



WESTERN NEUROPATHY ASSOCIATION

August 2020

Issue 08

Volume 18

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November 13, 2018

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)

## WNA'S FIRST WEBINAR – TUESDAY, JULY 28, 1:00 PM (PDT) EDUCATIONAL OVERVIEW OF HEREDITARY ATTR (hATTR) AMYLOIDOSIS

Speaker – Rita Lazenby, Patient Education Liaison, Alnylam Pharmaceuticals

Rita Lazenby, patient education liaison with Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, will present information about this fatal type of neuropathy via a virtual webinar viewable from your computer or Smart phone. There now is a test and a treatment for this condition that extends and improves the life of those that have it. All webinar attendees will find the presentation informative, but if you know your neuropathy is hereditary or you have an idiopathic diagnosis, meaning they don't know what caused your neuropathy, you definitely want to arrange to view this webinar.

The webinar will be via Zoom (a virtual meeting site), which means you can access it with your computer or Smart phone so that you see the speaker and her visual material. If you don't have a computer or Smart phone, you can listen in by phone – you won't be able to see the video but you can hear the speaker. The presentation is expected to last about an hour.

This is the first of the webinars of the speakers we

would have had at the Annual Conference scheduled for May 7 that was cancelled due to COVID-19. WNA Board member, Darrell O'Sullivan, will greet everyone and introduce Rita. He will also have a closing statement. Responses from the audience will not be incorporated.

To access this webinar, you will receive a link or the phone number for the voice only access once you register. The WNA office will send out the link via email before the webinar. So please send an email to Lindsay at [lindsayc@pnhelp.org](mailto:lindsayc@pnhelp.org) to tell her you plan to attend. If you don't have a computer that can receive this email, please enlist a friend or relative to register for you, receive the email, and communicate the telephone number to you. Lindsay is still working from home and is not taking work phone calls there but can receive email. She goes into the office once a week to retrieve any messages that have been left so this registration needs to be handled via email.

## BALANCE – CONSULT WITH OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

By Shirley Gast Lynn

Marlene Kuntz, physical therapist, speaking at Support Group Leader Bob Williamson's Tidewater Neuropathy Support Group, in Virginia Beach, Virginia, had this to say about balance; "Our ability to balance depends on sensory information from our eyes, inner ear, and feet. Balance also depends on the brain, autonomic nerves, motor nerves, and muscles that provide the movements that allow us to balance."

Many people, young and old, have balance problems caused by inner ear conditions that are often undiagnosed. Our brain needs exercise in order to preserve our ability to balance. It's very important that we keep moving and not become sedentary. Balance therapy involves exercises which give the sensory nerves in your eyes, ears, feet, and brain a workout. An example of such an exercise, shake your head while keeping your eyes focused on a point.

Be aware that persistent balance problems may be caused by the inner ear as well as by PN or circulation problems. Physical therapists cannot cure your PN, but they can help you cope with the physical symptoms, poor balance, muscle weakness, and foot drop. An occupational therapist can also help you with problems you may have with hand control or hand strength. (If you decide to go for therapy, be sure to get a referral from your doctor, so insurance pays for it.)

In addition to suggesting exercises to improve your muscle strength and range of motion, physical therapists can show you better ways to walk, turn around, sit down, and get up. For example, walk with your feet wide apart. When turning, move one foot

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## 2020 WNA Board of Directors

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**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

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## Roster of Our WNA Information and Support Groups

Support groups are not meeting unless a leader notifies the group they are. If in doubt, call your Leader.

### CALIFORNIA

#### Auburn

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

#### Castro Valley

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

#### Concord

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

#### Davis

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

#### Elk Grove

2<sup>nd</sup> Tues., 1 pm  
New Senior Center  
8230 Civic Center Dr.  
Roger White (916) 686-4719

#### Folsom

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

#### Fresno

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

#### Grass Valley

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

#### Merced

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

#### Modesto

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, 10:30 AM  
Trinity United Presbyterian Church  
1600 Carver Rd., Rm. 503  
Harkaman Ghag (209) 541-5404

#### Monterey

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

#### Napa

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

#### Placerville

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

#### Roseville

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

#### Sacramento

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 1:30 PM  
Northminster Presby. Church  
3235 Pope Street  
Sonya Wells (916) 627-0228

#### San Diego

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, 1:30 PM  
The Remington Club  
16925 Hierba Dr.  
Chhattar Kucheria (858) 774-1408

#### San Francisco

2<sup>nd</sup> 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

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

#### Santa Barbara

4<sup>th</sup> Saturday, 10AM (Sept., Oct., Jan., March, May)  
St. Raphael Catholic Church  
5444 Hollister Ave., Conference Room  
Nancy Kriech (805) 967-8886

#### Santa Cruz

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

#### Santa Rosa

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

#### South San Diego

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday, 2 PM  
Garden Room  
3541 Park Blvd.  
Jacklyn (858) 228-7480

#### Walnut Creek

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

#### Westlake Village - Thousand Oaks

2<sup>nd</sup> 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

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

### OREGON

#### Grants Pass

3<sup>rd</sup> Wed., 4:30 – 6:30 PM  
(except July, Aug., and Dec.)  
Club Northwest  
2160 NW Vine Street  
David Tally 541-218-4418

### TEXAS

#### Austin

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 9:30-11:00 AM  
Education Room  
Conley-Guerrero Activity Center  
808 Nile Street  
Marty Meraviglia RN, ACNS-BC  
(512) 970-5454 • mgmeraviglia@gmail.com

#### Houston

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, 1-2:30 PM  
Memorial Drive United Methodist Church  
12955 Memorial Drive  
South Parking Lot, Southeast Entrance  
Room D100 (Ground Floor)  
klstenzel@hotmail.com

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, Livermore, Lodi, Madera, Mt. Shasta, Oxnard, Quincy, Redding, Redwood City, 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

This is the August issue of **Neuropathy Hope**, but it should reach you early enough in July for you to prepare for our first WNA webinar on July 28 at 1 PM (PDT). We chose the time so it would work for our members in Texas, too. They are two hours ahead of us. Rita Lazenby, patient education liaison for Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, will talk about Hereditary ATTR (hATTR) Amyloidosis. Alnylam has developed a test for it and also has a treatment. Another company also has a treatment from what I've read. Alnylam is the only pharmaceutical company that I know of that specifically deals with a type of neuropathy. They offer free testing for those that want to check to confirm if they have or don't have it. It is a hereditary type but you can be the first in your family to have a hereditary disease. The combination of genes of two parents can precipitate a never before combination. If yours is a so-called idiopathic type of neuropathy, there is a chance you have a hereditary neuropathy that this test might out. It deals with the genes related to neuropathy so is a genetic test but not one to find your ancestry. We do have a limit of people involved. It is open to all first come, first served so if you want to participate, you need to submit your reservation.

Jacklyn Lewicki's article gives an insight of what her childhood and the tragedy that came because a national leader decided some people were better than others and thus justified eliminating the ones he didn't think deserved to live because they were different. There are varying degrees of this still today. We as a nation are going through a period of self-examination. Some or all of us have had experiences that let us know we were deemed different and thus undesirable. Add to any of us any variation of color, dress, religion, sexual orientation, language or other variable and there are people who don't realize that people are people and it is all right if they are different from us. None of us chose how we are; we are born this way. God shows He is a God of variety in the appearance of plants and animals. Why be surprised that he made people in a variety of appearances, too? I ask myself this when I catch myself wondering about someone I meet that is unique from others I know in a noticeable way.

Groups are continuing not to meet in person and we are continuing the teleconferences listed on the back page of this newsletter. It is not hard to join into a group. It just takes a phone call. We have a variety of people calling in – sometimes from more than one state as well as people from northern and southern California. We had a man from New York City join a call. We enjoyed talking with him. Every person that calls in adds flavor to the mix. Usually there is something to be learned in each of the teleconferences. It is like a support group. Please give it a try.

Be sure to look at Dr. Donovan's Column and check out the medical news he offers. This month there are some possible pain relief opportunities. If you find help from his column, he'd be delighted to know about it.

Speaking of thank you notes or letters telling of help you have received from WNA, I'd really like to receive those as well. WNA would like to apply for a certification that requires so many letters indicating we helped someone with what we do. It helps when we apply for grants too. Just send your notes to Bev Anderson at WNA, P.O. Box 276567, Sacramento, CA 95827-6567 or email it to [info@pnhelp.org](mailto:info@pnhelp.org).

Happy August! Enjoy as you start getting those first glimpses of fall with the days getting shorter.

*Bev*



## TELECONFERENCES IN AUGUST

Call 1-877-366-0711 • Passcode 36199447#

Monday, August 3, 6:30 PM PDT – All areas

Wednesday, August 12, 1:00 PM PDT – All areas

Saturday, August 15, 10:30 AM PDT – San Jose

Tuesday, August 18, 1:30 PM PDT - Sacramento

Wednesday, August 19, 12:30 PM PDT – All areas

Thursday, August 20, 1:00 PM PDT – Las Vegas | Nevada

## WNA Annual Conference Webinar

Tuesday, July 28, 2020,  
1:00 PM PDT

See page 1 for more information

### 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](http://www.Medicare.gov)

...

#### The Affordable Health Care Act

For current information go to [www.HealthCare.gov](http://www.HealthCare.gov)

...

#### HICAP

#### Health Insurance Counseling

for seniors and people with disabilities.  
[www.cahealthadvocates.org](http://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](http://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".

## A GROUP LEADER'S PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

**Editor's Note:** Please let this information give perspective for what we are hearing today. Prejudice allowed to build to hatred and beyond has taken the lives of millions over the years of human history. Let's be truly free from this. We all stand taller when we don't take on the weight of judgement of others because they are different from ourselves. None of us chose to be born who we are.

Jacklyn (Frenkel) Lewicki is the leader of the San Diego South Neuropathy Support Group. She says she is not totally sure what caused her neuropathy but thinks it likely the trauma of being hidden by people in France after her father was taken from them. Diet during those years was not the best. She was five years old. She never had a chance to go to a regular school but got enough education over those years to enter and graduate from college.



### REMEMBERING AUSCHWITZ EVEN NOW

By Jacklyn Lewicki, August 27, 2009

Where is A —Auschwitz?

What is A — Auschwitz?

Who is A — Auschwitz?

Who cares? We are now living in the 21st century and that happened so long ago.

Older generations will say, enough, let it alone, it is long gone.

Younger generations will raise their eyebrows puzzled, what are you talking about?

A — Auschwitz is a word, which has been said millions and millions of times since 1940, or even before since someone thought of it in the Nazi commando.

I myself have said it thousands and thousands times through my life and it has been on my mind as many times too.

A — is a word, it is a place, it is an abomination, it is a cancer in the human race.

I have said this word so many times because it is part of me. It is part of my heritage and of my upbringing. It is a part of my life, it is my pain — a part of my make up that I cannot remove.

I have lived with A — since 1940, when the war broke out for me and my family in France.

I will tell you that even having said and heard this word all my life, I did not know where it was until I was almost 70 years old. It was during my visit to Krakow, Poland, that the people where I was staying told me that A — was 70 kms away to the north of the city.

So, I decided to go and pay respects to my father, his two brothers, my aunt, Bella, and my two young cousins who were exterminated there among the six million Jews slaughtered, as well as all the others, totaling 20 million souls, and affecting many generations.

I really thought that A — was in Germany. I had never asked the questions, where is it? It was too painful to think about it. I could never read or listen to stories about the Holocaust. I was five years old when they took my father away to ship him to the extermination camps. I do not know if he survived the horror of the transportation in those cattle cars.

So now I knew where it was and I had to go and pay respect to my family and to all those souls who perished there.

I was there and I walked the grounds of that death camp. I saw the irony of the statement above the gate; “arbeit mar fray” “work makes you free.” I saw a documentary about the death camp. It talked about the routine the prisoners had to go through early in the morning with barely anything in their belly. They pushed them out to go to work in the field, marching them five by five so the SS up on the roof could count them. Inside on a raised platform, Jewish musicians played marching music.

And at night when they came back, they had to carry the dead bodies of the day for the perfect count.

I saw the barracks, but I did not go inside. It was too much for me.

I saw the wall between barrack 10 and 11 where the SS shot the people they caught trying to escape and the Polish people who tried to help. They lined them naked and shot them. And then they were dragged to the oven, to disappear forever.

I did not spend too much time there, but took a few pictures of the posters. I then went two miles away to the other camp. This is where the trains used to arrive, with the survivors and the dead who had not survived the journey.

Some barracks and (oven pipes) are still there, and the train track too ... arriving from nowhere and ending there.

This is where the “trillage” -- the selection took place.

Arrivals went to the right or to the left -- one line was straight to the gas chamber and the other line was for those chosen

— Continued on page 7

## COPING WITH COVID19 By Vanessa Kessler

The past three weeks have shown coronavirus infections increasing significantly across the United States. The pandemic spread in California, Florida, Texas and Arizona and many other states is surging, breaking new records almost every day. These increases have taken place over much of the south and west. On the other hand, the northeast of the country, which saw such terrible caseloads in April and May, is seeing far fewer new cases. The death rate across the country has also significantly lowered, though the full story on that is not yet known.

Basically the two-or three-month shelter in place orders that many have endured were for circumstances less severe than what is taking place in many states today. If you are at high risk it makes sense to take all possible precautions.

Increases in new COVID-19 coronavirus cases are being blamed mostly on the economy opening up too soon together with many in the community not taking appropriate precautions. Mask wearing has become controversial with some, an unfortunate development as wearing a mask while in public is probably at this point the single most important thing to do to limit this pandemic. In some areas, protests have accelerated new infections as well.

For those of us in the high-risk category, the pandemic may well be here to stay until a vaccine is developed. Some combination of social distancing protocols will probably be necessary for the foreseeable future.

A summary of the most important tips to remember to do during this pandemic has been updated in several important ways. It is a perfect list to post on your refrigerator.

### TIPS TO HELP DEAL WITH COVID-19

#### Who is at high risk?

- Anyone over the age of 60.
- Particularly those with preexisting conditions of diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, lung or heart disease.
- Those with compromised immune systems.

#### Stay Safe:

- To socially distance, stay 6 feet apart from everyone. That means crossing the street to avoid other walkers.
- Wash your hands under hot water for 20 seconds frequently, especially every time you enter your home and after storing goods brought into the home.
- Do not touch your face or mask. Do not shake hands or hug.
- Wear a face mask when you are away from your home: Wear a face mask when you are indoors with other people. When you are outdoors, you should wear a face mask when you are unable to keep 6 feet of distance between yourself and others.
- Wear a face mask when others come into your home: Insist they do also. Notice what they touch and clean it after they leave.
- Wash your face mask after each use.
- Shop when the store opens or visit during "senior" hours. Do not wait in lines for entry. Shop when there are no lines or have the

food delivered. Buy as much online for home delivery as possible. Use services like DoorDash for restaurant take-out.

- Take precautions when storing groceries you bring into your home. Discard packaging. Clean any surface someone else has touched. Wash your hands after unpacking.
- When banking, use sanitary wipes to clean the ATM surfaces or use your little finger to do banking transactions. Do not touch your face and wash your hands immediately upon returning home. Bank at home on your computer when possible.
- Beware of mail box handles and other commonly touched things like door knobs. Use mailboxes with drop in chutes if they are available. Otherwise use a wipe or cloth to mail letters or open doors.
- If you feel sick, stay at home and isolate yourself from others. Call for medical help if you are suffering from COVID-19 symptoms. The latest symptom list from the Federal Government is available using the CDC link below. Fever, shortness of breath and dry cough are common coronavirus symptoms.
- Establish online communication with your doctor. Let them know what is happening if you are not feeling well.

#### Eat Well:

- Eat broccoli and/or spinach every day for an improved immune system. Improve your immunity in other ways through food and/or supplements.
- Add these 5 foods to you diet daily if possible (AABBC): almonds, avocados, broccoli, blueberries, carrots. These are the foods which have the highest anti-inflammatory effect.
- Reduce eating refined sugars and highly processed foods. Binge on guacamole instead of candy and cake.
- Lose weight, lower salt intake, control your diabetes. Recent findings show that those with diabetes, high blood pressure or obesity suffer more extensively from COVID-19.

#### Stay Active:

- If possible, get outside. Wear a face mask while out in public. If walking isn't possible or if walking is causing you problems see the recommendations in Advice About Walking.
- Stick to your physical exercise routine. Include yoga, meditation or some other mind centering exercise to reduce anxiety. Take online or DVD classes at home. Move at least 5 minutes of every hour that you sit.
- Use extra precautions to prevent falls and maintain your balance. Always hold onto something first before you look up. Same goes for turning your head. Pick your feet up as you walk. Do not rush.

#### Resources:

CDC Guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>  
Advice About Walking: <https://building-better-balance.com/>

See Discounts for WNA Members on Page 7 for **Vanessa's Building Better Balance** DVDs.

## 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](http://www.anodynetherapy.com)

### Auburn

#### The Footpath

825 Lincoln Way  
(530) 885-2091  
[www.footpathshoes.com](http://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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## Balance – Consult With Occupational And Physical Therapists – Continued from page 1

first; don't twist your upper body first and keep your feet wide apart. When sitting down, reach for the arms of the chair and lower yourself slowly. When getting up from a chair, lean your nose over your toes, and keep your hands on the chair to stabilize yourself. Once standing, find your balance and begin to walk slowly. When you bend over a sink, brace yourself over the sink, and brace your knees against the cabinet beneath the sink. It's easier on your back.

### Balance – More on Balance

Peripheral neuropathy often affects the balance of patients; however, there are other causes for lack of good balance:

Many medications can compound the problem with balance and reflexes.

It is necessary to schedule regular vision checks, especially if you wear bifocal or trifocal glasses.

Weakened muscles add to balance problems. Do muscle-strengthening, weight-bearing, and resistance-training exercises at least three times a week.

Serious balance problems should be referred to your physician who can arrange physical therapy and/or occupational therapy sessions with professionals.

Falls from poor balance don't have to result in fractures. Aging and an active life style can go together: With exercise, nutrition, a good dose of common sense, and good communication with your physician, you should be able to avoid injuries that could cause more problems. Be careful!

Balance exercises are important when you have neuropathy. They can be done anytime, anywhere, and as often as you want to do them. Just be certain to have something sturdy to hold on to when you are doing them.

**Try these balance exercises to help prevent you from falling:** Stand on one foot, then walk heel to toe, after that, walk in a straight line putting one foot in front of the other! (Warning – Walking in a straight line, putting one foot in front of the other as you walk, could be a no-no for someone who has neuropathy, if you have to keep your feet and legs farther apart in order to keep your balance. -SGL)

Lower-body exercises that strengthen your legs and ankles can also improve your balance. These include the back-leg raise, side leg raise, knee curl, and toe stand exercises. Do five of each to begin. They can be found on the Go4Life website.

As you progress with your exercise program, add the following challenges to help your balance even more:

Start by holding on to a sturdy chair or cabinet with both hands for support.

When you are able, try holding on to the chair with only one hand.

With time, hold on with only one finger, then with no hands at all.

If you are really steady on your feet, try doing the balance exercises with your eyes closed. Good balance helps you walk safely, avoid tripping and falling over objects, and to go up and down stairs.

### Balance and Vitamin D

Most people living with neuropathy experience balance problems. Besides balance exercises to strengthen your balance, taking vitamin D is important. Dr. Julian Whitaker, in his Health & Healing newsletter, explains Why Vitamin D is Your #1 Independence Insurance:

Vitamin D improves bone strength and density by increasing calcium absorption and making sure calcium stays in the bones where it belongs, instead of being excreted. But here's what's really fascinating – vitamin D also plays an integral role in muscle strength.

Vitamin D promotes protein synthesis in the muscles and is also responsible for transporting calcium into the muscles, where it's necessary for muscle contraction. Vitamin D also triggers a response from type II muscle fibers, which are "fast-twitch" fibers that are the first to react when you have to move fast and keep your balance.

Observational studies also confirm that there is a link between vitamin D status and lower limb and grip strength, particularly in older adults. And the combination of calcium and vitamin D has been shown to measurably reduce incidence of falls in folks with low blood levels of vitamin D who are over age 70. (I received permission to copy this article.) – SGL)



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## Remembering Auschwitz Even Now – Continued from page 4

for being strong enough to work until they died.

A —, all the survivors have been living with those memories. They have a ‘gift,’ the number tattooed on their forearm. The physical and mental pain never goes away, the ripping feelings inside of the lost ones.

There are no Jewish families that have not been touched by the atrocities of World War II or by A — and the other death camps.

As I said before that word has been spoken, mumbled, remembered, written millions of times and always with pain, and it will go on.

For the German population it is a black mark in their history and for their country.

What A — is? It is pain – it is the mark of the devil.

Who is A —? It is the ghost that is alive and still wakes up sleeping people in their beds; those people who have been tortured and brutalized by a people who felt they were the Aryan Race - the better and unique people who should have all the rights.

It is the memories that pop up any time any place for those people.

And I was one of the lucky ones. I am the one as well as my brother and sister and mother who escaped going in those death camps. We were not taken to those infernos, but it does not lessen our pain.

I have the pain of all those people who perished there, because we are all one.

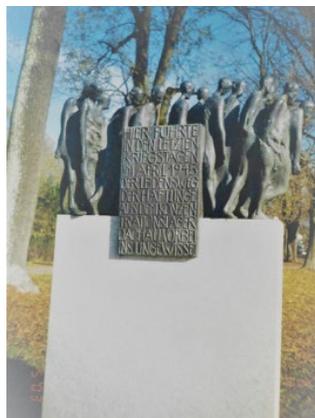
Whoever thinks of A — or any concentration camp ... I identify with the pains of all those people – whenever I think or hear of that word, I am right back there.

We are all one – and when someone is beaten or burned, we all feel it.

I feel it all the time. I live it all the time. It is more than memories - it is more than impressions – it is happening right now to me.



**Death March 1944:** By January 1945, the Third Reich stood on the verge of military defeat. Most of German East Prussia was already under Soviet occupation. Soviet forces besieged Warsaw, Poland, and Budapest, Hungary, as they prepared to push German forces back toward the interior of the Reich. After the failure of the surprise German Ardennes offensive in December 1944, Anglo-American forces in the west were ready to invade Germany.



The SS guards had strict orders to kill prisoners who could no longer walk or travel. As evacuations in the brutal winter of 1944-1945, the number who died of exhaustion and exposure along the routes increased dramatically. This encouraged an understandable perception among the prisoners that the Germans intended them all to die on the march. The term death march was probably coined by concentration camp prisoners.

## DISCOUNTS FOR WNA MEMBERS

*Continued from page 6*

### Neuropathy Support Formula/Nerve Renew

(1-888-840-7142) is a supplement that a 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. They now have Nerve Renew Fast Acting Cream at \$20 for WNA members. It reportedly takes the edge off numbness.

### Building Better Balance DVD, Developing Spine Health

– The DVDs are \$30 each. The price of a full set (4 DVDs) is \$100 (that’s a 20% discount). You can order the DVDs by going to the website [www.building-better-balance.com](http://www.building-better-balance.com). Shipping is free. You can also order the DVDs over the phone using a credit card. Call (707) 318-4476 and leave a message” Vanessa Kettler, Balance and Fall Prevention [www.building-better-balance.com](http://www.building-better-balance.com) (707) 318-4476

### 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](mailto:info@pnhelp.org).

We’ll mail an agreement form to the business, and once we have it, we’ll add them to this list.

## Monoclonal Gammopoetry By Julia Helen Tracy

My guardian angels are surly tonight;	refuses to believe	her craziness is normal.
well, who could blame them?	she’ll never dance again;	A lady who seems to have
They’re (stuck?) here taking care	even a little.	poetry seeping out of her
of a cranky old crippled lady.	A lady so used to her own	disintegrating bones.
A lady who refuses to believe	company by now	
she’s a cripple;	she’s become convinced	OK, bring it on!



## 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](http://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](http://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 PMIDs:

- 26775115 This is a review of the literature of 31 random controlled trials with 2676 patients, comparing the treatment of diabetic neuropathy with lipoic acid and prostaglandin E1 (PGE1). Treatment with a combination of both agents was much more effective ( $p < 0.00001$ ).
- 28066745 This article describes deep gluteal syndrome (DGS), a neuropathy due to the hip rotator muscles compressing the sciatic nerve. DGS can mimic lumbar disc-related sciatica with pain in the buttock and hip radiating down the leg. It can be explored by endoscopy and be decompressed if it does not respond to physical therapy with muscle stretching.



**Western Neuropathy  
Association (WNA)**

A California public benefit, nonprofit,  
tax-exempt corporation.  
Bev Anderson, Editor

**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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