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Hello <<First Name>>, I hope you had a Happy Easter.

Welcome to the April edition of the Chair's monthly newsletter to the membership.

I hope everyone had a wonderful Easter and got plenty of chocolate eggs to eat. That said, life for People with Parkinson's is never easy – the latest trend in Easter Eggs is to incorporate more protein. There is even a 44g protein egg to give to those who could be characterised as a 'gym-bunny.' So what's that got to do with me I hear you say? Well, just a reminder that Levodopa-based drugs compete with the other proteins hence it is recommended that you pay attention to the timing between taking the medication and food. Details are on your medication data sheets and are generalised here: parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/your-magazine/spotlight/why-protein-important-people-parkinsons

How can life as a newsletter writer be so stressful that even wishing members have plenty of Easter Eggs has me walking on eggshells? I need to relax and chill and what better way than attending a Jazz concert or other Branch activity? So here are the major activities and things to note this month....

- **Spring into Jazz.** Trad's Army Dixieland Jazz Band will provide an afternoon of jazz entertainment at Onslow Village Hall, 4 Wilderness Rd, Onslow Village, Guildford GU2 7QR on Saturday 6 April from 12.30 pm to 3.00 pm. Attendees will be seated at tables however you are more than welcome to dance if you wish! Alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks and a selection of snacks will be for sale throughout. And there will be fabulous raffle prizes to be won. Bring family, neighbours and friends. Early bird ticket prices (up to and including 1 April) are £15 for adults and £7.50 for members and children under 16. Full price from 2-6 April and on the door: £20 per adult and £10 per member and child. For tickets please apply to Clare Price by email at cprice@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk
- **Health Qigong Ba Duan Jin** sessions are now available on Zoom. Ruby Ho, a retired Occupational Therapist and qualified Health Qigong (HQG) Ba Duan Jin (BDJ) Instructor is offering free weekly Zoom sessions on Qigong Ba Duan Jin for branch members. BDJ is a Traditional Chinese exercise with a long written history and is well known for its gentle, slow movements and associated health benefits. The weekly sessions will be run in English on Wednesdays from 9:00 am to 10:15 am and the course starts **3 April 2024**. If you would like to sign up for the classes please contact Ruby at hqgruby@hotmail.co.uk. Your partner or carer is welcome to do the class alongside you.
- In May 2024 **Hazel Davies** will be trekking for 5 days, covering the first 47 miles of the Tamara Coast to Coast Way, in aid of both our Branch and Parkinson's UK (50:50). Hazel's parents are members of the Branch and she sees this an opportunity to give something back. Hazel will be starting in Plymouth and finishing in Lifton. Next year she will complete the full length of the route (a total of 87 miles), also in aid of Parkinson's UK and ourselves. The link to her Just Giving Fundraising page is below. Please share with all you know to help Hazel achieve her fundraising target.

justgiving.com/page/hazel-davies-1705346858628

'Movers & Shakers' a podcast featuring Rory Cellan-Jones, Gillian Lacey-Solymar, Mark Mardell, Paul Mayhew-Archer, Nick Mostyn and Jeremy Paxman. They have come up with a Parky Charter - a list of things all Parkies should have a right to expect from a functioning health service and a caring care system. They now have the chance to take the Charter to 10 Downing Street on World Parkinson's Day (April 11). Parkinson's UK, Cure Parkinson's and Spotlight Young Onset PD, support the principles of the Charter and are promoting it wherever they can.

Please, if you can, sign up your support here
campaign.parkinsons.org.uk/page/145665/petition

- You may remember that the **Chair's Challenge** for March was to look for interesting signs. I've had a number sent to me and I've also noticed that if I pay attention to the world around me, I see things I would previously have missed. One example is in the collage below taken in the toilet of a Southwest train journey. I particularly like this as it started with what seems to be a serious sign and which on further inspections becomes increasingly strange. Hopefully, some of you will take up my challenge for April, which this month, is **something related to Spring**. My logic is that we are surrounded by so much negative news around the world and Spring is such a wonderful time; I hope to receive photos of freshly growing plants or wonderful spring weather or anything else that makes your heart skip a beat.



On a personal note, I missed March's Newly Diagnosed Social Gathering in favour of watching 'Peter Pan goes wrong' at Woking Theatre. "The much-loved members of The Cornley Drama Society once again battled against technical hitches, flying mishaps and cast disputes on their way to Neverland with hilarious and disastrous results. "

Attending the theatre reminds me just how talented actors can be. This cast was exceptional and I'd thoroughly recommend it. I haven't laughed so loud and so frequently for years and I blasted out the set pantomime phrases like "he's behind you..." at my full volume which for others might be normal speech...

That brings me to one of my bigger challenges; how much do I write about myself in these Newsletters? On one hand, many members tell me that they find them entertaining. On the other, are people simply being kind as nobody likes someone who only talks about themselves? It seems this is 'Conversational self-focus' and refers to individuals consistently turning conversations to focus on themselves. Conversational self-focus appears egotistical and insensitive, but people who self-focus are often depressed.

I don't consider myself depressed but I like the idea of being egotistical and insensitive. That sounds like fun. Just to be on the safe side I thought I would check out who could be considered the top 5 egotistical and insensitive people. Given AI has allegedly read everything ever written and fully considered it then that is where the answer would lie. So I asked it and it said...

"As an AI developed by OpenAI, I must emphasize the importance of being respectful and cautious when discussing individuals, especially in terms of sensitive characteristics like egoism or insensitivity. Labelling individuals in such a manner can be subjective and potentially harmful. Instead of focusing on specific individuals, I can discuss types of behaviour that might be considered egotistical or insensitive. However, it's crucial to remember that people are complex and multifaceted, and it's not fair or accurate to reduce them to simple labels. It's more constructive to address specific behaviours and their impacts rather than categorizing entire individuals as egotistical or insensitive. If you have a particular context or situation in mind, I can provide guidance on how to navigate it or discuss relevant behaviours."

We are building a relationship with the MS Society '**Samson Centre**' in Guildford, and they are generously now allowing our members to receive Oxygen Therapy at the centre (more details in the May Park). Like ourselves they are always needing to raise funds, and they have a Quiz Evening at the Centre on Saturday 27 April, starting at 6.00pm. Entry price is £15 and includes a food platter, plus there is a bar. They are looking for teams of 4 or 8 to join them. Are our Parky brains better than their MS brains? We'll only know if some of you take part. More details are on their website at samsoncentre.org.uk/event/quiz-night-please-join-us-to-support-the-samson-centre/

Finally, as it was April Fool's Day is the following True or made up?

While I cannot take part in this Team Sport due to my gender, I am coincidentally linked to it by two of my exercise instructors. Specifically, I attend weekly Branch subsidised Exercise classes which are supported by Kate who used to be a coach for this sport. I additionally attend classes at my local sports centre run by Sammie who used to be GB World Champs standard and have the role of "The Toilet" in the team.

Is it true? is it madness? if true what sport do I refer to???

Till next month,

David



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