

InTouch Newsletter

October 2022

Pump for Parkinson's raises \$4,000 for nurse

This year's Pump for Parkinson's fundraiser by the Bailey Centre Liberty Service Station and its co-contributors raised \$4,000 for the Parkinson's Coffs Harbour Nurses Fund.

As it has done over the past several years, the Bailey Centre Liberty Service Station pledged to contribute 10 cents per every litre of fuel sold to support the Fund.

Local delivery firm PK Express Transport also committed to contribute an additional 5 cents per litre sold.

This year for the first time, a third donor joined this fundraising initiative. CHESS Connect is a not-for-profit human service organisation that provides a range of specialist Employment, NDIS and Workplace Wellbeing supports. CHESS Connect donated \$300 to the fundraiser.

Service station customers who 'Pumped for Parkinson's' helped to raise funds to maintain the services of a Parkinson's Specialist Nurse based in the Mid North Coast Local Health District in Coffs Harbour.

This nursing position is co-funded by the Local Health District and Parkinson's NSW. Fundraising goes towards the Parkinson's NSW portion of the funding for this important role.

The annual fundraiser is an initiative of the Coffs Harbour Parkinson's Support Groups and the Bailey Centre Liberty Service Station.

Sydney art exhibition to benefit Parkinson's NSW

When Michael Kiely was told he had stage four cancer and three months to live, he'd already been living with Parkinson's Disease for over 20 years. Facing his mortality, Michael knew he had to paint.

Ever the fighter, Michael has overcome two life-threatening cancer diagnoses and has now produced approximately 600 abstract paintings. His devoted daughter, Jessica Kiely, is producing a curation of those pieces on behalf of her father to honour his dying wish of having his art shown in an exhibition.

This exhibition, MY KIDS COULD DO THAT, marks the very first time Michael's art is available to be viewed and purchased by the public.

The ticketed public event on Sunday, 30 October will showcase 48 of his artworks with a portion of the profits donated to Parkinson's NSW. It will be held at the Museum of Contemporary Art at Circular Quay in Sydney.

"Do yourself and an old man a favour, buy my art before I die. I want to see these pieces going home with people. And just think, as soon as I cark it, they all become limited edition," he says.

50 percent of every ticket sold is donated directly to Parkinsons NSW, so your purchase helps to improve the lives of people affected by Parkinson's disease.

Learn more and buy tickets online [here](#).

Meet The Blacktown Support Group

The Blacktown Support Group in Sydney was formed just over a year ago, in August 2021.

"It wasn't ideal timing because of the COVID restrictions during that time, but we persevered and made it work through a combination of face-to-face meetings when possible and an informative Facebook page," said Claire Rich. She is joint leader of the Group with her husband Ian who is living with Parkinson's.

Blacktown Support Group meets once a month at the Blacktown RSL which generously provides a meeting room free of charge for the gatherings.

"We have about 10 regular meeting attendees," said Claire. "At this point, we are a very much evidence- and information-based Group because most of our participants are within the first five years of their Parkinson's journeys – so they are in search of answers to the many questions which arise as their condition progresses."

Caregivers are also very much part of the Group. They join regular Group meetings and also occasionally take time out for themselves – exercising and socialising together.

"Being a relatively new Support Group, we are still building our profile in the local community. However we are taking every opportunity to reach out and are currently engaging with a representative of the City Council, which is promising.

"We are also very grateful for the support of Mobi Healthcare – a polyclinic which offers physiotherapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy. Most of our participants access the services of Mobi and they are great for us," said Claire.

Claire says the greatest challenge facing the Blacktown Support Group is boosting active participation in its meetings.

“We have a lot of people who want to listen and learn,” she said. “Now we are encouraging everyone to take the next step by participating and sharing their own experiences during our meetings.”

Kiama Walk in the Park raises more than \$10,000

The annual Walk in the Park fundraiser by Kiama Parkinson’s Support Group this year raised \$10,875 from sponsorships of walkers, in addition to income from merchandise and raffle sales.

The Walk took place at Black Beach near the centre of Kiama township on 28 August.

In addition to its fundraising success, the event was notable for its organisation, delegation of tasks among Group participants and close coordination on fundraising and administration requirements with Parkinson’s NSW.

16 to 22 October is Carers Week!

This week from 16 to 22 October is Carers Week – the perfect time for a reminder of the rich resources offered by the Carers NSW organisation.

Carers NSW is the peak non-government organisation for carers in NSW, part of the National Carer Network and a member of Carers Australia. Carers NSW works with the other state and territory Carer Organisations. Its focus is on improving the lives of carers.

Carers NSW works with all carers regardless of their age, location, life stage or circumstances. This includes those caring for individuals with support needs relating to ageing, disability, health, and mental illness.

For carer information and support, phone Carers NSW on 02 9280 4744 (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday).

For Carer Gateway services including carer support planning, counselling, peer support, tailored support packages and respite services, including emergency respite, call Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm) or visit www.carergateway.gov.au

Email: contact@carersnsw.org.au

The Carers NSW web site at <https://www.carersnsw.org.au/> offers a huge variety of resources including:

- News and Upcoming Events
- Services and Support

Parkinson’s NSW Limited **ABN** 93 023 603 545 **ACN** 622 455 985
PO Box 71 North Ryde BC NSW 1670

P 1800 644 189 **E** pnswh@parkinsonsnsw.org.au **W** www.parkinsonsnsw.org.au

- Resources for Carers
 - Advice for Carers
 - Support for Young Carers
 - First person Carer stories
 - Education and Training – including a guide to navigating My Aged Care
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Martin Pryor and the tales of his dog, Bungee

Writing a children's book about a dog named Bungee – in fact, a series of books about this dog – was never on Martin Pryor's to-do list.

"It was an accident," laughs Martin, 68, who is living with Parkinson's and has so far released *Bungee, A Doggy Tale*, and *Bungee's Buddies*.

"I was just sitting down taking a rest from writing music and in walked our dog. Instead of going on with the song, I wrote a few lines of poetry about him. It became a book and then a second, and a third, and now there are eight in the series I've written, with the first two released.

"Bungee is our dog, and he was a rescue dog. The books follow his life and adventures and are written to make reading enjoyable for primary school children. Once the publishing costs are covered a percentage of the profits will go to Parkinson's NSW. It's the least I can do to thank them for all they do for people living with Parkinson's."

Martin, who lives with his wife in North Balgowlah, released a CD in 2017 called *Hot Sand*, which raised \$1500 for Parkinson's NSW. He had played guitar in bands as a young man but had a variety of careers until his retirement in 2016.

"Originally I was an art teacher," Martin explains. "And then for many years I was a professional sailor, sailing around the world. Then I was a history teacher for 20 years and from 2011 I transferred from history to directing a sailing program at the school where I had taught."

By 2013, Martin was also a keen cyclist, very fit and slim, when he fell down some stairs.

"It took me ten weeks to recuperate," he recalls. "I had problems with my left knee and other things. I could ride again, but it just didn't feel right. I couldn't get the power I used to have. In 2016 when I had issues with my back, I went to see a physiotherapist I'd known a long time.

"She asked me to put my arms across my chest and I noticed my wrist shake and wondered what that was about. I had no idea, but I could see the look on her face. She asked me to see a neurologist. When I was diagnosed with Parkinson's, I said thank heavens for that. It was a relief because I thought it was something much worse."

Following his diagnosis, Martin retired, and it was when he was tidying his study at home that he found his old guitar.

“The words to Parkinson’s Blues just came into my head,” he says. “I’d been in bands from rock to jazz, in choirs, but I hadn’t touched a guitar for 37 years. Now I’ve done three albums, with the fourth to come.”

Since writing his first children’s book two years ago, Martin and his family have been working on promoting the books.

“It was fun to write the books and as a teacher I have a good understanding of what helps children to read,” says Martin. “I also have lifelong friends who are primary school teachers. I knew what I wanted for the illustrations and supplied the artist with lots of photos of the dogs I was writing about as well as a description of how I wanted them used. I’m very happy with the illustrations.

“We plan to sell books at book fairs and the Manly markets; my son’s girlfriend promotes them on an Instagram account, and I do school visits and email broadcasts.

Just recently I’ve signed with a book outlet in Britain called Featherbed Tales (<https://featherbedtales.com/>). My book is their first outside author on their website.

This site allows people to record themselves reading the books there so that their child or grandchild can log in and hear the book being read to them as they follow the pages, which is great for families who can’t see each other easily.”

If you’d like to buy copies of Martin’s books, you can purchase them on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Xlibris and Booktopia. Martin also has a number of personally signed books available through Thebungeebooks@gmail.com

The benefits of exercising with your pet

We all know exercise is what you need if you have Parkinson’s. However, with Parkinson’s you also often have trouble mustering the motivation to exercise at all.

If you have a pet, not only you miss out, but your pet also often misses out on quality time with and their exercise. Let’s solve the problem by exercising with and for each other.

If you’re thinking about going for a run or walk, take your pet with you because both of you will benefit. Regular workouts will help you and your pet maintain a healthy weight.

Exercise will also help prevent other weight-related conditions, such as diabetes and high blood pressure for both of you. Other benefits for you both are reducing the chances of stiff joints, arthritis, or hip dysplasia. And of course, exercise improves the mental health of both humans and animals.

You know how exercise can just put you in a good mood? It does the same for animals. It's been shown that aerobic exercise can increase serotonin production in not only your brain but your dog's brain as well. This helps them feel more relaxed and less aggressive.

One of the best reasons to exercise with your pets is that you get a workout buddy! Having a workout buddy can help keep you motivated even on days you'd rather stay in bed.

Once you get in the habit of exercising with your dog, he or she is going to be waiting excitedly by the door – possibly with leash ready. Your dog will help push you out for a walk or run whether you want to or not. You won't get a more dedicated workout buddy!

One study discovered that dog owners were 34 percent more likely to get at least 150 minutes of exercise per week than those without a dog.

There are loads of options to vary your pet-buddy workout. You could go kayaking, paddleboarding, Nordic walking, walking on the beach, by a lake, or in the park. Take a ball or Frisbee so that you can both play fetch to break up your workout.

Make sure to consider both you and your pet's health and fitness ability. Can your dog keep up with you, or can you keep up with your dog?

Keep both of you safe and drink lots of water, wear sunscreen and both of you take a break when needed. Dogs can dehydrate and overheat just the same as we can. Look out for excessive panting or drooling.

Try and go early in the morning in summer before it gets too hot. This will also stop your dog's feet from burning from hot pavement.

If you can't get out of the house to get in your workout, try a home workout. There are even yoga classes for you and your dog.

Sit ups at home are great for whatever pet you have. A co-operative cat or dog can be held and used as added weight or you can throw a treat each time you raise your head and shoulders and hopefully your pet will return to you for another.

Squats or lunges are great if your pet is obliging. Hold them in your arms and bend your knees up and down. Repeat as many times as your pet allows.

Doing a push-up is very similar to the body language of animals when they want to play. Front paws lower than their rear and a great tail wag. Your push-up can be the same. Or train them to sit on your back to add a challenge to your push-ups

Make sure you end with stretches; your pet will be right there with you.

Ensure you and your pet get a check-up from the vet and GP to say you're both good to go.

Do yourself and your best friend a favour and exercise together!

References

<https://vetmed.tamu.edu/news/pet-talk/exercising-with-your-pet/>

<https://www.petproblemsolved.com.au/exercise-with-your-pet/>

<https://fitformulawellness.com/>

<https://www.truecareveterinaryhospital.com/blog/the-dos-and-donts-of-exercising-with-your-pet/>

Fashion parade raises over \$1,900 for Temora Parkinson's Support Group

Temora hairdressing salon SASS Hair Dezin harnessed the talents of multiple local businesses and individuals to create the Decade of SASS runway fashion show in September.

With the support of the local community, the SASS team managed to raise \$1,575 to donate to Coral Moncrieff of Temora Support Group. An additional \$370 came from three generous individual donors including the Miller family and two members of the Stimson family.

Reminder: Next *Let's Talk Parkinson's* Zoom session

Let's Talk Parkinson's with Parkinson's Specialist Nurse Rachael MacKinnon

Date: Thursday 27 October 2022

Time: 10:30am

Topic: Taking care of your wellbeing during the end-of-year busy season

Advice will include:

- Making a plan to help reduce stress
- Managing stress and anxiety – especially when people haven't seen you for some time and may comment on your Parkinson's progression
- Planning for sufficient supplies of your essential medication
- Taking medication according to the time zone where you are – not your home time
- Staying hydrated
- Conserving your energy
- Exercising care when eating
- Keeping up an exercise routine

Go to this web page to register for the Zoom or view the recording: [Online meetings for support groups | Parkinsons NSW](#)

Parkinson's NSW Limited **ABN** 93 023 603 545 **ACN** 622 455 985

PO Box 71 North Ryde BC NSW 1670

P 1800 644 189 **E** pnsw@parkinsonsnsw.org.au **W** www.parkinsonsnsw.org.au