

**Welcome:** Wayne welcomed everyone with his usual warm welcome. Then to make things go a little more smoothly, we did a brief review with some housekeeping tips for using Zoom. It has been suggested that we have some instruction in using this software as a separate session or some webinar sessions. We will look into doing this in the near future for those who are interested.

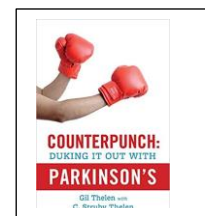
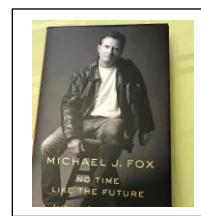
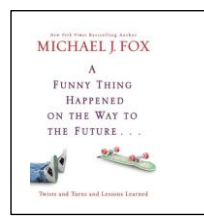
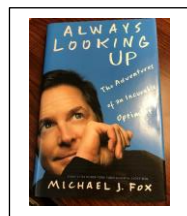
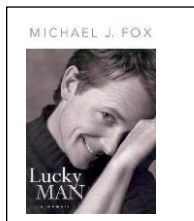
Parkinson's Support Group of Sudbury

A few Housekeeping items for ZOOM meetings



Wayne had an especially warm welcome for our guests Sandie Jones (Toronto), and Anne (Sault Ste. Marie) and Yvonne (Brockville).

We reminded people of the vast amount of information available in our “Parkie Office” downstairs. Feel free to call us and ask for information on anything. Bob has donated a copy of Michael J. Fox’s latest book “No Time Like the Future” that is available to lend around the group. We also have “Always Looking Up” which you can borrow. Does anyone have a copy of “Lucky Man”? or “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Future”? It would be nice if we could make these available for the group.



Besides the Michael J. Fox books that you might find interesting, we heard the authors of this one speak at the Burlington Support Group on Monday and it looks to be an excellent read. Anne said she really enjoyed their presentation and got a lot out of their talk. The promo for this book reads,

“COUNTERPUNCH – Duking it Out with Parkinson’s

By Gil & Struby Thelen

“A Hall of Fame Newspaper editor describes his turbulent journey of discovery with Parkinson's. Gil Thelen confronts this malady with infinite faces and—using keen reporting and engaging prose—offers inspirational and practical ways to foil the beastly tenant in his brain.

“Armed with Cornell medical training, a background of health and medical writing, and activism in national and local Parkinson's communities, Gil tackles his condition head-on.

“In two chapters, his wife Struby courageously reveals the devastating impact Parkinson's and its drugs have had on their marriage. From both Parkie and care partner perspectives, Gil and Struby bare PD stumbling blocks and share workarounds to counterpunch this condition by taking aggressive action to stay upright, moving, productive, and to NOT be a victim.

“The perfect read for the newly diagnosed, looking for insights into Parkinson's, as well as anyone looking for guidance, either personally or professionally to help others, in fighting back against this baffling condition. An outstanding collection of recommended resources and suggestions for Parkies to get informed, get organized and get MOVING. All proceeds from the book go to the Me-Over-PD 501(c)(3) Foundation, dedicated to creating live, local databases of crucial Parkinson's resources in communities across the United States.”

You can order through Amazon.ca

## Support Group News

Still in Hospital: Carol Croteau (Larry's widow), Frank Morassutti

Passed away: **Henriette Belanger**, 84, on Feb. 13, 2021, <https://www.sudbury.com/obituaries/belanger-henriette-3428005>

After the meeting we learned that **Peter Higham** (a past-president of our group) passed away unexpectedly on Feb. 14, 2021. Lucille very much appreciated the flowers sent to her by the group. Condolences may be posted at Sudbury.com. <https://www.sudbury.com/obituaries/higham-peter-3435918>

**Upcoming Events** are still all virtual (webinar or zoom meetings), and any that have already occurred can be accessed online through the archives of the various organizations. It is a wonderful way to keep abreast of the current information and treatment practices for people with Parkinson's, at your own pace and when it is convenient for you.

Thursday, Feb. 18, 2021, 12 – 1 pm, “New to Parkinson’s? Steps to Take Today” presented by the Michael J. Fox Foundation. [www.michaeljfox.org](http://www.michaeljfox.org)

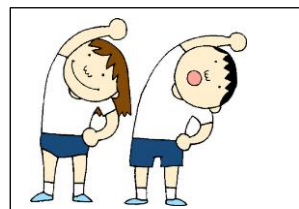
Saturday, Feb. 20, 2021, part of the Victory Summit Series for the Newly Diagnosed, comes to us from the Davis Phinney Foundation (Look under the “Events” tab). [www.dpf.org](http://www.dpf.org)

Check out our own Parkinson Canada website and look for specific information or topics. Scroll down to the No Matter What Video that we did manage to air. [www.parkinson.ca](http://www.parkinson.ca). Parkinson Canada have a YouTube channel where you can find past webinars and other resources.

Parkinson Canada also have a new periodic newsletter “What’s Happening February 2021”. How else would we know about the east Coast Kitchen Party – Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup>? (More information to come later.) Or the Tech Support that is available for Zoom meetings (a video that walks you through how to join a Zoom meeting and how to use Zoom)? Or the Connected Canadians, that promotes digital literacy skills amongst older adults with free technology training and support? [click here](#)

**Tips for Bits** – although I must say, virtual Tim-Bits just don’t cut it, here’s a tip anyway – make humour your friend, if you look for it you’ll find it! Life with Parkinson's is much more bearable if you can laugh at life and laugh at yourself and just laugh. Let me introduce you to my favourite humourist as she shows you how to find humour all around you. Click [Jeanne Robertson](#) for the story we watched of sending her husband for groceries. Once you get there, be careful, you’ll be hooked! There are lots of youtube videos of her stories and they are all good!

**Exercise Break** – led by Lillian, done by everyone!



**Welcome Sandie Jones!** For years, Sandie was known as Parkinson Canada's best kept secret. She was our favourite nurse, always full of wisdom and knowledge imparted with gentleness and kindness. It was a pleasure to hear her speak. We were privileged to attend a virtual retirement party for Sandie in December, where I told her my story:

When I was diagnosed in 2001, Peggy Gray in Ottawa was my one-time mentor, an hour with her and I was done. For a few years I stumbled along on my own with what I read in textbooks.

And then I discovered Parkinson Canada and along came Sandie Jones into my life.

When I was ready to learn about living well with Parkinson's, there was Sandie,

Whenever I had a question, there was Sandie,

When I was preparing talks for the community, there was Sandie,

When I needed encouragement, even if I didn't know it, there was Sandie.

Now she has retired and the question we ask is, "Where is Sandie?"

We don't begrudge her this time of less pressure and no deadlines, but we didn't want Sandie to leave without saying "thank you!" for always being there when we needed her most.

Best Wishes for a long and happy retirement!

We asked Sandie to reflect a little on her time with Parkinson Canada, beginning with the story of how she actually got the job there in the first place. As she told the story, at one point she had asked Allan if he thought it was suitable for her. He asked what the requirements were and she replied, "they want a nurse who likes to talk." His response? "I think you may be overqualified!"

Sandie's ability to talk has been a blessing to many of us with Parkinson's who have benefitted from her wisdom and candour. All the years of talking, giving private counsel in one-on-one situations or sharing general advice and knowledge at seminars and conferences have brought many of us through difficult times. It has been wonderful to know there was someone to whom we could refer people who had questions and needed a degree of knowledge far deeper than what we could offer.

Covid-19 has been a blessing in disguise, in that it gave Sandie a chance to "practice" retirement before actually making that decision. She loved her job and what she did so much she was not in a hurry to retire. But now that the decision has been made, the die cast, and the papers signed, she is content. Not that she will be doing nothing. Once Covid frees us up from these lockdown restrictions, she will be doing some volunteer work. Until then, she is happy just to chat with old friends and new. Zoom has a plus side – no mask required – and you don't have to fear misreading facial expressions. You will be able to see the care and concern which she brings to every conversation.

THANK YOU SANDIE, for all you have done for people with Parkinson's, and for inspiring us to do more to help one another on the journey. We're looking forward to your next visit, whenever that will be!

### **Discussion:**

#### **What you see may not be what you get:**

What you may see in others or when you read stories of others with Parkinson's, keep in mind that what they may have experienced is not necessarily what you will experience. We can take a lot of comfort and

encouragement from learning that others are coping well and finding the silver linings in their experience, without jumping to the conclusion that we can deal with life the same way.

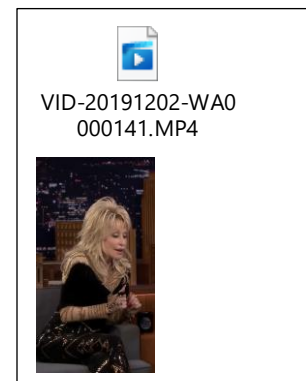
In some ways, Parkinson's is a "designer" disease, it varies from person to person with a few similarities that are pretty common. We talked about how two out of three of the cardinal symptoms of Parkinson's are necessary for diagnosis, Tremor, Slowness of Movement, Rigidity. But those are only motor symptoms. Just some of the motor symptoms. Then there is the long list of non-motor symptoms from which our body seems to "take it's pick". It is truly a case of "When you meet one person with Parkinson's, you've met one person with Parkinson's."

- As Sandie talked and interacted with various attendees, the meeting drew to a close. We were reminded of **the Parkinson Mobility Program** exercise class through the Parkside Centre Without Walls. Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays from 1 – 2 pm. Register with [peter.marshall@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:peter.marshall@greatersudbury.ca) and you will receive a link to the Zoom class.
- If anyone is in need of a **walker**, Kathy Hoag has one that is specifically designed for people with Parkinson's. One that won't run away on you, is easy to manipulate and maneuver. Call Kathy to discuss: 705-858-2705.
- Louise knows of someone **in need of a single bed**. Call her if you know of anyone selling one or looking for a new home for one. 705-522-2864
- Refurbished **Laptops and tablets** are available to those in need through a joint program with the Parkside centre and NISA. If you know anyone who can't afford one and would benefit from having one this may be for them! Let me know and I will put them in touch with the people offering the program.
- Our next Support Group Meeting will be Wed., March 17, 2021, from 2 – 3:30 pm via Zoom. Louise and Richard will be hosting.



The meeting concluded with a hearty laugh and this video from Dolly Parton:

Thanks to Claire for sending this one! Maybe next month someone else can send a joke or two to make us laugh.



Parkinson's is not the nicest thing to bring people together,  
but it does seem to bring together nice people!