folsom

3rd Wednesday, 12:30 PM
Association Resource Center
950 Glenn Dr., Suite 150
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

Fresno

3rd Tuesday, 11:00 AM
United Community Church of Christ
5550 N. Fresno St.
Bonnie Zimmerman (559) 313-6140

Grass Valley

2nd Monday, 1:30 PM
GV United Methodist Church
236 S. Church Street
Bev Anderson 877-622-6298

Livermore

4th Tuesday, 10 AM
Heritage Estates
900 E. Stanley Blvd.
Lee Parlett (925) 292-9280

Merced

2nd Thursday, 1 PM
Central Presbyterian Church
1920 Canal Street
(Hoffmeiser Center across from the church)
Larry Frice (209) 358-2045

Modesto

3rd Monday, 10:30 AM
Trinity United Presbyterian Church
1600 Carver Rd., Rm. 503
Ray (209) 634-4373

Monterey

3rd Wed., 10:30 AM (odd numbered months)
First Presbyterian Church
501 El Dorado Street
Dr. William Donovan (831) 625-3407

Napa

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

Placerville

2nd Wednesday, 1 PM
El Dorado Senior Center
937 Spring Street
Bev Anderson (877) 622-6298

Redwood City

4th Tuesday, 1 PM
Sequoia Hospital Health and Wellness Center
749 Brewster Avenue
Danielle LaFlash (415) 297-1815

Roseville

2nd Wednesday, 1PM (odd numbered months)
Sierra Point Sr. Res.
5161 Foothills Blvd.
Stan Pashote (916) 409-5747

Sacramento

3rd Tuesday, 1:30 PM
Northminster Presby. Church
3235 Pope Street
Bev Anderson 877-622-6298

San Francisco

2nd Monday, 11 AM – 12:30 PM
Kaiser French Campus
4141 Geary Blvd. between 6th & 7th Ave.
Rm. 411A - Watch for signs.
Merle (415) 346-9781

San Jose

3rd Saturday, 10:30 AM
O'Conner Hospital, 2105 Forest Avenue
SJ DePaul Conf. Rm.
Kathy Romero (407) 319-2557

Santa Barbara

4th Saturday, 10AM (Sept., Oct., Jan., March, May)
St. Raphael Catholic Church
5444 Hollister Ave., Conference Room
Shirley Hopper (805) 689-5939

Santa Cruz

3rd Wednesday, 12:30 PM (odd numbered months)
Trinity Presbyterian Church
420 Melrose Avenue
Mary Ann Leer (831) 477-1239

Santa Rosa

1st Wednesday, 10:30 AM
Steele Lane Community Center
415 Steele Lane
Judy Leandro (707) 480-3740

Walnut Creek

4th Friday, 10 AM
Rossmoor, Hillside Clubhouse
Vista Room
Karen Hewitt (925) 932-2248

Westlake Village - Thousand Oaks

2nd Monday, 4:30-5:30 PM
United Methodist Church
Youth Classroom 1 (faces parking lot)
1049 S. Westlake Blvd.
Angie Becerra (805) 390-2999

NEVADA

Las Vegas

3rd Thursday, 1 PM
Mountain View Presbyterian Church
8601 Del Webb Blvd.
Barbara Montgomery
lvneuropathygroup@gmail.com

OREGON

Grants Pass

3rd Wednesday 2:00 PM
Club Northwest
2160 N.W. Vine St.
David Tally 541-218-4418

Start a support group
in your area:
Contact Bev Anderson at
(877) 622-6298 or
info@pnhelp.org

For information on groups in the following areas or any other place you are interested in finding out about a support group, call Bev Anderson at (877) 622-6298. She is actively trying to open new groups and re-open closed groups. Check with her about a group in your area especially if you would volunteer to be the leader.

New Leadership needed. No meetings for now. Contact for information: Bev Anderson 877-622-6298. **California:** Alturas, Antioch-Brentwood, Bakersfield, Berkeley - Oakland, Carmichael, Clearlake, Costa Mesa, Crescent City, Eureka, Fort Bragg, Garberville, Jackson, Lakeport, Lincoln, Lodi, Madera, Mt. Shasta, Oxnard, Quincy, Redding, Salinas, Santa Maria, San Rafael, Sonoma, Sonora, Stockton, Susanville, Truckee, Tulare-Visalia, Turlock, West Sacramento, Weed, Ukiah, Woodland, Yreka, Yuba City-Marysville. **Nevada:** Reno-Sparks. **Oregon:** Brookings, Medford, Portland, Salem.

President's Message By Bev Anderson



The 2019 Annual Conference went quite well according to most of those attending as noted in the evaluations. I thought all the speakers provided good information. Having two top neurologists share the morning with presentations and a Q & A was invaluable. Dr. Paul Sampognaro is a newly licensed neurologist and is studying the extra year to become a neuro-muscular neurologist, which is what people with neuropathy need. When that is completed, he will join the staff at U.C. San Francisco Medical Center. We believe he will be an excellent neurologist. Dr. Jeffrey Ralph, who led the morning presentations, is his mentor, which gives him added credibility in our view.

The afternoon speakers were excellent. Bryn E. Miller, a registered dietitian, at Kaiser Permanente – Modesto provided good counsel on healthy eating and Alan Eighmey, elder law attorney, guided us in what needs to be done to make it easy for our heirs. Having our estate in a trust is critically important. O'Brien's Market Catering in Modesto served lunch. It was well received. A special highlight was awarding our special award for support group leaders. Short bios are printed in this issue.

We welcome new leaders: David Talley for Grants Pass and Kathy Romero for San Jose.

Thanks to all those who sent in donations and participated in the raffle for our book project at the Conference. We were able to match the \$1,000 that Kathy Clemens challenged to be matched and are well on our way to doubling it again. Thank you, Kathy, for giving us this helpful incentive.

June 21 is coming – the first day of summer. After that we start daily losing minutes of daylight as we start toward fall and winter.

Happy Summer,

Bev

Help With Health Care Challenges

If the number is not in your area, call the one listed and ask for the right number.

Medicare

www.Medicare.gov

...

The Affordable Health Care Act

For current information go to www.HealthCare.gov

...

HICAP Health Insurance Counseling

for seniors and people with disabilities.
www.cahealthadvocates.org/HICAP/
Call (800) 434-0222 to ask a question or 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, insurance rights and concerns of people with disabilities and serious health conditions. For more information, go to <http://dralegal.org/> and click on "Projects".

BIOS OF GROUP LEADERS RECEIVING AWARDS By Bev Anderson

This year, when we reviewed which group leaders should receive the Group Leader of the Year Award, it was difficult to choose between them so we decided to reward all of them. We have some wonderful people serving as leaders of Support Groups so we celebrated a sizable number of them.

Marty Price – Antioch-Brentwood

Marty was born in Altadena, California, but grew up in Highland Park and South Pasadena, CA. He graduated from South Pasadena High School and went on to Pasadena City College. He continued at Long Beach State and eventually received his degree in business administration from Antioch University. He worked in sales and marketing and served as regional manager and operations of the plants for both paper and steel manufacturers.

Marty has quite bit of pain with his neuropathy, chiefly between his feet and knees currently. He has a Boston Scientific implant in his spine which helps a great deal but he also takes oral pain medication. With his support group he liked to bring research reports. If people weren't there, he sent copies of the meeting notes. He advocated Magnilife Cream that he feels works well. He told them to never feel alone. If they did, they could call him.

Joy Rotz – Castro Valley

Joy was born in Corvallis, Oregon. Her childhood was spent touring the United States as her father was in the Army Corps of Engineers and then the Aero Space Program. The company often moved their employees for each job. She attended college at U.C.-Berkeley and Trinity College studying microbiology and business management. She began as a molecular microbiologist at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland. Joy and her husband decided to move to California where she was a substitute teacher and then taught math and biology. She reports she enjoyed it.

Joy says she thinks people come to a support group for empathy and answers and don't realize that they are really seeking ways to manage their condition. She tries to help empower them to do this. All need to know that what works for someone may not work for another but the reverse is also true. What doesn't work for one may be just what another needs. Our feelings often are what really have meaning. People need to get in the "can do" zone.

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DISCOUNTS FOR WNA MEMBERS

The following companies or individuals have agreed to give WNA a discount to WNA members. Give them a call or visit. If you choose to purchase the service or wares of any on this list, pull out your WNA Membership Card and claim the discount.

Anodyne Therapy

Infrared Light Therapy equipment - **12% off all home units.**
Contact: 800-521-6664 or www.anodynetherapy.com

HealthLight Infrared Light Therapy equipment - **5% off Single Boot System and Dual boot system.**

Contact: 888-395-3040 or www.healthlight.us

Auburn

The Footpath

825 Lincoln Way
(530) 885-2091
www.footpathshoes.com
WNA Discount: 10% off the regular price shoes.

Elk Grove

Shoes That Fit

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

Fortuna

Strehl's Family Shoes & Repair

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

West Sacramento

Beverly's Never Just Haircuts and Lilly's Nails

2007 W. Capitol Ave
Hair – (916) 372-5606
Nails – (916) 346-8342
WNA discount: 10% off the regular price.

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Currently, she is working for H & R Block doing income taxes. It is long hours, but she is enjoying it. The evening I talked to her, she and others in the office had saved a lady's life. A senior van stopped at a light on the corner across from their door. Suddenly, they saw an old lady open a door into traffic, jump out, and start running across the street. Joy ran to their door opened it and beckoned to her. As she neared, she said, "It is so good to see you. It has been a long time since you were here. Welcome in." They kept the lady entertained until those with the van could turn back to find her.

Wayne Korsinen – Concord

Wayne was born in Selma, California, and grew up in Reedley, California. He attended U.C.-Berkeley and became a teacher. He taught at Antioch High School for 35 years.

He sees his support group as giving each other support. They are not alone. Others have the same symptoms even though the cause may be different. They have some really good discussions. People in attendance can open up about how they experience neuropathy and other medical concerns they may have as it is not a judgmental group. They will give empathy and support. Some may have a similar concern and can give suggestions. Wayne usually emails those on his list and calls people on the list who don't have an email. Sometimes another person in the group makes the calls.

Bonnie Zimmerman – Fresno

Bonnie was born in Steam Boat Springs, Colorado, but moved to Oakland, California, when she was in junior high school. She graduated from Oakland High School and attended Oakland City College.

When she married, her husband was attending Fresno State College in Fresno, California, so they moved there. She took training to be a respiratory therapist and worked for 23 years at Valley Children's Hospital in the neonatal unit. She retired several years ago but the people in the unit were so comfortable with each other that they still meet for lunch monthly. She had just returned from one of those lunches on the day we spoke. She remarked at how much they all enjoyed seeing each other and catching up with the current scene as some people still working come. New things are happening all the time in this center for all ages of children but especially babies with special conditions. They are transported there from a wide region. The neonatal unit is a very busy place.

Bonnie had one daughter who died as an adult. Her other two children are grown and Bonnie has two grandchildren and six great-grandchildren that are the

joy of her life. Two live nearby and the other four are some miles away. They see the nearby ones regularly and go to visit the other four periodically.

Her neuropathy was diagnosed more fully when she went to an appointment with Dr. Jeffrey Ralph at UC – San Francisco. She had been told she had Charcot-Marie-Tooth (CMT) and she would end up in a wheelchair. He told her she did not have that and hers was not genetic, but that she would have it the rest of her life. Bonnie will die with it but it will not be the cause of her death. So, she passes this word on to the people in her support group.

She encourages her group to exercise to keep themselves mobile. Neuropathy is not curable so chasing off to try out the treatments of the scams out to empty your wallet is not going to get you what you are looking for. In their group, she says, they talk about all kinds of topics that people are concerned about.

Lee Parlett - Livermore

Lee was born in San Francisco, California, and grew up there. He graduated from Lowell High School in 1958. After high school, he joined the Air Force. He spent two years stateside and two years in England. Lee was a jet engine mechanic. His parents sold their house and moved to Santa Rosa, California.

When he returned from his days in the armed service, he got a job with United Airlines on the night shift maintaining the aircraft. In the next two years he found a wife and got married. They are in their 55th year. He found a job on the day shift at the pneumatic shop at United Airlines. Lee reports they have two children. Their daughter lives near them and their son is an electrician in San Mateo, California.

The most important thing he tells his support group is to exercise. It is important to keep muscles working to be limber and balanced. Go for walks. (While we talked on the phone his wife came prepared to go for their afternoon walk with him.) The other most important thing he values is to encourage people. He mentioned a 45-year-old man with two young children that came to tell about his having neuropathy. After sharing his story, people gave him helpful ideas and encouraged him to keep moving and doing what he could as improvement is possible.

Ray Nichols – Modesto

Ray was born in Jersey City, New Jersey. They lived there when his father was helping build the Empire State Building. He doesn't remember much of that as he chiefly grew up in Modesto, California. He was attending Modesto Junior College when he joined the service to serve in the Korean War. He was in the Navy

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Bios Of Group Leaders Receiving Awards – Continued from page 4

coming out of Navy Reserve. When he was discharged, he was in the Bay Area and went to Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, California, and on to U.C. Berkeley.

When he joined the Navy in 1950, he wanted to be a photographer, but became an aviation electronic technician. In Alameda, California, he was a general service technician, and then was taken into a naval squadron to maintain their equipment. Out of college, he worked in a grocery store, became a life insurance and securities agent with licenses. These take tremendous amounts of study to pass the tests required to be licensed. Then he spent nine years doing computer system bookkeeping. Ray has three children – a daughter and two sons.

Ray's neuropathy is from a car accident. He does fairly well during the day but is miserable at night and doesn't get much sleep. He has trouble getting doctors to understand his situation as he seems so well when they see him. His neck was what was most injured and still gives him much pain.

He says that he talks to his group about his experience as it is hard for some to understand that an accident can cause neuropathy. He also encourages them to take responsibility for their own health care and treatment as doctors are "practicing" and don't have all of the knowledge they should have about our condition and the more than 200 known causes. He is currently discouraged about his support group and is not sure what is causing a lower attendance than they have usually had. They usually have an interesting speaker and a core group of officers that help plan the meetings. Announcements of their meetings appear fairly regularly in the local newspaper.

Merle Easton – San Francisco

Merle was born in Boise, Idaho, but grew up in Alaska. They lived in Skagway and Sitka during World War II as her father worked in the Aleutian Islands and they were evacuated inland after the Japanese bombed the island area. Her father maintained the railroad out of Skagway when they lived in this beautiful area. When I mentioned that the area had an abundant supply of "Alaska's State Bird," she laughed and knew I meant the monstrous mosquitos Alaska is noted for.

Merle graduated from the University of Washington at Seattle and is an architect. She initially did drafting and project management. Merle chiefly made working drawings for others. Later, she worked on projects resulting in houses and then hospitals, some for Kaiser Permanente. She married and had a son. He now lives and works in Seattle.

Merle thinks of her support group as everyone experiencing neuropathy differently. So, what you

experience may not be exactly the way another experiences it. She asks people what is helpful for them. It may be helpful for someone else or it may not.

Danielle LaFlash – San Jose-Redwood City

Danielle was born in San Francisco, California, and grew up there. She graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School and attended San Francisco City College at age 16 after taking a test to leave high school early. She took some classes but then went to the College of San Mateo and graduated from Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont, California with a degree in biological science and business management. Some of this education was done while working. She started working at Guidant Corporation as a receptionist and worked her way up as her studies progressed to pre-clinical researcher. For part of the time, the job had her going to technical meetings to take minutes. In the pre-clinical researcher position she says she protected patients and their families. This job took her many places in the world.

Danielle's neuropathy started from a catastrophic event. She had just come back from a business trip to Ireland to do testing and a short vacation and had been home a few days. On her way to work, she was hit by a 30,000-pound dry wall truck. The weight doesn't include the cargo and it was loaded. The accident caused her to lose her job with the good salary and begin trying to get well. The accident caused her neuropathy. She has seen many doctors since. There are not many answers to what to do about much of what it caused. Her whole left side is the most badly injured.

In the midst of the pain and medical treatments, she started going to the Redwood City Neuropathy Support Group when Stan Pashote was leading it and the San Jose Neuropathy Support Group. When he resigned, she became the leader of both and tried diligently to develop them, but illness has kept interfering. Her goal is to use her medical training to produce some information she thinks would be helpful to people with neuropathy, put it out for patients to see on the web, and possibly be invited to speak at support groups presenting this material. With her support groups she offered to put their medications into a website that compared them and advised if any interfered with something else they were taking to allay their fears on this concern. She wanted them to know that neuropathy is not going to kill them.

Judy Leandro – Santa Rosa

Judy was born in Newport, Virginia, and grew up chiefly in San Diego, California. Her father was in the military. She was four when her mother died of breast cancer. They later moved to Santa Rosa, California.

DISCOUNTS FOR WNA MEMBERS

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Neuropathy Support Formula/Nerve Renew

(1-888-840-7142) is a supplement that a sizable number of people are taking and reporting it has helped them. The company gives members of WNA a discount and free shipping. The 30-day supply is \$40 (normally \$49.97). It can be auto-shipped monthly for the same. A 3-month supply via auto-ship is \$95.00. They also have a Nerve Repair Optimizer that is available for \$20 with free shipping. Marsha, the manager, said that if anyone wants more information about the product, they can call and ask for her. If she is not readily available, leave your number and she will call you back.

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 add them to this list.

Bios Of Group Leaders Receiving Awards – *Continued from page 5*

Judy attended Santa Rosa Junior College. She married and had a son that they raised in Santa Rosa. She lived the Seattle area of Washington for 10 years and then moved back to Santa Rosa. She worked in a variety of jobs from teen years on. She started as a member of the breakfast crew at a McDonalds and advanced in her jobs. In Washington, she worked at Nordstrom's. She was grocery checker at Lucky's for 20 years in Santa Rosa. Then, when they lived for a while in Guerneville, California, she did bookkeeping for the senior center. At one point, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and was treated with Taxol, which is how she got neuropathy.

I have a special place in my heart for Judy becoming the Santa Rosa Neuropathy Support Group Leader. She was in the meeting just after the terrible fire that nearly leveled Santa Rosa. They were renting and the fire took everything they couldn't grab as they ran out, jumped in the car, and made it to safety. They had the home of a friend who was away for some while to camp in until they found a place in the region. So, she was there when the former leader announced he was resigning. He asked if anyone would take the group from there and Judy said, "I will," while her own life was in chaos.

She says they have good discussions and use items in the WNA newsletter, Neuropathy Hope, as topics fairly often. They find that people need to tell their story more fully especially if they are new to the group. She talks to people who have special problems. They have speakers that bring perspective to their situation. Recently, a major topic has been marijuana. They have people in the group who are using it that report how it is working for them and how they use it.

Barbara Montgomery – Las Vegas, Nevada

Barbara was born in Fort Scott, Kansas, but grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She graduated from Highland High School in Albuquerque. Her college years started with attending and graduating from the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque and continued with various classes at Texas Tech and others over the years.

Barbara worked in marketing and product development. She became global director of education for a manufacturer in the cosmetic industry. She still works part-time selling flavors for products and possible products that need to be flavored in some way. She is on the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. It is a group of doctors with a health course, Food for Life. She was selected to fill out forms as were many throughout the world so a representative sample of people could be selected to join the doctors at a conference in Washington, D.C. in August. She was one of the 25 that were selected. She will spend a period of August working hard in August in a medical company.

She sees her support group as a way to help people with their incurable, painful disease. It brings support, care, and knowledge. Besides the monthly meeting, she sometimes sends helpful articles to group members for their personal information. Encouragement keeps people going. Something to do and think about can make a major difference.

Angie Becerra – Westlake Village – Thousand Oaks

Angie was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley of California. Angie started her career right away in the gift industry for a greeting card manufacturer. She started out as marketing director and worked her way to becoming vice president. She attributes her ability to communicate well to her 10 years of greeting card experience. Later, Angie found herself back at school studying human services, psychology, and crisis mediation. This is her occupation today.

Marriage, children, and keeping up professionally took a toll on her back and after her first laminectomy she was diagnosed with neuropathy in her lower back and legs. Based on her own needs, Angie studied the "unlearn your pain" philosophy and methods and added "pain coaching" to her list of support services. In her support group, Angie tries to provide shared information as well as encouragement and supportive interaction for those suffering from chronic pain and neuropathy.

"Understanding what it is like to feel pain constantly in the background of your daily life is almost impossible unless you have lived it," Angie explains. "Having a place to go where others can identify with you on that level is really helpful."

Angie was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley of California.

Bev Anderson - Grass Valley – Folsom

Bev was born in Fresno, California. The family moved a number of times due to her step-father being a long-line truck driver during World War II with a coastal route from San Francisco, California, to Los Angeles, California, and back via Highway 101. They lived chiefly in San Luis Obispo County. They returned to Fresno, California, when Bev was in the ninth grade and she graduated from Theodore Roosevelt High School in Fresno.

Bev attended Fresno Junior College to sharpen her typing and shorthand skills. She worked as a typist at the Fresno County Probation Office until she left for Central Bible Institute, which is now part of Evangel University. She transferred to Fresno State College and graduated with an AB in Elementary Education. She earned a master's degree in Teaching Theory and Practice while she taught five years in what is now the Selma Unified School District. She moved to Concord, California, and taught 29 years there.

Bev was finally diagnosed with neuropathy after she retired even though she now knows it is hereditary due to her brother's diagnosis and the experience of her mother, grandfather, and great-grandfather. She knows why she couldn't do as well as others in physical skills as it is an early onset type of neuropathy that was likely the cause of not being able to learn to roller skate.

She started the first neuropathy support group in what became The Northern California Chapter of The Neuropathy Association and now is the Western Neuropathy Association. As president, she thought she would have enough to do to start groups and get them underway. Then a wonderful leader came along for the Auburn Neuropathy Support Group - Sharlene McCord. From time to time the leader of the Grass Valley Neuropathy Support Group has not

UC Davis Researcher Will Test Non-Addictive Drug That Could Lead To A New Way To Treat Pain

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consultants in the world, checked out their credibility and made a list. And, the first guy on the list was Bill Schmidt.”

Hammock was floored when he learned that his home was no more than 75 yards from Schmidt’s home. Schmidt’s office was in downtown Davis, and they had mutual friends.

“When they called me,” Schmidt said, “they had no idea where I was located. Bruce told his people, ‘Develop a list of the top consultants in pain medicine in the United States.’ After they made the list, I was the first person they called. It turned out I was in the same city, and they were located five minutes from my office. I said, ‘Come on over.’”

Schmidt said he almost fell out of his chair when he learned that Hammock was an entomologist and that his research was so far along. He had isolated properties in the compound and tested for adverse reactions, Schmidt said.

“He had synthesized and tested 3,500 compounds over a period of more than 20 years,” Schmidt said. “He had optimized these for all the properties that I would want. I (had) worked for one of the primary companies developing analgesic drugs, and here an academic lab had done a higher quality work in many respects.”

Hammock was simultaneously developing drug candidates for humans, for horses and for companion animals, Schmidt said, and he already had gotten his first equine test subject: a granddaughter of 1977 Triple Crown winner Seattle Slew named Hulahalla.

Hulahalla had arrived at the UC Davis Veterinary School at an advanced stage of a disease called equine laminitis. At its most severe, laminitis causes inflammation and swelling in the legs and hoofs that is so severe that horses cannot stand.

“The horse had been on her side for two days and not responding to any other drug or any other type of therapy that one of the most advanced veterinary schools in the country or in the world would have to offer,” Schmidt said. “So, they scheduled the horse for euthanasia.”

The vet school, however, had received permission to try an experimental drug on Hulahalla before the euthanasia, Schmidt said, so at 2 a.m., Hammock got a call from Dr. Alonso Guedes, then a veterinary anesthesiologist at UC Davis who was treating the horse.

“Alonso said, ‘Bruce, I have your first patient,’” Schmidt said. “Bruce rode over on his bicycle, carrying a vial of this new experimental medication. They gave an IV dose, and in an hour, (Hulahalla) was up on her hoofs. In two hours, she was walking around her stall again and eating for the first time in two days. They then gave one dose a day for five days, and the horse had a complete recovery.”

Hammock has since administered the medication to 10 other horses at the veterinary school, Schmidt said, and eight out of 10 responded favorably after treatment with the drug. The results have since become documented in published papers.

Despite this success, Hammock said, he was nervous when he and Schmidt faced a grilling last Monday from FDA officials in Washington, D.C.

“I was really scared, but the meeting came off really well. It’s tense. They do exactly 55 minutes, and we had 10 people come into the room. None of them smiled. None of them introduced themselves,” Hammock said. “The previous two people who met with them were told to go home and not come back. They don’t all end well.”

By the end of the meeting, however, Hammock, Schmidt and the rest of their team had won smiles from the panel and the right to submit a lengthy document seeking permission to begin human trials.

Davis-based eicOsis (pronounced EYE-co-sis) plans to have intravenous, topical and oral forms of the drug, Hammock said, and it will likely be four or five years before the drug goes to market. The initial human trials, he said, will be on healthy volunteers to test for side effects.

“We’re off and running toward changing the way that we treat acute pain and chronic pain in this country, hopefully moving a lot of the treatment away from opioids to nonaddictive compounds that are highly effective and also giving opportunity for those patients who can’t benefit from... drugs...like ibuprofen and naproxen because their pain is either much higher than those drugs can treat or because they’ve had adverse reactions (to them),” Schmidt said. “I hope we can offer a compound that is safer and more effective for them to use as well.”

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Bios Of Group Leaders Receiving Awards – Continued from page 6

been able to go on and the same is true in Folsom. So, Bev has been interim leader. She helped start both groups early in the association’s history so she was determined to not let them fold.

Bev thinks the chief purpose of a support group is to welcome people with neuropathy, listen to their concerns and stories, and encourage them that there is help. It may not do all you want it to do but it can lessen the concerns and new information come to light that makes a difference. Also, it is important not to chase after scams that claim to work but that have no hope of doing more than a temporary distraction. None of these many treatments have been found to be lasting or doctors would be prescribing them, and some are actually quite dangerous. She has certain neurologists that she refers people

to if they ask even if they have to travel a distance for an appointment. It is very important to at least have the opportunity of an accurate diagnosis so you don’t have to worry needlessly. And you might find an answer that may save your life as one patient did who went to see Dr. Jeffrey W. Ralph. It wasn’t neuropathy but something that needed immediate attention.

She has found a new favorite ‘hobby.’ It is to listen to people who say they have idiopathic neuropathy tell their story from childhood on and many times able to identify a major activity or experience that most likely is the cause the neuropathy. Even doctors often have no concept of what causes neuropathy.



WESTERN NEUROPATHY ASSOCIATION

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NEUROPATHY MEDICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

By William B. Donovan, M.D.

We can access the National Library of Medicine (NLM) to obtain information on peripheral neuropathy (PN). There are over 100 medical articles a month written on PN.

I review these references and select articles that would appear to be most interesting to us neuropathy sufferers. This is the link to PubMed that will connect to the NLM:

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez

If you are reading this article on the computer, just click on the above link to go there. If you are reading the print edition of the newsletter, type this link into the address bar of the browser on a computer. If you don't know how, get a librarian or friend to help you.

After you get to PubMed, you will see a line that says "Search PubMed" followed by "for" and a space. Every article in the NLM is given a PMID, an eight digit identification number. I will give you PMID numbers of the selected articles. Type the PMID into the space after the "for" and click on "Go" at the end of the space, or press the ENTER key on your keyboard. You will then see a one paragraph abstract of the article appear, as well as links to related articles.

The reader can also go to the WNA website www.pnhelp.org, click on the RESOURCES tab and select MEDICAL LITERATURE REVIEW from the menu to review the archive of summaries that have appeared in this column over recent years.

This month's PMID:

- 29979431 This Chinese review searched the medical literature for randomized controlled trials that used Fasulin, a rho-kinase inhibitor, to treat diabetic peripheral neuropathy. Thirteen acceptable studies totaling 1148 patients were found. By adding Fasulin to either methylcobalamine (B12) or lipoic acid, highly significant improvement was found in both clinical efficacy and nerve conduction velocities. The literature cited was mainly from China where Fasulin is commonly used as a vasodilator.



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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

All contributions and dues are tax-deductible.

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

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