

Milestones™

News and Possibilities for Seniors

February 2012 ■ Free

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Virginia Dillon and William Goldberg 'Dance for PD' ('People with Parkinson's Disease') at CHI Movement Arts Center in South Philadelphia.

For people with Parkinson's Disease, dancing a 'liberating' experience

By Ann L. Rappoport

People with Parkinson's Disease (PD) may have trouble moving, but some of them sure can dance!

"Dance for PD" started a decade ago in New York City and has spread across the country. Weekly classes are now available at three sites in this region.

"The music wakens parts of my body that are otherwise not responsive," said Susan Jaffe, 68, a Center City resident who has had PD for more than 10 years.

"It's liberating. It frees participants to be present in body and in mind," said Keila Cordova, a dancer-choreog-

rapher who initiated 954 Dance Movement Collaborative, a Northern Liberties dance studio, and was instrumental in involving Penn Medicine and The Parkinson Council of Philadelphia in the PD venture.

Tango to Bollywood

"Dance for PD utilizes the power of music to overcome some of the movement difficulties that are a result of Parkinson's," explained Julie Stutzbach, community outreach coordinator in the University of Pennsylvania Health System's Neurology Department. The dance sessions help bring participants out,

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Romances blossom in senior centers and retirement communities

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

Some Philadelphians are finding love in senior centers and retirement communities.

"Love at any age is nurturing," says psychotherapist Claudia Apfelbaum. "It can improve your mental, emotional and physical health."

Ginny Burroughs agrees.

"Had I been 10 years younger, I would have jumped over the dining table to reach Hal," says Burroughs, 91, who lives at Twining Village, a Bucks County retirement community. Instead, she rushed to meet and introduce herself to Hal Bernhardt.

"I knew he was the one," says Burroughs, who had been happily married to her husband, Bob, for 40 years. Bernhardt, former CEO of his company, has both great-grandparents, "talents in golf, and dance at the Twining Village Club," Burroughs says. "We've been married. Too much paperwork."

Ginny Burroughs and Hal Bernhardt meet each other at Twining Village.

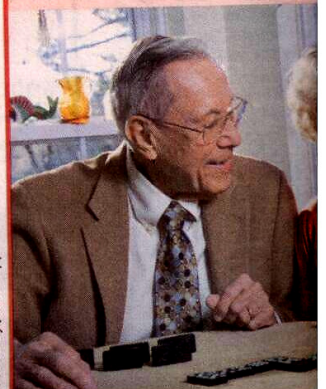


Photo by Jim Greipp

Milestones readers were invited to tell their love stories, and the response bears out what Plato said centuries ago: "At the touch of love, everyone becomes a poet." Three were chosen for this issue. They are on pages 10-11

More can be found online,

dance

• continued from cover

physically and emotionally," Stutzbach said.

Live music ranges from tango to "West Side Story," from Bollywood to Virginia reel. "The contrast makes it fun," according to Jaffe. "There's something for everyone. You hear the different rhythms and you want to adapt to them."

Another benefit, noted Stutzbach, is that participants find Dance for PD classes a "safe place, where they don't have to explain themselves and their symptoms."

Goal: Keep husband moving

Through a gift to The Parkinson Council, Karen Jacobson has funded much of the pilot program that launched Dance for PD classes in Philadelphia. The weekly classes, she says, create a "caring, non-judgmental community that releases participants to allow themselves to try" moving in ways they wouldn't contemplate in their regular lives.

Jacobson, 64, is a somatic therapist working in "core energetics;" that is, she helps people who have personal life problems connect to their bodies and manage their emotions. She married Barry Milberg in 2008, just after he was diagnosed with Parkinson's. Milberg, a pension administrator, chairs The

Parkinson Council's charity golf tournament.

Jacobson said she wants to keep him moving.

"The ability to move is something that most individuals without PD take for granted," said Wendy R. Lewis, executive director of The Parkinson Council of Philadelphia.

Lewis described a Dance for PD class as "fun, inspiring and pretty emotional." She said she was particularly moved by a participant who commented that the class gave her "the opportunity to feel." When she's at the dance class, the participant no longer believes she's "such a klutz."

Toward the end of one class, the group performed a reel in which the dancers formed two lines, facing each other. During the reel, dancers at one end of each line peel off in turns to travel the length of the "corridor" formed by the two lines. During the second round of the dance, Stutzbach recalls, a participant in a wheelchair stood — and slowly traversed the column, flanked by her husband and friends.

"There wasn't a dry eye in the room," said Stutzbach.

"I feel energized. I'm surprised at what I can do," echoed Jaffe. "If I could go two times a week, I would."

Classes are held at:
 • 954 Dance Movement Collective, 954 N. 8th St., Phila., Pa. 19123; 215-627-1157 or 954dmc@gmail.com

• CHI Movement Arts Center, home of Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers, 1316 S. 9th St., Phila., Pa. 19147; 267-687-3739 or kyldphilly@gmail.com.

• Rock School West, 1510 Paoli Pike, West Chester, Pa. 19380; 610-431-4321 or rockwestinfo@therockschool.net

For information about the fall schedule:

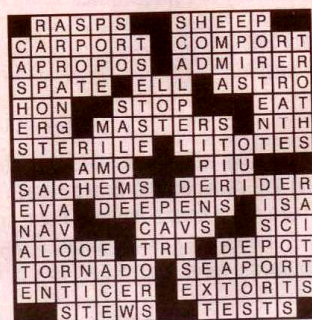
• Wendy Lewis: 610-668-4292; wlewis@theparkinsoncouncil.org;
 • Julie Stutzbach: 215-829-7651; julie.stutzbach@uphs.upenn.edu



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Solutions to the Milestones Crossword puzzle

(see page 14)



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