

**“You are
not alone.”**



**Parkinson Partners’
Mission Statement:**
To encourage,
educate and support
those with
Parkinson’s disease,
their caregivers and
loved ones as they
cope with the
challenges of
disease. Exploring
better resources,
services and
outcomes for people
with PD.

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*Please remember
Parkinson Partners
in your estate
planning. Your gift
can ensure that
local services and
support continue
for the Erie PD
community.*

A Final Farewell to Audree Parr

It is with a heavy heart, that we
must bid farewell to our
founder, advocate and friend,

AUDREE PARR



Audree passed away on Friday, January 31, 2025 surrounded by her family. She was a founder of Parkinson Partners of NWPA and served on the board of directors for nearly 33 years. Audree was beloved by the PD community for her grace, thoughtfulness and advocacy. She saw a need and was determined to make things better. Her highest goal was to make sure that those with PD and their families knew that they were not alone. Her dedication to making the PD journey better for others, was life-changing to many. They felt seen. They felt understood. They felt supported. She left an indelible mark that will never be forgotten.

Memorials can be made to Parkinson Partners at www.parkinsonpartners.org or mailed to PO Box 10547 Erie, PA 16514. For information on how to help fund the launch of the Audree and James Parr Parkinson Fund, please contact Michael Parr at (925) 321-6091 or the Hamot Health Foundation at (814) 877-3962. Your generosity will help continue the mission of providing support and resources to those living with Parkinson’s disease in our community.

News and Notes

🎵 **LAST CALL--Caregiver Book Donation:** We are using special donated funds to order books for interested caregivers. Please let me know if you are interested. Here is PD caregiver Karen Locke's review: *"A very good friend of mine gave me a book recently, **The Light in the Middle of the Tunnel**, by Susan Gangsei. It's short stories about what caregivers of family members with Parkinson's Disease have to cope with. At first, I wasn't sure I wanted to read it, but I started it anyway. It made me realize that I was not alone in how I was feeling, being relatively new to this. And it gave me some hope. I really enjoyed this book and I hope you will too."*

🎵 **Meeting Cancellations:** In Erie, there is always the possibility that we will need to cancel a meeting due to weather. If we need to cancel, an email will be sent out alerting the community to the change. If you are not signed up for our email alerts, sign up today: <https://www.parkinsonpartners.org/home-2/contact-us/> We will also post the information on our Facebook page. If in doubt, you are always welcome to call the office at 814-899-3030.

🎵 **Donations:** We have a new donation processor, Zeffy, for online donations. This new system comes highly recommended for safety and security and saves us money by eliminating fees for us. When donating, you may see a box asking if you want to make a donation to Zeffy to defray costs on their end. THIS IS OPTIONAL. You can click on the tab to pick an amount or you can choose not donate to Zeffy. The choice is yours. If you have questions, don't hesitate to ask.

Board of Directors Welcomes New Members

In recent months, Parkinson Partners Board of Directors has welcomed two new members to our board of eight. Sadly, we lost our ninth member, Audree Parr, with her passing on January 31, 2025. (See page 1 for more information.) As a nonprofit it is important that we have a Board that can oversee the organization and its employee, for governance and strategic planning. We are grateful to all of our board members for their time and commitment to Parkinson Partners of Northwestern PA. If you would like to learn more about the board or board membership, please feel free to reach out to us.

Our newest board members include:

Mary Kingston: Mary has been a physical therapist for 17 years who is certified in neurology and holds both LSVT BIG and PWR certifications. She has worked in both outpatient and inpatient rehabilitation settings and has extensive experience working with the PD population. When asked why she would like to serve on the board, Mary said, "I am going to be taking over the Parkinson's (inpatient) program at Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Erie and I believe that this is an important connection to foster. I have always had a passion for this patient population and have been a part of the community for a long time. This seems like a the logical "next step" in helping to make a bigger impact." The other board members were happy to approve Mary's application in the fall. Mary has also been chosen unanimously as Vice President of the Board starting in 2025. Congratulations, Mary and thank you for your service to the PD community.

Lori Robson: Lori has also recently joined the board. Lori has experienced PD in her family as her mother had Parkinsonism with Lewy Body Dementia and Lori was her caregiver. She believes her personal experience will benefit the board in many ways. Lori said, "I have experience watching my mother's decline and diminished abilities. I have an understanding of what families endure while going through this. I am a caring and compassionate person and my experiences allow me to feel empathy for those affected by these illnesses. I would like to help make guiding decisions that will help families be aware of this (organization's) support and to enhance services." Lori is a licensed social worker and works at Gannon University as therapist and oversees a large grant project. Lori's wealth of personal and professional experience led the board to approve her application in January.

We thank Mary and Lori for their commitment to Parkinson Partners.



Best Wishes for those with Special Celebrations

Happy Birthday and
Happy Anniversary!

To have your birthday or
anniversary added to our
list call 814-899-3030 or
email:
info@ParkinsonPartners.org

February.
16—Corrine Dyakon

March
2—Dave Barron
20—Carolyn Bard
23 – Phil & Denise
Wahler Anniv.
25—Chuck Leone
31 – Lynne Gotham



The Story of Our Logo

The following story explains why our group's symbol is a bundle of sticks tied with a yellow tulip signifying hope, wrapped in the gray Parkinson's disease awareness ribbon.



The old man was taking his daily walk when a young man came jogging up beside him. They recognized each other as members of the same church. The young man, Bill, stopped and joined the old man in his walk. Henry introduced himself and mentioned to the youth that he had not seen him in the church

recently. "Oh, no," Bill said, "I've decided I don't need church anymore. I can make it on my own!"

Without saying anything, the old gentleman stopped, picked up a stick, and broke it. Then he stopped and picked up two twigs and broke them. He proceeded to pick up a whole handful of sticks and sought to break them but could not. Where upon he handed the bundle of sticks to his young friend and asked him to break them. The youth tried and failed. But quickly the young man separated them and began to gleefully break them, one by one. Observing what the youth was doing, Henry quietly said: "Bill, we can all be broken if we stand alone but TOGETHER, we can survive the crushing onslaughts and challenges of life."

WE DO INDEED NEED ONE ANOTHER!



Save the Date: Saturday, May 31, 2025

Patti Mattis Memorial PD Awareness Walk

For quite some time the Cooney family has helped Parkinson Partners of NW PA with their Dave Cooney Parkinson Awareness Walk. It is held every other year to benefit Parkinson Partners.

Guess what? You won't have to wait two years between walks. Our family will be filling in the gaps with a walk in memory of Patti Mattis, who died in February, 2024 after battling Parkinson's Disease and Lewy Body Dementia for four years.

The walk will be held on Saturday, May 31, 2025 at Our Lady of Mercy Church, 837 Bartlett Road in Harborcreek. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and the walk follows at 10 a.m. All proceeds from the walk will be donated to Parkinson Partners of NWPA., a 501c.3 non-profit whose mission is to provide education, support, programs and resources for those with Parkinson's Disease and their families in the Erie region.

Additional details and registration forms will be available at a later date, Questions can be answered by calling (814) 459-1326.

The Patti Mattis family

Joe Mattis (husband), Kathy Smith (sister), Jeanette Fuller (sister)
Mary and Mike Mattis (children)



Where It All Began

Here is a picture from the very first Parkinson's event held in Erie in April 1992. Pictured here is Cleveland Clinic Neurologist Dr. Sweeney, Audree Parr and Hamot Neurologist Dr. DeMatteis. Audree was there from the beginning and we are so thankful for 33 years of support, advocacy, leadership and kindness. What a legacy she leaves behind!



Parkinson Partners of NW PA, Inc.

PO Box 10547
Erie, PA 16514

PHONE:
814-899-3030

E-MAIL:
info@ParkinsonPartners.org

DONATIONS:
Checks should be made payable to "Parkinson Partners" and mailed to the address above. Donations can also be made via PayPal on our website.

Parkinson Partners of NW PA, Inc.
PO Box 10547
Erie, PA 16514

Like us on Facebook!



We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.ParkinsonPartners.org

DISCLAIMER: The material presented in this issue is solely for the information of the reader. It is not intended for treatment purposes, but rather as a basis for discussion with the patient's physician.

Support Group Meeting Schedules

Remember: all events are also listed on our Events Calendar on our website including live links to Zoom meetings. **Make sure to sign up for our emails so you are alerted to any last-minute changes.**

ZOOM MEETINGS:

- **Parkinson Partners Support Group Meeting on Wednesdays, Feb. 12th and March 12th (2nd Wed. of the month) at 1:00 PM.** Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/93010770942?pwd=bzhTYTgxVEIXV0pONnYwbEt5TnZzZz09>
- **Caregiver Only Zoom Meeting on Thursdays, Feb. 27th and March 27th (4th Thurs. of the month) at 1:30 PM.** Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/96391675305>

IN-PERSON MEETINGS:

- **Eastside YMCA PD Support Group: Wed., March 5th and April 2nd (1st Wed. of the month) at 1:00 PM** at Eastside YMCA, 2101 Nagle Road. All are welcome!
- **Care Partner Only Lunch: Monday, February 24th and March 24th (4th Mon. of the month) at 11:30 AM** at Peach St. Wegman's Café
- **Evening PD Support Group: Tues., Feb. 11th and March 11th 2nd Tues. of the month) at 6:00 PM** at Springhill Retirement Community, 2323 Edinboro Road (Community Room). We will have a potluck so let us know what dish you'll bring and bring your own drink. All are welcome!