

# PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP OF ASHEVILLE

"You are not alone"

<http://www.parkinsonsavl.org>  
ParkinsonsAVL@gmail.com  
(828) 579-7897

## NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024

## THIS MONTH:

### JANUARY MEETING

**\*\* 2nd Tuesday this month\*\***

**Tuesday, January 9**

**10:00am**

**Groce United Methodist Church**

**Topic: Speech pathologist  
Shelby Bjorlie on voice/  
swallowing**

**See p. 2 for details**

**Happy  
New Year  
2024**

### HEALTH TIP

#### NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!

*"You don't need motivation to be healthy, you need consistency."*

This time of year, many people get "motivated" to work out and then stop by the end of January (just ask the gyms!). The key is for you to move every day. It doesn't have to be the best workout ever, it doesn't have to be the most stimulating, it just needs to happen.

Sticking to a routine over time will result in the greatest benefits.

Mind/Body Workout To Get The New Year Started!

### BEERS AND CHEERS

(3rd Thursday of each month)

**Thursday, January 18**

**5:30pm**

**Village Pub**

**100 Fairview Rd.  
(Biltmore Village area)**

### HIDDEN EASTER EGG

This month, and likely going forward, instead of a seasonally themed graphic we are hiding a single red tulip (based on the one in our group logo - see upper left corner of this page) somewhere in the newsletter pages - can you find it?

# Voice expert Shelby Bjorlie to speak at January meeting

People with Parkinson's disease may notice **changes or difficulty in speaking or swallowing**. These changes can happen at any time but tend to increase as the disease progresses. Just as Parkinson's affects movement in other parts of the body, it also affects the muscles in the face, mouth, and throat involved in speaking and swallowing.

**Shelby Bjorlie**, who runs [Sunrise Speech and Swallowing Therapy](#) in East Asheville, **knows a lot about these challenges and will offer advice for addressing them** when she speaks at the January 9 meeting of the Asheville Parkinson's Support Group.



*Shelby Bjorlie, local speech and voice therapist*

She is a certified [Lee Silverman Voice Treatment \(LSVT LOUD\)](#) provider and works with many Parkinson's patients locally. She has a master's degree in Communication Disorders from Appalachian State University and has spent the last 17 years treating adults with speech-language, voice and swallowing disorders.

## Tips for coping with speech difficulties from the Parkinson's Foundation:

- Exercise your voice by reading out loud or singing every day.
- Drink enough water, avoid shouting, and rest your voice when it is tired.
- Get feedback from friends and family members about how others perceive your speech.
- Make eye contact with the person to whom you are speaking.
- Reduce background noise.
- Socialize in small groups or one-on-one.
- If you experience facial masking, use "feeling" words ("I feel happy/sad/excited," or physical gestures to help convey emotions.
- Determine which times of day your speech is best. Plan social engagements around those times.
- If you participate in speech therapy, bring your loved ones to a couple of sessions.
- Use video calls instead of phone calls to communicate.

\*see full version [here](#)

"Communication is fundamental to who we are as individuals," Bjorlie says. "It is how we connect and is a basic human right. Changes or loss of communication and swallowing abilities can be devastating. My goal is to help you regain and maintain these abilities so you can carry on with your life."

Bjorlie **will talk about treatment options and provide tips** for people to relearn the habit of using a louder voice and clearer speech by strengthening the muscles used to produce voice and speech.

# TUESDAY JAN. 9

*\*note different Tuesday this month*

The Asheville Parkinson's Support Group meets at [Groce United Methodist Church](#) at 954 Tunnel Road in east Asheville on the first Tuesday of each month (2nd Tuesday this month) at 10:00 a.m. for refreshments, socializing, and announcements. The speaker's program begins at 10:30 a.m. The meeting room is wheelchair accessible.

# Annual Christmas Party: PHOTOS!

December 14 was a clear, cold day, but more than 100 members of our group joined together for a feast of holiday goodies and for old and new friendships!



Thanks again to Jenell Wright for donating this beautiful quilt for our raffle, which was taken home by lucky winners Judy and Jeff Byers.

**See you next year!**

Becky and Pat Stone shared their storytelling skills with us with a couple of Christmas stories!



## AD SPACE



**Providing Guidance and Solutions  
During the Challenging Times of Aging**

As advocates for aging adults, Mountain Area Premier Care Navigation (MAP CN) care managers are compass creators for seniors and their families. Tapping into several decades of experience with extensive knowledge of local and national resources, Aging Life Care™ Managers create a successful care map for each client based on their unique needs.



*Lisa Laney, MSW, CMG  
Owner, Mountain Area  
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# Social Connections

by Elizabeth Grover

The human need for connection to others is as basic as the need for food and water. Feeling lonely is bad for not only your mental health, but your physical health, too. If you are living with Parkinson's, you are even more at risk for feeling lonely and disconnected, and your sense of loneliness may contribute greatly to your decline.



Why don't people with PD go out? Because going out in public means strangers looking at you, many people with Parkinson's just stay home. You may stay home because it is hard to move and going out requires too much physical effort, or because you are depressed and unmotivated to go anywhere.

Perhaps your cognitive or communication skills have declined, making it hard to interact with others. Maybe you are embarrassed about your abnormal posture or your shuffling gait, or are afraid of falling. Or maybe you can no longer drive so going out requires more planning, and it feels like it is just not worth the trouble.

**How can we overcome these obstacles? Here are some ideas:**

1



Try a Parkinson's event or program where you can meet others who have PD. (The local monthly meeting includes social time, and the new small groups are a great way to get to know folks.)

2



Socialize with friends who have PD. Your tremor won't matter – they are shaking too!

The technology of the 21st century defines socializing so much more expansively. With FaceTime, Zoom and Skype, you can have friends around the globe and get together as often as you like from the comfort of your home. It is not usually quite as satisfying as meeting in person, but it is far better than sitting at home alone.

**continued on next page**

## Social Connections, continued from previous page

3

Joining an exercise class is a great way to care for your physical needs and socialize at the same time.



Check out the listings for [local exercise opportunities](#) on our website, and look for periodic emails from group leaders.

4



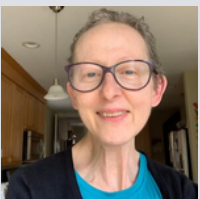
Give your friends a chance. You may not realize how willing they are to support you. They are friends with all of you, not just your healthy parts.



5



Be sure to take poles, canes, or walkers if needed to help you stay and feel safe.



Elizabeth Grover was diagnosed with Parkinson's 24 years ago. She is a board member of Parkinson Support and Wellness in Cincinnati and [writes for their blog](#). She has published a book entitled [On the Trail with Parkinson's Disease](#). Elizabeth grew up in North Carolina; she and her husband John are now part-time residents of Fairview.

# Get Better and Stay Better with Exercise

by Steve Miller, Exercise Chairman

It's the time of year of setting goals, and of renewing commitments to loved ones and ourselves. Taking inventory of our physical, emotional, social, and behavioral health helps this process.

We all know that Parkinson's disease is a progressive syndrome that affects many different systems.

Medications for PD primarily target dopamine-related movement symptoms, such as:

- Rigidity
- Slow movements
- Tremor
- Lack of coordination

Exercise targets many different motor and non-motor symptoms, such as:

- Motor: slow, rigid movements; lack of coordination
- Emotional: depression, anxiety, apathy
- Cognitive: attention, executive function
- Autonomic: sleep, pain, constipation



**\*see PSG-AVL website for a list of local exercise opportunities!**

The Parkinson's Foundation and the American College of Sports Medicine have collaborated on [these exercise guidelines](#):

1. Aerobic activity – 3 days per week for 30 minutes; continuous or intermittent movement, moderate to vigorous
2. Strength Training – 2-3 non-consecutive days per week for 30 minutes; 10-15 reps for major muscle groups
3. Balance, agility, and multitasking – at least 2-3 days per week
4. Stretching – 2-3 days per week (although every day is better!)

**examples:**

indoor cycling, pole walking

machines or free weights

multi-directional stepping, large movements

yoga, tai chi, dance, boxing

Other tips:

- Seek guidance of your physician or physical therapist
- Exercise during “on” time (when taking medication)
- Find a workout buddy or exercise in a group – it's more fun!
- Variety is the spice of life

Other resources:

- Parkinson's Foundation Helpline: 800-473-4636
- Davis Phinney Foundation resources on exercise and Parkinson's: [davisphinneyfoundation.org/resources/exercise-and-parkinsons/](https://davisphinneyfoundation.org/resources/exercise-and-parkinsons/)

\*Thanks to Drs. Becky Farley and Jennifer Bazan-Wigle from [Parkinson Wellness Recovery](#).

The Davis Phinney Foundation's *Every Victory Counts* manual has excellent information, as well as self-assessments, which can also serve as a great communication tool for neurologist appointments.



### 10 Ways to stay consistent with your exercise program

As we pointed out earlier, staying consistent with your exercise routine is far more important than getting yourself “motivated.” So how do you do that?

#### Staying consistent with an exercise program involves several key strategies:

1. **Set Realistic Goals:** Establish achievable and realistic fitness goals. Break them down into smaller milestones to track progress and maintain motivation.
2. **Create a Schedule:** Plan your workouts in advance and integrate them into your daily or weekly schedule. Treat exercise as an essential appointment that you cannot miss.
3. **Find Enjoyable Activities:** Engage in exercises or activities you genuinely enjoy. If you like what you're doing, you're more likely to stick with it.
4. **Mix It Up:** Avoid monotony by incorporating variety into your workouts. This could include different types of exercises, classes, or outdoor activities to keep things interesting.
5. **Accountability Partner:** Partnering with a friend or joining group classes can provide accountability. Knowing that someone else is relying on you can be a powerful motivator.
6. **Track Progress:** Keep a record of your achievements and improvements. Celebrate milestones, whether they are related to strength, endurance, or overall well-being.
7. **Adapt to Changes:** Life can be unpredictable. Be flexible and willing to adapt your exercise routine to accommodate changes in your schedule or circumstances.
8. **Reward Yourself:** Establish a reward system for reaching your fitness goals. Treat yourself to something enjoyable when you achieve a significant milestone.
9. **Prioritize Self-Care:** Recognize the importance of rest and recovery. A balanced approach to exercise includes adequate time for rest to prevent burnout and injuries.
10. **Intrinsic Motivation:** Cultivate a deeper, internal motivation by focusing on the long-term benefits of exercise for your health, well-being, and overall quality of life.

By incorporating these strategies into your routine, you can build a sustainable and consistent exercise habit that becomes an integral part of your lifestyle.

*\*\*\* Now is a great time to start preparing for Movement For Life's Knock Out Parkinson's Field Day on May 5th! More details coming soon! \*\*\**

# Support Group Contact Info

## Address

Parkinson's Support Group of Asheville  
825 C Merrimon Ave.  
PMB #327  
Asheville, NC 28802

## Website

[parkinsonsavl.org](http://parkinsonsavl.org)

## Phone

828-579-7897

## Email

[parkinsonsavl@gmail.com](mailto:parkinsonsavl@gmail.com)

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### Chairman of Board of Directors

Ed Horton  
336-209-0177  
med7365@msn.com

### President & Board Member

Chris Simpson  
847-867-5802  
cms930@hotmail.com

### Vice President

[Vacant]

### Treasurer

Sharon Sbrocco  
828-242-2892  
sharonsbrocco@gmail.com

### Secretary & Board Member

Bob Pettigrew  
828-768-3650  
robp50@ieee.org

### Board Member

Ruthy Fricke  
828-215-4679  
ruthyfricke@gmail.com

### Outreach & Media Chairman

Jody Watts  
612-859-6083  
jnk watts@msn.com

### Grants Chairman

Mike Grenauer  
828-333-8851  
mgrenauer1017@gmail.com

### Program Chairman

Mike Horak  
828-413-1932  
mhorak@tnc.org

### Program Committee & Board Member

Lisa Laney  
828-772-0002  
lisa@premiercarenavigation.com

### Marketing Chair

Ben Elderd  
650-726-7323  
belderd1@gmail.com

### Newsletter Editor

Sean Simonds  
828-484-4200  
sean.simonds@movementforlife.com

### Newsletter Chairman

Jane Rigot  
706-951-5647  
wlrivot@att.net

### Exercise Opportunities Chairman

Steve Miller  
828-215-2331  
stevempwr@gmail.com

### Membership Chair

Lisa Simpson  
lrs51723@gmail.com

### Chat & Chew Chair

Linda Pyeritz  
828-231-6086  
lrpyeritz@gmail.com