



P R E E C L A M P S I A

foundation

INSIDE:



3 creating a treatment protocol

4 members making a difference

7 golf events raise awareness & money

8 Month of Grace brings national focus to Saving Grace

VOLUNTEER | NEWS

Preeclampsia Foundation Newsletter • Spring 2008

Changing Lives Forever

The Experience of Preeclampsia

Saturday, November 10, 2007 was the date of one of the latest preeclampsia awareness event, initiated by Preeclampsia Foundation Board Member John Warner, and his wife Brenda. The Warners are parents of Shelly (Warner) Bridgewater, who lost her life to Preeclampsia/HELLP Syndrome in 2005.

The event was held at Thompson Auditorium in Des Moines, Iowa, in cooperation with Iowa Methodist Hospital; the Iowa Health System; Dr. Paula Mahone, Perinatologist at Iowa Methodist Hospital; the Blood Center of Iowa; and Christine Hayes, Director of Promotional Events for the Blood Center of Iowa, who was highly involved in organizing the event.

Preeclampsia Foundation attendees included Executive Director J. Thomas Viall; Administrative Director Jaime Nolan; and Nebraska Group Coordinator Missy Updike. Opening comments were given by Sue Gehlsen, Executive Director of Women's Services for Iowa Health System,

a preeclampsia survivor herself. Gehlsen hopes to help the Preeclampsia Foundation encourage Iowa Health System to consider offering CME/CEU credits for healthcare professionals.

Mahone, a highly-respected perinatologist in the Des Moines area gave the keynote address. In 1997, Mahone delivered the world's first surviving septuplets, the McCaughey Septuplets, and has pledged her support for future awareness events in the Des Moines area.

Preeclampsia survivor and blood donor advocate Lauren Larsen gave an inspirational talk, with a slideshow presenting her personal battle with preeclampsia and HELLP Syndrome. Her emotional story cast a real face and a name to the medical terminology, statistics and scientific research that come along with an event like this. Larsen promotes blood donation around the country offering her personal story of needing more than 200 units of donated blood products to survive. Larsen ended her presentation with a tribute to women who have lost their lives from preeclampsia and dedicated the event in Bridgewater's honor.

Warner is hoping that future events will have more support of the medical community, provide CME/CEU credits for healthcare professionals, and inspire greater attendance. In organizing these events, Warner's objectives remain the same: get the word out about the signs and symptoms of preeclampsia and explain to healthcare professionals the potential devastation this disease can cause.



Dr. Paula Mahone of Iowa Methodist Hospital

Wisconsin Volunteers Spend a Day at the Zoo

By Denise Lang

On September 9, 2007, the Wisconsin members of the Preeclampsia Foundation gathered together for a fun day at the Henry Vilas Zoo in Madison, Wisc. Six families participated, including several long time members as well as two new families who were eagerly welcomed into the group.

The group usually gathers for business meetings to focus on the goals they have for their state, but this event was strictly for fun and socializing. The outing provided the opportunity for Wisconsin volunteers, brought together by the common bond of their preeclampsia experiences, to get to know one other better outside of the preeclampsia world. Denise Lang, Wisconsin co-Group Coordinator, provided the following recap of the day:

We started off by stalking a pair of lions. The king of the jungle sat upon his stone throne, while the female lion wandered lazily. Next up was the primate building, where an orangutan was in need of haircut and lemurs hung from the trees. We strolled over to the seals where they frolicked in the water. And then what do our eyes behold? Giraffes! One giraffe must have found our group rather intriguing as he made his way over to us and checked us over. Nearby, two rhinos were hanging out.

Continued on pg. 5

MESSAGE FROM LESLIE WEEKS -

Chair of the Board of Directors

Since December, 2007, I have heard of three maternal deaths related to preeclampsia. Between these women, there are eight new babies (two sets of triplets and one set of twins) who will grow up not knowing their mothers. Online reports about the deaths indicate that two of the women had “uneventful” pregnancies until they complained of breathing difficulties shortly before the delivery of their babies via emergency cesarean section.

While I admittedly know very little about these three tragic cases, I do note that - short of the complaints about breathing difficulty - reports do not indicate that any of these women were suffering from the classic symptoms of preeclampsia: high blood pressure, swelling, severe headaches, proteinuria. Online reports about the deaths also indicate that in all three of these cases, severe preeclampsia came on very quickly and delivery of the babies did not stop its progression.

Preeclampsia can be difficult to diagnose because many of its symptoms are commonly reported by women whose pregnancies are not affected by preeclampsia. I have no idea whether or not the women who died were familiar with preeclampsia and its symptoms, and I am definitely not qualified to comment on the standard of care they each received. I do know, however, that as long as mothers and babies continue to die from preeclampsia that the Preeclampsia Foundation must be aggressive in its mission of educating women, their loved-ones and their health care providers about the signs and symptoms of preeclampsia, and urge everyone to take these symptoms—even if they seem innocuous - very seriously. My heart is with all families who have suffered a preeclampsia-related loss.



VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Fiona Morrow

Volunteering in Honor of Nate

I found the Preeclampsia Foundation through Google. I thought that I might be pregnant again, and I was in a major panic. It had been six years since my son Jay had been born at 30 weeks because of severe preeclampsia, and seven years since my beloved first born, Nate, was delivered at 26 weeks to live for just two days.

So, here I was, 38 years old, having emigrated from London to Vancouver just six months earlier, face-to-face with a fear I thought I'd put behind me years before. I Googled “preeclampsia”, found the Preeclampsia Foundation—and started reading. And reading. And reading.

First of all, I was shocked to find that so many women shared my experience. Then, as I read on, I was stunned to realize just how sick I had been. In the pre-internet days of my first sons, the information out there was very slim. Also, the theories and thinking behind the disease had taken a major leap forward. Now, I was really scared.

I started posting—very tentatively (this was the first site I had ever signed up to and I was nervous of protecting my privacy and inviting a bunch of strangers into my life).



Fiona Morrow and son Jay at the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, CA.

Gradually I relaxed, completely in awe of Laura and Julie and Catherine and the rest of the moderators, who took so much care to answer individual queries and were incredibly generous of their time and compassion.

Throughout my pregnancy with Sacha, the Forum was an absolute lifeline. My friends and family were a 12-hour flight and an eight-hour time difference away; talking to them was so hard because I knew they were shocked I was risking everything again and, to be honest, I didn't really blame them. There were times when I couldn't believe I'd been so reckless, either.

I was lucky: for no good reason whatsoever, Sacha was my easiest pregnancy, born at 36 weeks 3 days. I had pregnancy-induced hypertension that was starting to ramp up, but not a whiff of preeclampsia.

I knew I was lucky because there were too many of my Forum buddies who weren't. I came home from hospital to learn that Cassie had lost Kaitlyn and Lucy's Sebanna had died. A couple of months later Susan lost Corine. If I thought my connection to the Preeclampsia Foundation would end with Sacha's arrival, I couldn't have been more wrong.

I came to the Preeclampsia Foundation because I was frightened and needed information and support. I hung around because that's exactly what I found. I stay because I want to offer that same help to the next woman who Googles “preeclampsia” and finds the Preeclampsia Foundation.

And, I do it all in honor of Nate.

Fiona Morrow
Forum Administrator

Creating Standard Protocol for the Diagnosis and Intervention of Preeclampsia

On November 20-22, 2007, a meeting was held in Vancouver, British Columbia to discuss The Preeclampsia Integrated Estimate of Risk Study (PIERS) which was lead by Dr. Peter von Dadelszen. Beside being the lead investigator for the study, Dr. von Dadelszen is also a member of the Preeclampsia Foundation's prestigious Medical Advisory Board, President of the North American Society for the Study of Hypertension in Pregnancy (NASSHP), and the President of ERIPED (Equipede Recherche Interdisciplinaire sur la Pre-Eclampsie et ses Determinants), Canada's preeclampsia research alliance.

The goal of the 41-month PIERS study was to create a rigorous standard care protocol for the diagnosis and intervention of preeclampsia and the purpose of the meeting was to move to the next level of the PIERS study. After prospective gathering of data for seven years, and publishing the findings, the next step was to strategize about what had been learned and figure out how to get hospital administrators to adopt the findings as the standard protocol for care.

Representing the Preeclampsia Foundation in non-scientific roles during the two-day PIERS meeting were Executive Director J. Thomas Viall and Fiona Morrow, Forum Administrator and preeclampsia survivor. Morrow was involved in the PIERS study and presented the human component behind the graphs and charts by sharing her story and answering questions. Viall could tell by the eagerness of the interaction that she really got the audience's attention and described her speech as "emotive and clear." He said their entire presentation, "...was very powerful. Many of the scientists and medical professionals had tears in their eyes." They were "just stricken." Viall credits von Dadelszen with presenting and keeping the human component "front and

center" to keep the researchers focused on the importance of the study. "There are moms losing babies, and husbands losing wives," said Mr. Viall.

The researchers looked at past practice and records of how 400 women were evaluated for, and diagnosed with preeclampsia, as well as the recommendations that were made for intervention. The researchers compiled a snapshot of how, in these 400 cases, monitoring was done; what diagnostic protocols were used, and what interventions were taken. They matched those data to the outcomes of each of the women and found that five percent of the women had negative outcomes (loss of life, stroke, seizures, organ failure, etc). The next step was to develop a standard protocol for all possible cases of preeclampsia, because one cannot predict the outcomes.

Approximately 300 women participated in this phase of the initiative. When the standard protocol of care, which was very stringent, was used for these women, it produced a significant decrease in negative outcomes; which dropped from five percent to approximately seven-tenths of one percent. Viall pointed out, that unfortunately, there was no shift in neonatal outcomes with the standard care protocol.

Viall thought this study might present a major opportunity for the Preeclampsia Foundation, in that the Foundation could seek grants to do similar studies in the U.S., based on the PIERS findings. The goal would be to change diagnostic and intervention protocols in the States, though Viall acknowledged

that differences in the Canadian and U.S. health care systems might present certain challenges. At a minimum, he said, "the Preeclampsia Foundation could be a clarion voice for the patient by promoting its view of best practices." We must continue to be the honest broker with no agenda other than minimizing negative outcomes...that will help to save lives."

Acknowledging that preeclampsia is an even bigger problem in the developing world, the meeting also focused on the development of condensed recommendations for diagnosis and intervention in less developed countries. "I had the opportunity to meet and speak to the Coordinator of Maternal and Perinatal Health activities within the Reproductive Health Division of the World Health Organization. He was quite impressed with our work and I do believe we will stay in touch and consider ways in which we can collaborate in the future," said Viall. While delving into the underdeveloped world is "not necessarily a front line mission-issue for the Preeclampsia Foundation, the Board of Directors has begun to look at ways we might begin developing materials and guidelines to have an impact beyond North America," said Viall.



Researchers, doctors, and Preeclampsia Foundation representatives meet to strategize a standard protocol for preeclampsia patient care.

Submit Your Nominations for the 2008 Volunteer of the Year Award!

To recognize the important role and contributions of our volunteers, the Preeclampsia Foundation has established a Volunteer of the Year award, presented annually to a member who epitomizes the true spirit of volunteerism. The award will be presented at "Saving Grace—A Night of Hope," our annual benefit gala to be held this year in Washington, DC on September 20, 2008. The recipient will be provided with round-trip airfare and one night's accommodation at the Omni Shoreham Hotel.

The Preeclampsia Foundation Board of Directors is encouraging all volunteers to thoughtfully consider nominating one of "their own" for this distinguished honor. All volunteer members are eligible; however, members of the Board of Directors as well as

paid staff and contractors who are compensated by the Preeclampsia Foundation are not. An awards committee is responsible for selecting the winner based on the following guidelines:

Teamwork—effectively collaborating in all activities and communications with a positive attitude, earning respect of peers, volunteers and community leaders.

Advocacy—representing the Foundation with unwavering support, striving to present the organization favorably in all endeavors.

Need—contributing a needed service to the Foundation.

Initiative—initiating new programs or activities and using new methods to solve problems.

Achievement—accomplishing desired results.

Impact—producing positive changes and

providing examples for other areas of the Foundation.

Time—devoting a significant amount of time to the activity or service.

Nominations of 250 words or less should be submitted to VOY@preeclampsia.org outlining the reasons you have nominated your candidate. Volunteers may nominate more than one candidate. All nominations must be submitted no later than Friday, July 11th.

The selected candidate will be notified via phone and email by Friday, July 25th, after which a post in the Forum will be made announcing the Volunteer of the Year. Please consider nominating a deserving member who has provided outstanding effort with the Foundation this year.

Members Making a Difference

Throughout this newsletter, we often report on multi-million dollar studies and big fundraising events. These are important activities, but should never negate the importance of what all of us as individual volunteers can do within our own networks and even with modest resources. Future issues of the Volunteer News will include this column as a place where we inspire one another with ideas on how to raise funds and spread awareness about preeclampsia and the Foundation. This quarter's column focuses on creative promotions coming from Forum members who run their own businesses and on easy "FUN" fundraising opportunities.

Angel Pin Sale

A jewelry-making Forum member in Ohio who owns her own store hosted a promo-

tion during the month of December to benefit the Preeclampsia Foundation. Daughter Kelsi, who was born prematurely (and died) due to preeclampsia, was the inspiration for the event and for a specially-designed, handmade series of angel pins. During the benefit, 50% of the price of each angel pin that was sold was directed toward the Preeclampsia Foundation. The benefit raised \$450.

Soap and Lotion Sale

A Forum member in Alaska who owns a natural bath and body care business, is running an ongoing benefit that directs one dollar to the Preeclampsia Foundation from the sale of specially selected soap bars or lotion, lip balms, belly balms and baby bum balms. To date, the sale has raised more than \$50 and helped in spreading

awareness through product labels that are printed with a list of symptoms and the website address for the Preeclampsia Foundation.

Every Penny Counts

Multiple small fundraisers can add up to be as profitable as one large-scale event.

\$20 raised = the cost to produce 100+ brochures, spreading awareness

\$50 raised = 10 educational DVD's for community groups

\$150 raised = cost of insurance for holding a local walk-a-thon which, in turn, generates more dollars

Wisconsin Volunteers Spend a Day at the Zoo

Continued from page 1

Up next were camels that seemed to be walking in circles. Then every child's favorite: the goats in the petting zoo area. One goat was brave enough to come near the children, but the rest stayed up on their mountain. The children were all smiles at having such a close encounter, while we parents were grimacing as we reminded the kids not to touch their faces. After traveling a short distance, there was a magnificent sight! A carousel! Most of us got on for a spin with the animals. The animals on the carousel were very colorful and it made for an amazing ride.

Our travelers were hungry, so a lunch stop was quickly planned. Our group sat near a big top tent, where we were entertained by a juggler, a man on stilts, and finally...Irish dancers. The young girls among us were mesmerized and it was the only time all of them sat silent. Naps were in need for a few of the children; so, this is where our group started to break apart. One by one, we left, saying "goodbye", "glad to meet you", and "hope to see you soon."

It was a wonderful adventure!

Taking A Swing in Support of the PF Mission

By Dawn Detweiler

This past September, two golf tournaments were held to benefit the Preeclampsia Foundation—together generating about \$15,000 toward the cause!

The third annual Susan Denise Lowrimore Golf Tournament took place at Mansfield National Golf Club in Austin, Tex. Seventy-two people participated and enjoyed the buffet-style meal and live entertainment. Prizes were awarded to first, second and third place teams. Carolyn Hastings coordinates the event yearly in memory of her sister and nephew lost suddenly to preeclampsia 32 weeks into the pregnancy. "I am motivated by my love for my one and only baby sister

and my desire to help spread the word so that everyone knows about this condition—what the symptoms are so that we may help save lives," Hastings says.

In southeastern Pennsylvania, 15 teams and seven volunteers gathered at Bella Vista Golf Course for a shotgun scramble followed by a barbeque luncheon. Highlights of the event included a raffle, free blood pressure screenings, and hole-in-one prizes including a car from Quigley Dodge of Gilbertsville, Penn.

Guests in Pennsylvania heard from Ed Kimble who shared his family's own touching experience with preeclampsia. In addition, tribute signs were created and placed throughout the golf course. These signs were reminders of the importance of the Foundation's work, and were funded by donations given in honor of loved ones affected by this disorder.

"The event was a success," reports Dawn Detweiler, Pennsylvania golf event coordinator and Preeclampsia Foundation National Fundraising Coordinator. "The golfers left informed and motivated to do more for the cause. At the end of the day the first place team even donated their winnings back to the organization!"



Pennsylvania golfers had the chance to win prizes such as a Los Vegas vacation and a new car.

J. Thomas "Tom" Viall, Executive Director of the Preeclampsia Foundation attended both the Texas and Pennsylvania golf events as a participant and guest speaker. His message included valuable information on the long-term health affects of preeclampsia, and the Foundation's goals of better outcomes in future pregnancies influenced by preeclampsia and related disorders.

For information on how to plan a golf outing in your area to benefit the Preeclampsia Foundation, contact Dawn Detweiler at Dawn@preeclampsia.org.

VOLUNTEER NEWS

Our mission: To provide inspiration, information, and ideas for the volunteers of the Preeclampsia Foundation—a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to educating patients and health care providers, funding research, and supporting those who have been affected by preeclampsia and other hypertensive disorders of pregnancy.

For questions or comments concerning the newsletter, please contact the staff at newsletter@preeclampsia.org

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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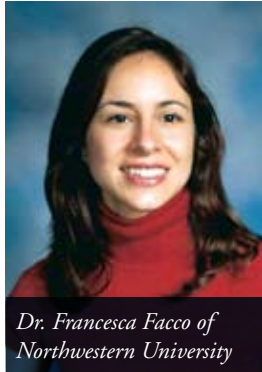
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2007 Vision Grant Recipient— Dr. Francesca Facco

On October 27, 2007, the Preeclampsia Foundation awarded Dr. Francesca Facco of Northwestern University and Dr. Frauke von Versen-Höynck of Magee Women's Research Institute its 2007 Vision Grants. These awards were presented at the Foundation's annual benefit gala, "Saving Grace: A Night of Hope" on Saturday, October 27 in Boston, Mass.



*Dr. Francesca Facco of
Northwestern University*

An overview of the grant process and a profile of one of the 2007 winners, Dr.

Fauke von Versen-Hoeynck, were included in the Winter issue of *Volunteer News*. The second 2007 Vision Grant recipient was Dr. Francesca Facco. She is a second-year maternal-fetal medicine fellow at Northwestern University and talks about the "two faces" of preeclampsia. One face is easy to manage, even if it is not understood, and shows up late in pregnancy as evidenced by elevated blood pressure and protein in urine. The second face, which is more interesting for Dr. Facco, is the one that presents itself earlier in pregnancy. Dr. Facco recognizes that there is a continuum of conditions that can be classified as preeclampsia; and, while a lot of people have it, there is something about some people that makes them get sicker than others. Since it may be very difficult to predict who is going to get severe preeclampsia, Dr. Facco believes researchers and doctors need to respect the scope of the disease and always remember that not all cases are the same.

Over the next year, Dr. Facco will be trying to shed some light on factors that may contribute to a woman's likelihood to be struck with preeclampsia by studying sleep patterns. As a recipient of a 2007 Vision Grant from the Preeclampsia Foundation, Dr. Facco will test her hypothesis that

pregnant women with significant sleep-disordered breathing may be at a greater risk of developing preeclampsia. A native of Italy, Dr. Facco, who emigrated to the U.S. when she was two because her father was employed as an engineer in the steel industry in Pittsburgh, has always been interested in sleep patterns and how they affect homeostasis and pregnancy.

Dr. Facco points out that we spend a significant portion of our lifetimes sleeping and that rest serves a biological function. While doctors are just beginning to understand how good sleep makes us healthy and bad sleep can make us sick, they are starting to learn more about what happens to our brains and our immune systems during sleep. Dr. Facco explains, "With the grant I will be able to take women who are pregnant and at high risk for preeclampsia and do sleep pattern studies. I will get subjective data through surveys and then objective information through observation of participants." Her goal is to see if women will do better during pregnancy if they have better sleep.

Drawn to obstetrics because of the unique ability to take care of two patients—mother and fetus—Dr. Facco expresses gratitude for the support from the Preeclampsia Foundation saying, "I think it is wonderful that the Foundation offers research grants to young investigators. Money for medical research hasn't gone up and I think we can anticipate in the near future we are not going to see increases in government funding, so the role of private foundations is very important—especially for young researchers who are trying to be innovative. Foundation support is invaluable and the only way that many diseases are going to get funded."

The Importance of a Woman's Participation in Research

By Wen Weber

Women can help researchers by raising awareness of a disorder and by raising research funds. They can also help by direct participation in medical research. In fact, the quality of medical research depends on participation from many women.

There are currently dozens of clinical trials and academic surveys on preeclampsia and more are forthcoming. These studies cover many aspects of preeclampsia such as sleep pattern, cardiac output, food supplementation, biomarkers for diagnosis and medical therapies. Potentially lifesaving treatments such as preeclampsia preventive drugs, hypertension treatment during preeclampsia, anesthesia and pathogenesis are being tested.

Women's bodies have great variability and clinical trials need participants from a wide range of backgrounds. For example, researchers are currently developing a blood screening test that detects preeclampsia biomarkers weeks or even months before symptoms appear. In the clinical trial, the researchers study various factors including race, geographical location, age, diet, first pregnancy, weight, family history and lifestyle. Participants currently taking medication are also needed to enable the study of potential drug interference.

Whether you have a disease or are in perfect health, you can play an important role in medical advances. Your participation may not directly benefit yourself but may help someone close to you such as a daughter, sister, or friend...not to mention women for generations to come.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Anger Well Channeled

"I have learned through bitter experience this one supreme lesson: to conserve my anger. And as heat conserved is transmitted into energy, even so our anger controlled, can be transmitted into a power that can move the world."

The quote above is from Mohandas Gandhi. I think it captures a very real component of human nature and gives us pause to examine our own behaviors and actions. Tragedy and sadness of any sort can fuel a torrent of emotions—among them anger.

Anger is a reasonable response for a woman who has had preeclampsia and perhaps lost a child or suffered debilitating damage to her body. Anger seems most rational for the husband who finds he is a single parent because of preeclampsia. Anger is almost logical for parents of a premature baby who may face a lifetime of physical and developmental challenges because of preeclampsia.

I get angry too when I realize that ignorance of the symptoms of preeclampsia—simple awareness—might be paid for with a woman's life or that of her baby. I get really angry when I realize that preeclampsia, when we consider its scope of impact, is one of the most poorly funded areas of research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

To be fair, it's not unreasonable for medical professionals to also well up with anger at the helplessness they sometimes feel when they can assess the problem but have no effective intervention to save mother and/or child. Few things are as frustrating and anxiety producing as the sense of being powerless.

Finally, it's not at all unreasonable for all of us to seethe over the lack of societal awareness and understanding of preeclampsia. We know that approximately one in 12 pregnancies will result in a diagnosis of preeclampsia and that 25% of those cases will be severe. With 4,300,000 births in the

U.S. in 2006—that equates to a diagnosis of severe preeclampsia every 6 minutes of every day of the year. It's easy to be angry.

The challenge (as we all know) is to not let the anger consume us. For me, this is where Gandhi's quote becomes useful. If I can use my anger's energy to address a root cause of that anger—that is anger well channeled.

Over the past few months I've had the privilege of getting out from behind my desk to meet many preeclampsia survivors, families, members, supporters, and researchers around North America. To be sure, I cannot presume to know the inner thoughts of all these good people; I don't know where the anger lies, how deep it may run, or if it's even there at all. However, I have seen people "*well channeling*" their energies and I am hazarding a guess that some of it is out of frustration and anger. And my message today is a simple one...that's OK.

You have every right to be mad—real mad—and as a result, that energy (well channeled) is fueling research as well as public awareness.

That anger has become an empowering, liberating force. None of us know with any certainty if we will be the one to, as Gandhi's quote suggests, "move the world." I dare say that Rosa Parks never thought of herself as an American icon—but in her quiet and dignified way—she changed America for the better. She moved the world and I suspect she used a little "anger well channeled."

Our mission is vitally important and we must use every tool we can to succeed. It's easy to be angry, but it takes work to harness and "channel" that potential energy. It is that very commitment to hard work and heavy lifting that makes the Preeclampsia Foundation—and all its supporters—a "channeling" force for good.

Wish list: *Specific volunteer needs*

Event Coordinators are needed to host local fundraising and awareness opportunities for the coming year: children's playgroup parties in Summer, golf outings in Fall, bake sales, garage sales, along with a wide variety of other new fundraising ideas. If interested in helping to raise funds in your area, contact Dawn Detweiler, National Fundraising Coordinator, at Dawn@preeclampsia.org.

A **Google Alerts Monitor** is needed to track coverage of preeclampsia and related issues and then follow up with

the authors to provide an introduction to the Preeclampsia Foundation. Contact Tom Viall at jtviall.execdir@preeclampsia.org.

A **Media Relations Coordinator** is needed immediately. This person will need to be able to dedicate about three hours a month to help establish National Media Relations and help local volunteers with media opportunities. PR experience and the ability to meet deadlines is a must. Contact Eleni Tsigas at eleni@preeclampsia.org.

Help Make September 2008 a “Month of Grace”

As many of you know, “Saving Grace—A Night of Hope” has become the Foundation’s most important fundraiser of the year. We have been rotating around the country (Minneapolis, San Francisco, Boston, and now Washington, D.C.) to give as many people as possible a chance to participate—but we realize that not everyone can fly across the country for a gala event, no matter its importance or one’s personal commitment to the cause.

Accordingly, we have decided to turn this September into a “**Month of Grace.**” The Month of Grace concept is designed to encourage ALL supporters of the Preeclampsia Foundation to contribute to the success of our largest annual fundraiser by *thinking nationally and acting locally.*

Over the coming weeks, we will be posting information and sending e-mail blasts to our members with suggestions of local events that they can organize in September. We will have simple, easy-to-use guidelines on

how to implement these events and we will provide as much personal coaching and consulting as we can possibly offer. For example:

- One volunteer has approached her church, asking them to split the collection plate with the Preeclampsia Foundation during the month of September.
- Another is proposing a special Month of Grace shopping day among baby and children’s clothing stores in her area with proceeds directed toward the Foundation.
- Other ideas include restaurant nights, Poker nights, or even a half marathon fundraising run!

In order to further connect these local events with the national gala—we will feature information about them at the gala in Washington. We want everyone to feel the full extent and reach of the “**Month of Grace.**”

For more information or to get support for your idea, contact Jodie Tabano at volunteers@preeclampsia.org.

Join PF Volunteers in Bringing the Month of Grace to D.C.

To promote the Month of Grace idea and to call attention to Saving Grace 2008, interested Preeclampsia Foundation (PF) members are encouraged to sign up for the Parks Half Marathon to be held in Gaithersburg, Md., on Sunday, September 14—the weekend before Saving Grace.

The event showcases one of the most extensive metropolitan parks systems in the country. While the race runs directly through the most populous area of Montgomery County, the majority of the course travels through preserved parkland along the Rock Creek Stream Valley.

If you are interested in training for (participants must be able to finish the 13.1-mile course in 2 hours and 45 minutes) and participating in this event with other PF volunteers, e-mail Jill Siegel at siegel.jill@gmail.com.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

AWARENESS WALKS

SATURDAY, MAY 10TH

- Davenport, IA, for more information, contact John and Brenda Warner at Jboycfarmer@aol.com
- Research Triangle, NC, for more information contact Elizabeth Willis at ncpreeclampsia@gmail.com
- York Campus, Penn State University, for more information contact Kelly Licari at KLLicari@comcast.net
- Minneapolis, MN, for more information

contact Marlene Meyer at minnesota@preeclampsia.com

- Tooele, UT, for more information contact Cynthia Hamilton at Preeclampsia2008WAT@q.com
- San Diego, CA, for more information contact Becky Sloane at sandiegowat@hotmail.com

SATURDAY, MAY 31ST

- Madison, WI Walk-a-thon. For more information, contact Kara Boeldt at Kara-Boeldt@kw.com.

And many, many “Friends and Family Walks” around the country, too numerous to list here.

GOLF OUTINGS

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH

- PA Golf Scramble to benefit PF. Bella Vista Golf Course Gilbertsville, Penn. Contact Dawn Detweiler Dawn@preeclampsia.org for detail on registration and sponsorships. Visit the PA golfs for PF webpage at <http://www.preeclampsia.org/pagolf07.asp>