



PARKINSON'S WARRIORS VIGNETTE



ANDY KATZ

Written By: Andy Katz

Andy Katz is a longtime Pacing for Parkinson's team member, captain of Team ThunderKatz, and active participant in programs at the Johns Hopkins Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Center.

Tell us a little about your relationship with Parkinson's Disease.

In early 2009 I noticed my right hand would shake every so often when it wasn't busy. I figured I would give it some time, and maybe I would get over it. After a few months I decided to make an appointment with a neurologist and get to the bottom of the tremors. After an hour of tremoring, walking, drawing various figures, and trying to pick out random smells from cardboard samples, I was advised that it was probably Parkinson's disease, for which there are no definitive indicators and no cure. If it got worse or started to really bother me, I was told to give the neurologist a call, and he would prescribe medicine that might help with some of the emerging symptoms. Thus began my odyssey to find a definitive diagnosis and to pursue what I could do to help find a cure for PD.

Parkinson's runs in my family; my father had Parkinson's, and my wife's grandfather had Parkinson's. Because I have two sons and three grandchildren, I began to look within the Parkinson's community for clinical studies that could help me achieve my two goals of searching for a definitive diagnosis and trying to help find a cure. I discovered the Michael J. Fox Foundation was rolling out a new study, Parkinson's Progression Markers Initiative (PPMI), and the Johns Hopkins Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorder Center was recruiting locally for participants. There were new tests that could provide a more definitive diagnosis and an ever growing battery of clinical studies that would help provide opportunities for future



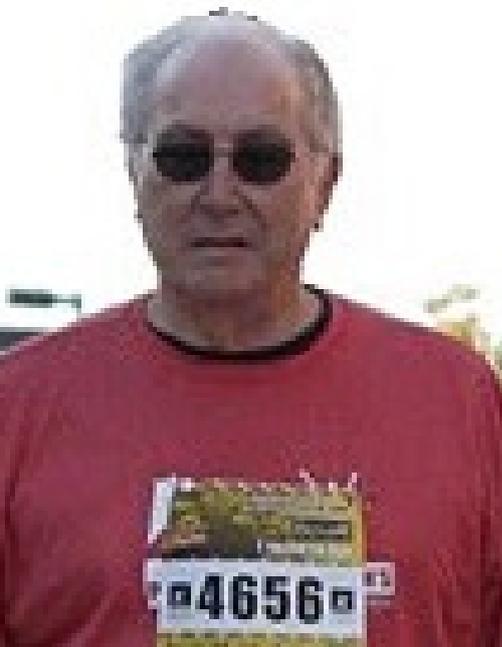
Above: Team ThunderKatz

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OCTOBER 2-9, 2021



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*Supporting Johns Hopkins Parkinson's
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Above: Andy Katz

treatments and perhaps even a cure.

I participate in Parkinson's studies so that my kids and grandkids won't have to in the future. For me, participating in research is about knowing everything I can about the disease that impacts me and knowing where we're heading in research development.

When you think of the Parkinson's community, what word comes to mind?

Parkinson's is like a salad bar; no two people get the same symptoms.

What's one piece of advice you would give someone with PD and their community?

Take advantage of the opportunities available in the community to learn as much as you can about PD and participate in user group organizations and clinical studies to both improve the way you deal with the disease and help others deal with PD.

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

If you had told me 12 years ago that I would have learned the beginnings of guitar, shared my journey through Parkinson's disease with the newly diagnosed, and exercise somewhat regularly including a frequent 3 mile walk/run [I wouldn't have believed it]. Each fall, I am joined by a growing group of family and friends at the Baltimore Running Festival with other groups of Parkinson's families in the Pacing for Parkinson's effort to benefit the Johns Hopkins Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders Center.



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