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# Annual Report

October 1, 2021-September 30, 2022



# From the President

This last year has proven to be a very productive growth year for the Peripheral Neuropathy Support Network. We have seen the program evolve in a somewhat different way than originally envisioned, but have successfully offered the outreach and support projected in our Mission Statement. The needs and interests of both individuals and local group leaders have been considered and met.

## PNSN Growth

Due to the Covid pandemic, the PNSN has become a virtual peer support group, reaching both individual members and local groups via Zoom. This has turned out to be an advantage for many of our members with mobility issues and concerns over potential in-person Covid exposure. We have been able to continue to provide the opportunity for sharing information, identifying resources, answering questions, and giving emotional support that is consistently praised by our members.

At the same time, we have facilitated the continuation and development of two new local chapters via Zoom. We have also re-



*Patricia Gualtieri, President*

initiated communication with another group who may, with our support, try an in-person PN group meeting at their facility. We continue to develop resources, presented on our YouTube channel, that others may use as a focus for their meetings.

## Management Consultancy

To further enhance existing and potential resources, we participated in a Project Management consultancy that resulted in a trove of new ideas to pursue in 2023, including an expanded Social Media presence. We are considering additional funding options, including a favorably received offer by a member to initiate a Matching Campaign. We may purchase additional equipment and software to augment our website design and features.

## The Future

We look forward to continuing the development of the Peripheral Neuropathy Support Network in 2022-23. We anticipate continued progress for our flagship DC/VA PN Support Group chapter. We also anticipate further development of the Bethesda/Chevy Chase chapter and that of the local group in Pittsburgh. We are providing continued outreach to two potential new groups, one in Herndon, Va. and the other in Hartford, Ct.

We will be reaching out to the Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy, the Western

## 2021-22 Executive Officers

*President*  
Patricia Gualtieri

*Vice President*  
David Bush

*Scribe*  
Rodney Smith

*Treasurer*  
Rebecca Hotop

*Communications Officer*  
W. Judson Vaughn

*IT Analyst, Researcher*  
Michael Foxworth

*For leadership bios:*

<https://dcpnssupport.org/about-pn/about-pn-2/current-leadership/>

### Mission Statement

*To help PN patients and their caregivers, by providing tools, support, and content to a network of local support groups.*

### Vision Statement

*Using technology tools and platforms, provide the support, education, and content volunteers need to start and sustain a growing number of community groups for PN patients and their caregivers.*

Neuropathy Association and other Neuropathy and related groups, such as the Hearing Loss Association and the American Diabetes Association, to explore ways to mutually enhance our efforts in the support of those suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy.

As President, I gratefully acknowledge the support and contributions of our Executive Team, volunteers, donors, and advisors who have enabled us to continue our work on behalf of patients with Peripheral Neuropathy and their caregivers.

**Patricia Gualtieri, *President***



# 2021-22 Accomplishments

## Organization Development

PNSN formalized its organizational and management structure.

PNSN:

- Wrote and approved a mission statement, vision statement, and charter.
- Approved officers and established committees.
- Filed and received 501(c)(3) non-profit status and tax-exempt number giving the organization legitimacy, allowing PNSN to avoid paying taxes, and making the organization more attractive to donors and potential grantors.
- Instituted Weekly Executive Planning Meetings.
- Adopted “Robert’s Rules of Order” for Executive Team meetings.
- Voted to become a virtual network of peer support groups.



## Consultancies and Leadership Training

PNSN sought no-cost training for leadership in order to improve the organization's effectiveness and efficiency.

PNSN leadership:

- Participated in a Project Management Day of Service in which professionals consulted with PNSN leadership on ways to improve the organization and support service delivery.
- Participated in Continuous Value Delivery consultancy with Gary Vaughan, to aid in more effective content distribution through social media and the website.



## Membership Growth and Service Delivery

In its third year of the PNSN network organization, PNSN continued to grow its outreach and membership.

PNSN:

- Grew the membership by 8.9%.
- Added two new groups to the PNSNetwork, Bethesda/Chevy Chase and Pittsburgh, joining with the existing DC/VA group.
- Investigated relationships with groups in Florida, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Richmond and Floris, Virginia.
- Improved functioning of, and audience participation at, monthly meeting by establishing a standard format of norms, time frames, and breaks.
- Incorporated Member Panels as an alternative to an expert meeting presenter for select monthly meetings.
- Instituted enhanced resources section of the website.
- Inaugurated cross country eBike tour by Greg Maassen for raising PN awareness and funds.
- Held hybrid winter holiday party during Covid.
- Voted to provide technical support to local chapters and small member groups who choose to meet in person while attending PNSN Zoom meetings



### Financial

Checking account was opened 11/3/2020 with a deposit of \$1,347.41

Calendar year 2021 saw 12 deposits from member donations of \$1,294.60. Expenditures totaled \$761.73 for website development, mailings, database maintenance, and operational costs.

Calendar year 2022 to date has 10 member donations for a total of \$1,591.10. So far expenditures have totaled \$497.59 for operational costs.

## Summary of 2021-22 PNSN Speakers and Events

- OCTOBER** Orthotist Joe Terpenning spoke on neuropathic foot care and preserving mobility and balance
- NOVEMBER** Dr. Brett McCray, of Hopkins Medical Center, spoke on Hereditary Neuropathy
- DECEMBER** Holiday party
- JANUARY** Open discussion
- FEBRUARY** David Clarke spoke about the mind/body connection and the role of the brain in managing chronic pain.
- MARCH** Chuck Barnhardt and his wife presented a talk, supplemented with slides, of their trips to US National Parks and the importance and challenges of accessibility in making travel plans.
- APRIL** Open Discussion.
- MAY** Cannabis Panel. Members discussed their experiences, positive and negative, with the use of medical marijuana and cannabis in various forms.
- JUNE** Heidi Garvis and Delores Athey-Clearfield presented on choices for senior living, including senior communities and aging in place with support systems.
- JULY** No meeting
- AUGUST** Open Discussion
- SEPTEMBER** Joe Ponsi presented on footwear options (via video).



Speaker Chuck Barnhardt and wife Donna hiking with neuropathy.



# Proposed 2022-23 Objectives

PNSN plans to continue improving the organization and growing membership in 2022-23. Goals include:

## Organization Development

- Fill vacant slots on Executive Team.
- Investigate hiring a part-time administrator (10 hours/week).
- Increase Executive Team and member contributions to website, Facebook, YouTube and other Social Media efforts.
- Increase and train volunteers for task-specific, time-framed assignments.
- Improve personal communication with members, including responses to emails, FB comments.
- Investigate PR and fundraising/grant writing options.

## Member Growth and Recognition

- Increase membership **by 10%**.
- Explore initiating two membership campaigns including a Matching Campaign and instituting a tiered paid membership system.
- Introduce guide for newly diagnosed PN sufferers, possibly as a membership gift.
- Finalize small group starter kit.
- Initiate “Volunteer of the Month” and other forms of member recognition.
- Acknowledge contributions of “Friends of PNSN” on website and social media.
- Upgrade IT and video features to enhance content, usefulness.
- Explore convening a summit with other PN groups/networks

*I look forward to continuing our important work in the coming year. The efforts of the Board, coupled with input from our members and other PN groups, will enable the sharing and hope promised in our Mission Statement.*

*Patricia Gualtieri*