



# NEUROLOGY

## ASSOCIATES, P.A.

[www.noggindocs.com](http://www.noggindocs.com)

# NOGGIN NEWS

Fall 2011  
Volume 3, Issue 3

Robert A. Yapundich, MD • Dale A. Menard, MD • Catherine A. Weymann, MD • Ryan S. Conrad, MD • James D. Heckaman, MD  
Rita G. Katz, PA-C • Jessica M. Cain, PA-C • Tiffany R. Wightman, PA-C

## Neurology Associates are First in North Carolina to Receive Accreditation

Neurology Associates is the first Electrodiagnostic laboratory in North Carolina and one of the first in the nation to receive Laboratory Accreditation status from the American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine (AANEM).



Robert Yapundich, MD, certified by the American Board of Electrodiagnostic Medicine (ABEM), is the laboratory's medical director.

“We are excited to be the first lab in North Carolina to receive AANEM Laboratory Accreditation status, explained Dr. Yapundich. We are committed to providing the best possible neurological care to our patients and this accreditation for our EMG/Nerve Conduction lab just strengthens our promise.”

Procedures performed in the lab are for nerve and muscle studies for conditions such as pinched nerves, shooting pain, carpal tunnel, burning feet, weakness and many other conditions involving the muscles and nerves. In addition to Dr. Yapundich, Dr. Ryan Conrad and Dr. Dale Menard also perform studies in the lab and Markese Powell is the chief Electrodiagnostic technician.

The AANEM established laboratory accreditation criteria for electrodiagnostic (EDX) laboratories to ensure patients

receive quality medical care in a safe environment. Laboratory accreditation provides patients, referral sources, and payers with a credible measure to differentiate the laboratory's quality of care. The accreditation standards evaluate the diagnostic services and clinical operations essential to providing quality patient care, which include:

- Clinical staff qualifications and continuing education
- Physical facilities
- EDX equipment
- Protocols for performing EDX studies
- Patient reports
- Policies for ensuring the health and safety of every patient

AANEM is a nonprofit membership association dedicated to the advancement of neuromuscular, musculoskeletal, and electrodiagnostic medicine. For more information about AANEM, or to learn more about laboratory accreditation, visit [www.aanem.org](http://www.aanem.org).

For a quarter of a century, Neurology Associates has been a leader in providing neurological healthcare for adult and pediatric patients throughout Western North Carolina. Our neurology clinics, located in Hickory, Taylorsville, Lincolnton and Denver, are comprised of five board certified Neurologists and three board certified Physician Assistants utilizing cutting edge technology to help patients reach optimal neurological health.

# Musical Training Affects Brain Development

by Fred R. McKinney

When I first tell people that studying and teaching classical guitar improved my skills as an analytical research chemist, and that working in chemistry improved my skills as a classical guitarist, I am usually met with quite a bit of healthy skepticism and curiosity.

How are such different fields related? During the past decade researchers have found considerable evidence that learning to play a musical instrument actually does correlate with improvements in academic achievement by school-aged children. Investigation of relationships between music studies and non-musical abilities is very complex and additional research is ongoing.



*Fred McKinney teaching one of his students*

One of these recent studies, published in the October 2006 online edition of the journal Brain [2006; 129, 2593-2608], focused on measurement of brain waveform components to study how

musical training affected normal brain development in young children (ages four through six). In this study researchers examined how the waveform responses to musical tones versus meaningless noise changed over a period of one year and looked for a correlation with changes in memory test results. Children who took lessons at a Suzuki music school were compared to a control group who had no music lessons outside of school. The group studying music performed better in numerical memory tests and developed the ability to process musical sounds more rapidly than the control group of children who did not receive musical training. The researchers concluded that musical training at an early age builds neural pathways related to memory and attention, and there may be potential benefits to other abilities.

In another study published in the online journal PLoS One [2008; 3, No. 10, e3566] children who studied a musical

instrument for at least three years outperformed children with no musical training in tests measuring vocabulary and non-verbal reasoning skills (visual pattern completion). These skills are not normally associated with music. The study also showed that the longer and more intensely they studied their instrument, the better they scored on vocabulary and non-verbal reasoning tests.

Musical activity may also yield benefits for aging adults. A recent study published in Neuropsychology [2011; 25, No. 3, 378-386] found that in a group of 70 healthy adults, ages 60 through 83, the participants who had studied and played a musical instrument for ten years or more performed significantly better on cognitive tests than the individuals with either no musical training or one to nine years experience. The results suggest that many years of practice and playing may have a positive affect on helping preserve cognitive function as we age.

Can studying music be good for your brain and fun too? Listening to and playing lively Irish jigs and reels, foot stomping old time tunes, or music of great composers like Bach and Mozart can certainly uplift our spirits! One of my goals as a guitar teacher is to help students find joy in the daily practicing and repetition needed to enjoy playing well. The most complex tasks in learning to play an instrument can be broken down into small manageable steps, and celebrating success with each small step leads to successfully achieving large goals. Whether I'm learning to play a new piece of challenging music on guitar or preparing to write a 400-500-page analytical phase study report, it's getting the little steps right that enables me to reach the goal. For me personally, the process of breaking large tasks into small manageable steps that I learned from studying guitar has turned out to be the most important link of all between music and non-musical abilities.

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Mr. McKinney is a registered Suzuki guitar instructor and a faculty member of the Suzuki School of the Arts in Hickory. He also enjoys performing Celtic music and is a part-time analytical consultant on Ag-Chemistry residue and worker exposure studies. For more information about the Suzuki learning approach, please visit his website at: <http://www.hickoryguitarstudio.com> and the Suzuki School of the Arts website at: <http://www.suzukischool.net>



"Dr. Yapundich (*center*) and Dr. Alan Finkel (*right*) of Chapel Hill recently met with Representative Patrick McHenry in Washington, DC to discuss the importance of congressional support for headache disorders"

**Neurology  
Associates  
Cares!**



July 20, 2011

Dr. Robert Yapundich  
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On behalf of the Piedmont Council, Boy Scouts of America, let us thank you for your contribution received during our 2011 Friends of Scouting campaign.

Your generous donation is truly changing the lives of children and families in the Piedmont Council and we are very thankful to have committed volunteers and devoted contributors like you who appreciate the principles of Scouting. Today, young people of all walks of life need Scouting more than ever and our Council is completely dedicated to "do our best" in the fulfillment of Scouting's promise. We can all be proud to say that the Boy Scouts of America remains a growing and vibrant program that is positively influencing the lives of over 18,000 young people in our eleven county region.

The Boy Scouts have experienced significant losses in community-based funding in the past two years for reasons far beyond our control, however we remain steadfast in our commitment to each of our eleven counties as the leader in the promotion of traditional family values through a duty to God and Country. The Piedmont Council has however, enjoyed significant increases in our camping activities all year long, largely because our parents identify Scouting as being both meaningful and affordable. For this we say thank you - your donation makes this happen for children of all walks of life.

Thank you again for your support. Your contribution is needed more than ever if the Boy Scouts are to fulfill their year-end financial obligations and meet the growing needs of our programs. Please understand this letter is to thank you for your financial contribution and to confirm that our records are correct and should not be considered a statement of further solicitation. If this information is incorrect or should you have any questions regarding this contribution, please contact David Allen, Scout Executive at the C.C. Kimbrell Scout Service Center.

With gratitude and appreciation we are,

Yours Truly,

Raymond von Drehle  
Council President

David Allen  
Scout Executive

Words to live by: Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean and Reverent

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Prepared. For Life.™

## Does your Multiple Sclerosis affect the way you walk?

If so, you may be eligible to participate in a research study of an investigational medication for the symptoms associated with multiple sclerosis. Qualified study participants must be 18 to 70 years old and will receive all study related care and study medication at no cost. Financial compensation for each completed study visit will be provided for time and travel.

For more information please contact:



828-345-5060 • [www.pmgofhickory.com](http://www.pmgofhickory.com)

## Employees of the Month

Neurology Associates recognizes the importance of our employees and their dedication to our patients, medical providers and co-workers. Each month all employees of the practice vote on an Employee of the Month (EOM).



June 2011 -  
**Kim Sparks,**  
Insurance Manager



July 2011 -  
**Debi Lail,**  
Insurance Associate



August 2011 -  
**Nerissa Rowe,**  
Medical Office  
Assistant

## Clinical Research Corner

### Clinical Trial Opportunities for Patients

Neurology Associates partners with many major pharmaceutical companies and local research centers to offer specialized clinical research and drug study opportunities to our patients and community.

We are currently recruiting patients for the following Clinical Trials:

- Multiple Sclerosis
- Multiple Sclerosis (Patients with Relapsing MS)
- Migraine Headache in Adolescents
- Partial Seizures

If you would like more information about these clinical trials please ask one of our physicians or physician assistants during your visit or call our office at 828-328-5500.

### Moderate aerobic exercise may delay age-related memory decline.

The AP (1/31) reported that, according to a study published Jan. 31 in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, "one year of moderate physical exercise can increase the size of the brain's hippocampus in adults aged 55 and more, leading to an improvement in memory." In fact, "walking three times a week may improve memory in older adults and help prevent mental decline as people age," *Bloomberg News* explains. "The study of adults ages 55 and older found a two percent expansion of the hippocampus, the brain's memory processor that can shrink during middle age, in those who walked 40 minutes, three times a week, for a year."

### Neurology Associates' Neuroimaging Center

Neurology Associates schedules patients for MRI procedures every Monday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm in our mobile MRI unit located on the ground level of our Hickory office at 1985 Tate Boulevard.

All MRI scans performed at Neurology Associates are read by Dr. Catherine Weymann, our Medical Director of Neuroimaging.



### Patient Tip:

- Do you have an appointment scheduled? If so, you can complete your paperwork at home by visiting our web-site ([www.noggindocs.com](http://www.noggindocs.com)). This can actually cut down on your waiting time and make your appointment go much faster. Website forms are in both English and Spanish.

### Questions or comments?

- Please feel free to contact us at 828-328-5500.



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Neurology Associates, P.A. specializes in adult and pediatric neurological conditions, including sleep disorders, headaches, seizures, dementia, stroke, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia, dizziness, nerve disorders, and much more.