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msconnection

Volume 4 • Issue 1

Michigan Chapter, Inc.

Because the future face of MS is everyone's business....This is why we're here.



▲ *Pat McDonald,
 president of
 the National
 Multiple
 Sclerosis Society,
 Michigan
 Chapter*

An open letter to the MS community

After much deliberation, I recently made the decision to step down as the President of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Michigan Chapter, due to health reasons. However, God willing and my health permitting, I am committed to remaining with the chapter until a suitable replacement has been selected.

These past 28 years have been truly an enriching and fulfilling experience. When I joined the NMSS, it was a very difficult disease to diagnose and there were no treatments. Over the course of time, I have been privileged to witness many changes in our world and within our organization, including the introduction of magnetic imaging, five new treatments that promise to reduce the severity and slow the progression of MS, the birth of the internet and the explosion

of information on MS research and resources that became available to all.

In Michigan in 1979, we had fewer than 2,000 individuals with MS on our census, we now have more than 16,000 people and are offering a broad portfolio of services and programs across the state.

As I prepare to leave the chapter, I take great comfort in knowing that we have a diverse and highly skilled board, a committed and talented staff, and the most incredible donors, participants and volunteers.

I look forward to the discovery of a cure for this disease which has impacted so many people that I have come to know and love, and I will continue to celebrate the milestones reached toward that goal right along with every one of you.

I am confident that the board will select a new chapter president who will take the Michigan Chapter to the next plateau and build upon the work

Open Letter, continues on p. 2

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The Michigan Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society is proud to be a source of information about multiple sclerosis. Our comments are based on professional advice, published experience and expert opinion, but do not represent therapeutic recommendations or prescriptions. For specific information and advice, consult a qualified physician.

The Michigan Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society does not endorse products, services or manufacturers. Such names appear (in this publication) solely because they are considered valuable information. The chapter assumes no liability whatsoever for the contents or use of any product or service mentioned.

The mission of the National MS Society is to end the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis.

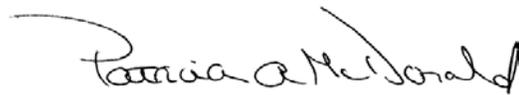
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that we have already accomplished. As E. Young once said, "Too low they build who build beneath the stars."

It has been an incredible honor and privilege to have been given the opportunity to serve the MS community in Michigan these many years.

Thank you all for your support, encouragement and contributions.

Sincerely



Patricia A. McDonald
Chapter President

SHARE YOUR STORY

The National MS Society and OnStar are interested in hearing from caregivers and people living with multiple sclerosis. Has OnStar ever assisted or improved your daily life? If so, tell us about it. Please email personal statements* to



info@mig.nmss.org
or mail your letter to
National MS Society,
Michigan Chapter,

Attn. Corporate Partnerships, 21311
Civic Center Drive, Southfield, MI
48076.

**All information will be kept
confidential*

MS Awareness Week 2007: Join the Movement

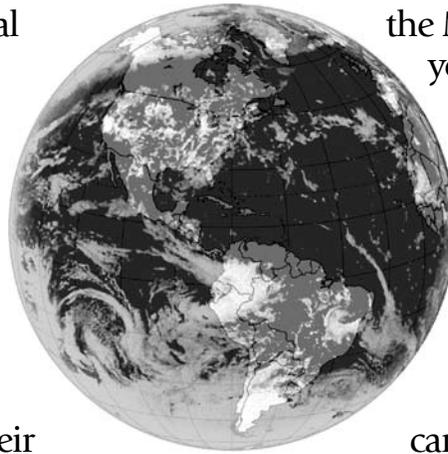
Last year, our inaugural MS Awareness Week focused on what it means to live with MS. We issued the challenge to “Come face to face with multiple sclerosis.” We launched a new Web site, faceofms.org, which offers an opportunity for anyone impacted by MS to tell their story and to read and hear the stories of others. It’s still going strong.

This year, we’re building on our good start. Mark your calendars: MS Awareness Week is March 5–11, 2007.

2007 is a pivotal year. Our strategic response to the problem of MS—developed by all levels of the Society during 2006—calls for us to be bold, relevant, inclusive, transparent, and engaging. Soon you will see an entirely new look—a new logo, new colors, a new central Web site, and most importantly, a whole new way of talking about MS and the work we can do together.

We need the wider world to understand what it means to live with MS. MS robs people of the ability to move easily, whether from one place to another or from one thought to another, or to move ahead with their lives as they expected to do. While the Society works to end MS, we also work to help people move ahead again. The new rallying cry says this in a simple and powerful way: *MS stops people from moving. We exist to make sure it doesn’t.*

We are going to ask everyone to “Join



the Movement!” We are asking you to:

- Tell 10 people you know that MS Awareness Week is March 5–11. Ask them to tell 10 people they know.
- Call us to find out if you can volunteer at one of our awareness events in March.
- Visit faceofms.org. If you haven’t added your story, do it now!
- Make a donation, online or by mail.
- Sponsor a walker or cyclist in an MS Walk or the MS Bike Ride .
- Sign yourself up for the MS Walk or an MS Bike Ride, and start training. We have accessible routes so everyone can take part.
- Put an MS Awareness Week html button on your e-mail signature. (Buttons will be on the national Web site before March.)
- Contact government officials about an issue important to people with MS—or call us to find out what MS activists are doing in this chapter.
- Network! Explore our affiliated self-help groups, committees, educational programs. Visit nationalmssociety.org to learn more.

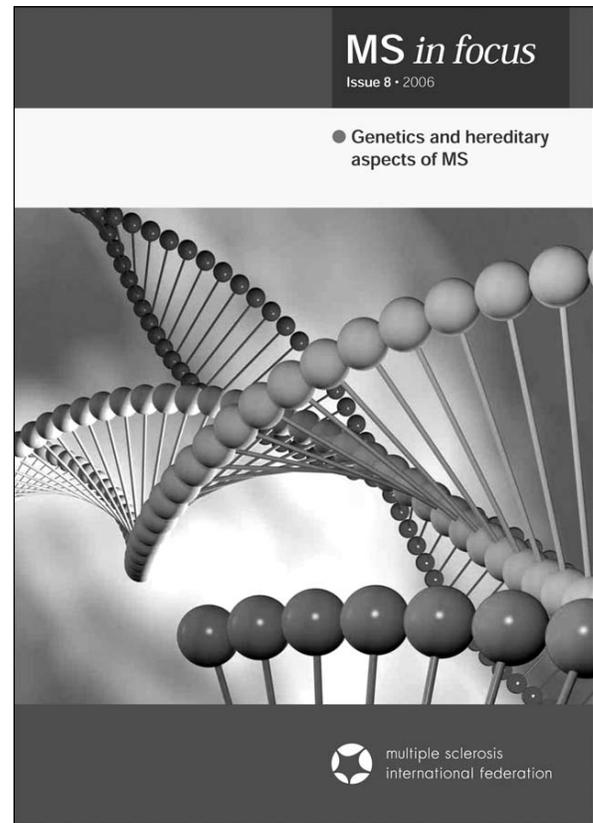
MANAGING SYMPTOMS WITH MS LEARN ONLINE

Get facts about options for managing MS symptoms from the privacy of your home computer with MS Learn Online. This series of more than 50 webcasts features experts who delve into such topics as treatment, life planning, alternative medicine, and much more.



Managing Your Symptoms is a fourpart program tackling the touchy subjects of bladder dysfunction, pain, vision problems, and sexual dysfunction. Nancy Holland, RN, EdD, and vice president of clinical programs at the Society, shares more than 30 years of MS experience and knowledge about physiology, diagnosis, treatments, compensatory strategies, and the social and emotional factors that can make these symptoms so difficult to live with.

Each program runs from 11 to 15 minutes. To view them, go to www.nationalmssociety.org/mslearnonline. The programs can also be downloaded as podcasts. If your computer can't access the webcast, program transcripts are available that can be read online or printed. To be notified of future programs, send your e-mail address to MSLearnOnline@nmss.org. You'll get advance information about the presenters and a direct link to the program. For more information, call us at 1-800-FIGHT-MS.



MS IN FOCUS SPOTLIGHTS GENETICS

The Multiple Sclerosis International Foundation announced that the eighth issue of *MS in Focus* magazine, a special issue on genetics and heredity published in August 2006, has been their most popular. "In the first two months, downloads for this issue exceeded any we've published since we started in 2003," Lucy Hurst, the MSIF's information and communications manager, told *MS Connection*.

Every issue of *MS in Focus* can be downloaded at www.msif.org/en/publications/ms_in_focus. You can also order free paper copies of your favorite issues. Recent topics covered include rehabilitation, intimacy and sexuality, and healthy living with MS.

Let Go – and Manage Your Life

by Nancy Law

Letting go of anger We have a tendency as human beings to hold on to things. We hold on to disagreements we have had with people; we relive injuries and insults. We can carry those bad feelings with us a long time, and this causes stress long after the stressful situation is over.



ance options or talking with your employer about workplace accommodations. These actions may sound worse than the fear, but taking action will help you feel more in control of your life.

Eight steps to less stress

One of the most important things to do in managing stress is to

take care of yourself.

Anger and MS can sometimes go hand-in-hand. Some of the signs that anger may be stressing you are:

- Feeling irritable much of the time
- Finding little things bothersome
- Yelling or raising of your voice frequently
- Feeling sarcastic
- Saying things you later regret

Anger is usually a secondary emotion. It comes in the wake of other more painful feelings—hurt, fear, or powerlessness. Anger actually protects us from those painful feelings, but until they are addressed, we generally continue to be angry. Ask yourself:

- Is something scaring or hurting me?
- If so, who or what?
- Do I feel helpless or powerless?

Confronting and talking to people who have hurt you can sometimes resolve the issue. Sometimes, it's just best to move on. Dealing with things that make you feel fearful or powerless generally requires action. For example, checking into insur-

take care of yourself.

1. Find the right medical team and work with them on managing symptoms.
2. Eat right. Good nutrition is a no-brainer. Stick to sensible portions and avoid fad diets.
3. Exercise. Even though you may not be able to do the things that you used to do, you can adapt your exercise regimen to fit with your MS.
4. Maintain healthy behaviors. Women should get regular pap smears and mammograms. Men should have their PSA test regularly. Periodic physical exams are a must for everyone.
5. Avoid negative coping strategies. Try to quit smoking. Drink in moderation. Seek help with this if you need it.
6. Healthy relationships. Many people find support within their own families. Others find a support network in their religious group. The Society has affiliat-

Let go - and Manage Your Life, cont. from pg. 5

ed self-help groups. Some people meet with others in Internet chat, bulletin board, and e-mail listserv groups. Find a system that works for you.

7. Avoid "toxic" people who bring you down. You know who they are.
8. Take time to laugh. Laughter is actually known to be physically healthy. Find those comedy DVDs, videos, or get out to a movie. Read jokes on the Internet. Talk to friends. Share a laugh.

Nancy Law is the vice president of the National MS Society Client Programs Department. "Let Go—and Manage Your Life" was adapted from her MS Learn Online series "C.A.L.M. Down and Manage Your Stress," which is archived at nationalmssociety.org/MSLearnOnline. The C.A.L.M. model was developed by Barbara Braham in her book *Managing Stress at Work*. If you do not have Internet access, call us and request the transcripts.

Información en Español

There are between 25 and 35 million Spanish speakers living in the U.S. Some of them have MS; many more know someone with the disease. "As part of our effort to provide people with up-to-date, unbiased information, we're offering many of our resources in Spanish," Maria Adelita Reyes-Velarde, MD, MPH, told *MS Connection*. Dr. Reyes-Velarde coordinates the Society's national Hispanic outreach program.

Last August, the program developed *Lista de Recursos de Información para Personas con MS o sus Familiares*, a list of Society brochures and webcasts in Spanish. It also includes URLs for a number of MS-related organizations for Spanish-language speakers. For a copy, call us at 1-800-FIGHT-MS.

Most of the Society's Spanish-language brochures can be read or downloaded from our Spanish-language home page: nationalmssociety.org/espanol. The page also includes links to other Spanish-language MS organizations, online com-

munities, and information about Spanish-language books on MS published by Demos Medical Publishers.

Other Spanish-language resources

Lista de Asociaciones Nacionales de EM (List of national associations provided by MSIF)
www.msif.org/es/global_ms_network/index.html

La Federación Internacional de EM (Multiple Sclerosis International Federation Spanish Information)
www.msif.org/es

Federación Española para de Lucha la contra EM (Spanish Federation against MS)
www.esclerosismultiple.com

La Alianza Nacional para la Salud Hispana (National Alliance for Hispanic Health—general health info)
www.hispanichealth.org

MS & the Wizard of Oz

By Sue Chapman, M.A., M.S.W.

Remember the old movie, *The Wizard of Oz*, starring Judy Garland as Dorothy? Dorothy and her dog, Toto, met up with three characters who befriended them on their journey to find the Wizard: the Tin Man, the Scarecrow and the Lion. Each believed the Wizard would solve their problems. Dorothy wanted to return home, the Scarecrow wanted a brain, the Tin Man, a heart, and the Lion longed for courage. Dorothy's three friends remind me of how people with MS can feel at different times on their own journey through life.

Folks newly diagnosed can feel tremendous anxiety and frustration.

"How do I get my mind around this? What does my future hold?" There are so many questions with few answers. And for those dealing with memory problems, thoughts come in but can be gone just as fast. You can feel like the Scarecrow, at times, brainless!

While living with MS, it is easy to become focused on your own issues. Physical problems can happen suddenly or emotional issues may cause depression or anger. When trouble happens, it can be difficult to look beyond yourself and think of others. "They don't know the meaning of trouble," you think to yourself. Like the Tin Man, you may lose your heart and forget to care about or empathize with what others are going through in their own lives.

Then there's the Lion with no courage. Do you ever wonder what happened to the strong independent person that used to be you? Do you find yourself saying, "I can't," to things you would do so easily before? Do

you get angry with yourself because you'd rather miss out on the fun than risk something bad happening to you outside the safety of your home?

Like you, Dorothy's three friends dealt with their inner battles of ignorance, confusion, selfishness and fear. They all believed their problems would be solved if they could just reach the Wizard! Sadly, it turned out, the Wizard was just an illusion fooling everyone from behind his screen of smoke and mirrors. The only wisdom he shared with them was, ironically, the most important wisdom he could have offered:

the solutions to their problems could be found right inside themselves!

So it is for people with MS. Your journey will have many junctions where you will need to make a choice. Will you choose to look beyond yourself and ask about others? Will you continue to participate in life even though it may be hard at times? Will you opt to learn

and understand as much as possible about yourself and MS so fear will not be your constant companion? MS may mean developing new coping skills, training your mind as you exercise your body.

The message of this article, like the Wizard's, is a reminder that your strengths still lie within. You need only to remember and focus on them. Have confidence that they will see you through. The National MS Society, Michigan Chapter, can help on your journey. It offers support groups, literature, programs and referrals to the help you may need. Call 1-800-243-5767, ext. 235.



Getting connected – online

“I was diagnosed last August,” Carla Gladstone told *MS Connection*, “and one of the first things I wanted was to talk with others who have the disease. But the thought of attending a support group was overwhelming.”

Gladstone* is not alone—some people new to MS are uncomfortable with the idea of telling their story to a roomful of strangers. Others like the idea of support groups, but live in out-of-the-way areas, or find it difficult to commit to frequent meetings. Many people with MS and the people who care for them have made a home away from home by logging on to MSWorld.org.

A decade online

Kathleen Wilson, MA, MFA, was diagnosed with MS in 1988, and in 1995 was forced to retire from a fast-paced advertising job. The next year she launched MSWorld with a single chat room. Now staffed by 30 volunteers who also live with the disease, MSWorld has evolved into a comprehensive online support network for anyone affected by MS. The site offers scheduled chats, e-mail groups, message boards, and an award-winning online magazine, and it receives half a million visits every month. The National MS Society has long been a partner with MSWorld—the Society honored Wilson with a National Achievement Award at its 2006 National Conference.

“Our motto at MSWorld is ‘Wellness is a State of Mind,’” Wilson said. “When you are well within your mind, your life has its greatest potential.”

*(Not her real name.)

Make a move

From national mssociety.org/chat.asp, click on “Go to the official chat site.”

Or simply type www.MSWorld.org into your browser. From there, click on one of the following menu topics:

Message Boards—Post a question, reply, or find replies to questions others have posted.

Chats—Talk with others in real time or read transcripts of earlier, highlighted chats.

E-mail Groups—Register for one of two discussion groups: E-Pals, for people diagnosed with MS; or CARE-Pals, for people who care for someone with the disease.

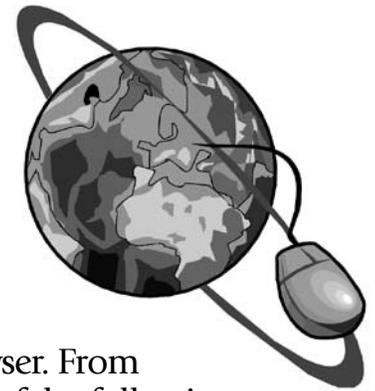
Resources—Read the latest news on clinical trials, alternative treatments, and more.

LivingMS—MSWorld’s online magazine features artwork, essays, poetry, recipes, and much more.

Wherever you are, whatever your situation, there are others in the same boat.

Online groups can be a rich source of advice from others experienced with MS, but remember even with its close ties to the Society, not all advice on MSWorld is appropriate for your particular situation.

Any medical information you pick up should be discussed with your professional health-care provider and the National MS Society.



NEW! KNOWLEDGE IS POWER—THE DVD

Hearing the words “you have MS” is overwhelming. What’s next?

Knowledge is Power (KIP) provides well-organized information about MS right away. Developed by MS professionals with input from people with MS, eight booklets cover diagnosis, treatment, self-care, relationships, employment, working with doctors, and parenting. They are sent by mail or by e-mail in easy-to-digest weekly installments.

Now there’s more to KIP—a 120-minute DVD narrated by Meredith Vieira,

the co-host of the Today show. Her husband, journalist and TV producer Richard Cohen, has MS.

The DVD features 12 people with MS—of different ages, backgrounds, and ethnicities—and several medical experts, one of whom has MS. Their stories illustrate how real people use knowledge to manage their lives with MS.

If you have previously received KIP but would like the DVD, call us at 1-800-FIGHT-MS. To sign up for the full KIP program, which now includes the DVD, go to nationalmssociety.org/knowledge or call us.

WAYS TO GIVE

NEW TAX-SAVINGS OPPORTUNITIES FOR DONORS AGED 70½



On August 17, 2006, President Bush signed into law new tax incentives for charitable gifts from donors who are 70½ or older. The Pension Protection Act of 2006 encourages financial support of qualified charitable organizations such as the National MS Society.

Previously, if you had taken a distribution from your IRA or Roth IRA to make a gift to the Society, you would have been required to pay income tax on the distribution; then you would have been entitled to a charitable deduction for the gift amount. Under the new law, you can make a lifetime gift to the Society using these funds without undesirable tax effects.

You can benefit from this new law if:

- You are age 70½ or older
- The gift is \$100,000 or less each year
- You make the gift on or before December 31, 2006, for the 2006 tax year; or you make the gift on or before

December 31, 2007, for the 2007 tax year

- You transfer funds directly from an IRA, Rollover IRA or a Roth IRA to the National MS Society

An Example

Pat, aged 80, has \$450,000 in an IRA and has pledged to give the Society \$100,000 this year as a charitable gift. If Pat transfers \$100,000 from her IRA directly to the Society, she will avoid paying any income tax on that amount. She cannot, however, claim a charitable deduction.

The legislation allows a maximum \$100,000 gift in both the 2006 and the 2007 tax years. So Pat could make a gift of \$100,000 each year. And Pat’s spouse, aged 85, can give up to \$200,000 over the same period out of his IRA.

For More Information

It is wise to consult tax professionals if you are contemplating a gift under the new law. The Society’s Special Gift Office is pleased to provide you educational information. Call us at 1-800-923-7727.

Legal Briefs

By Ina Cohen



There are many legal issues that have particular impact on the lives of those diagnosed with MS. While the local chapter cannot provide legal services, it does try to provide general information and referrals to resources. Ina C. Cohen is an attorney and member of the Board of Trustees, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Michigan Chapter, Inc.

Q: I am having difficulty working and need to consider going on disability, what should I do first?

A: The first thing you should consider is what benefits are available to you. Do you have sick days, vacation days, short term disability or long term disability? Have you worked long enough and recently enough to be covered by Social Security? Collect your benefit booklets from work, private policies and that annual Social Security report that you get each year before your birthday. Review these documents to see what alternatives you have available to you and whether you are eligible to apply for them. Perhaps meet with an attorney to have them explained.

Before you even start applying for any of the benefits, schedule an appointment with your neurologist and your internist. Get evaluated and explain to your physician your difficulties with working. Tell your doctor what type of work you do. Don't simply say, "I do assembly work" or "I work for a company as a secretary." If

your position requires walking, standing, lifting or carrying or other physical activity, tell your doctor. Let your doctor know how your job tasks affect you and what you have difficulty doing. Explain how you experience fatigue or cognitive problems that make your performance poor. Explain how the fatigue manifests itself – i.e., do you have difficulty holding things, lose visual clarity or walk poorly? Describe how you feel at the end of the day and how it affects what you do at home. If you have been criticized or written up for errors or failures that are attributable to your medical situation, tell your doctor.

Once you have informed your doctors and they have had an opportunity to examine you, ask if he/she will support your claim for disability. This is crucial. Your physicians will be asked to complete forms. They will be required to provide specific medical findings to substantiate your condition. Depending on the type of benefit and the circumstances, your doctor's opinion about the extent of your disability may not be determinative. For example, Social Security has certain standards for disability and they are often different from that of an initial claim for disability under a long term disability policy. However, if they document your specific symptoms and condition, it will clearly support your claim.

If your physician won't supply adequate information and documentation, sometimes you will be sent to another physician for an "independent" examination. These can be quick and far

less detailed and yield inadequate results. It is for this reason that you should consult your personal physicians before you proceed so that there is complete reporting and you have no surprises. Your doctors should not learn of your decision to proceed on a disability claim for the first time when a form is mailed to them.

After you have met with your doctors and reviewed the benefits you have, then obtain the necessary forms for filing claims. Make certain that you keep copies

of all papers you submit and keep track of the dates you file each item. Get a folder or heavy duty envelope to keep everything together. If, at any point, you are uncertain of the progress or whether you have complied with the requirements, seek help. Don't be hesitant to consult an attorney and don't rely on the advice of friends or family who mean well but don't know about the legalities of the situation. This is serious business and you can't afford to make a mistake.

RESEARCH

Support funding for MS research

MS community joins together for national petition drive

More federal funding for medical research is desperately needed to investigate multiple sclerosis. Scientists do not fully understand its causes. Therefore, an aggressive investment in medical research could lead to a more treatable, and potentially curable, disease. The goal is to obtain **more than 200,000 signatures in support of the MS movement**. This goal will not be reached without your help!

If you know someone with MS or would like to help end its devastating effects, sign the petition by completing the form below. Encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to sign as well.

MS is a chronic, often disabling disease in which the body attacks itself, resulting in damage to the nervous system. Symptoms can be mild, such as numbness in the limbs, or severe with paralysis or loss of vision. Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 40, the prime years of their lives.

I/we, the undersigned, urge you, our elected officials, to support a significant increase in federal funding for multiple sclerosis research in order to find a cure and better treatments for this dreaded disease.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email address _____

Complete and return to National MS Society, 21311 Civic Center Dr., Southfield, MI 48076 before **February 1, 2007**. For information contact Ruth Linnemann, Advocacy and Programs Director, 517-339-6002 or Ruth.Linnemann@mig.nmss.org. Petition also available at www.nationalmssociety.org/advocacy

“BENEFIT” STUDY ADDS TO DATA SUGGESTING EARLY TREATMENT MAY DELAY MS

Studies suggest that early treatment with one of the MS disease-modifying drugs can help to “put the brakes” on MS. In many people, early use of Betaseron, Avonex, Copaxone, or Rebif decreases the frequency and severity of attacks, reduces the number of new lesions in the brain or spinal cord, and possibly reduces future disability.

A new report on the BENEFIT study, published in the October 2006 issue of *Neurology*, has shown that Betaseron may delay the onset of MS in people with a high risk for the disease. The BENEFIT study followed 468 people who had experienced a single, MS-like attack, such as inflammation of the optic nerve or numbness on one side of their body. Many who experience such attacks—called CIS, or “clinically isolated syndrome”—will later be diagnosed with MS. They are considered at high risk for the disease.

The BENEFIT study participants received either a standard dose of Betaseron or an inactive placebo for up to 24 months or until MS was diagnosed. Those taking Betaseron had a 50% reduction in risk for developing definite MS, and those who were later diagnosed with the disease were diagnosed an average of one year later than those taking placebo.

Based on these results, Betaseron’s sponsor, Schering AG, filed an application with the FDA for use of Betaseron in people with CIS in the U.S. The FDA approved the application in October.



CLUES TO LIMITING NERVE DAMAGE

MS attacks nerves and myelin, the insulation that covers nerves. Finding treatments to protect nerve tissue is crucial, as damage to nerves is what causes permanent disability in MS.

In a new study, partly funded by research grants from the National MS Society and the National Institutes of Health, researchers at Children’s Hospital Boston found that treatment with nicotinamide, a form of vitamin B3, prevented further breakdown of damaged nerve fibers. The study was done in mice with an MS-like disease called EAE.

The researchers had shown previously that an enzyme called NAD decreases when nerves break down in mice. Injections of NAD or nicotinamide—which can be turned into NAD—prevented injury to nerves.

In the current study, the team injected nicotinamide into mice with EAE. Treatment succeeded in reducing inflammation and myelin destruction, and also protected nerves from breakdown, including those that had already lost their myelin sheaths. Mice given the highest doses of nicotinamide had the fewest neurological symptoms.

This hopeful clue requires more research. According to a press release from Children’s Hospital, the nicotinamide doses used in these mice would translate into very high doses for humans. High intake of B vitamins can produce severe side effects in people. Progress will depend on the outcomes of safety studies.

Outstanding volunteers honored

Winners of the 2006 Volunteer Recognition Awards were announced at the chapter's annual meeting held on Oct. 14, 2006 at the Doubletree Hotel Dearborn. The nine awardees received special honors for their resilience and commitment to ending MS.

This year's keynote speaker, David Rintell, Ed.D, a psychologist with more than 20 years experience working with people and families dealing with MS, spoke on ways to enhance one's own resilience in order to rise above the challenges that MS presents. Dr. Rintell is on staff at the Partners MS Center in Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Partners Pediatric MS Center at Massachusetts General Hospital and the MS Clinic in Framingham, Mass.

Brenda Irving (Holland): *Richard Ennis Award* for an outstanding Chapter Service Volunteer who has demonstrated support and initiative in providing programs to improve the quality of life for people with MS.

George A.L. Gant Award for volunteers whose efforts have furthered the mission of the National MS Society on a regional level.

Amy Yorke (Millington): *Eastern Region*

Michelle Montgomery (Detroit): *South-eastern Region*

Kirsten Ardery (Traverse City): *Northern Region*

Rebekah Aremo, 17, (Detroit): *Youth Award* for volunteers between the ages of 12 and 18, who demonstrate exceptional commitment to or leadership for at least one program or event.

Alison Hirschel (Lansing): *Public Servant Award* for officials or public groups who have demonstrated accomplishments and support for policies and programs that improve the lives of persons with MS. Hirschel



2006 award winners at annual meeting

serves as the elder law attorney at the Michigan Poverty Law Program.

Elizabeth Wiley (Ann Arbor): *Advocate of the Year* for a Michigan resident who advocates on behalf of persons with MS resulting in accomplishments that benefit people with MS specifically or people with disabilities in general.

Comcast (Southfield): *Corporation of the Year* for the company's strong support and commitment to the National MS Society. Comcast creates public awareness each year for the Chapter's MS Bike Tour through PSAs and digital messaging.

WHTV/My 18 (Lansing/Jackson): *W.B. Doner Award* for media representative who has gone the extra mile to promote the MS cause either in the press, on the radio, or on television.

Joan Laird (Traverse City): *Achievement Award* for an individual with multiple sclerosis who has achieved outstanding success in their life.

Deena Lisak (Bloomfield Hills): *HOPE Award*, a special and surprise award for a volunteer within the chapter who has made a significant contribution to the MS cause.

Michigan Chapter Updates

Dr. Robert Lisak, an 18 year volunteer with the Michigan Chapter, Wayne State University professor and chairman of the school's Department of Neurology, was inducted into the **National MS Society Volunteer Hall of Fame** at the national conference in Orlando. Lisak was honored for his commitment to the MS community through his research, volunteerism and advocacy.

Peter Burton has been elected chairman of the Michigan Chapter's board of trustees. Burton will oversee the board's focus on strategic issues that contribute to the Society's mission. He is president of Burton-Katzman Development Co.

Leslie Kota was named the new vice president of marketing and development for the Michigan Chapter. She previously served four years as the director of corporate partnerships.

Calling All Volunteers!

Event season is right around the corner and we need your help to make it a truly successful year! Brochure distribution is once again here and we need you to get out in your community and spread the word about our different fundraising events! Take a Saturday afternoon or a couple hours after work and stop at local businesses to drop off a stack of brochures. By helping get the word out, you're enabling the National MS Society to make 2007 the best year ever for people living with MS.

We would like everyone to join our team to help fight the devastating effects of MS. Contact Liz Sawielski at 248-350-0020 ext. 210 to learn more about other volunteer opportunities.

Michigan Chapter Receives National Grant

The Michigan Chapter of the National MS Society was recently awarded a Biogen Idec, Inc. and Elan Pharmaeuticals, Inc. Excellence in Programming Grant. The grant, in the amount of \$5,000, is intended to target underserved or hard to reach populations. The grant will be used to create awareness about the Michigan Chapter's programs and services among primary care physicians in Wayne County. Wayne County, which includes the city of Detroit, has the highest concentration of low-income residents and it is speculated that many more people are living with MS than what is reported.

The grant provides for calling and visiting at least 36 primary care practices in Wayne County to educate them about

chapter services and distribute literature about MS. Names of physicians will be collected from clients with MS who live in the three counties of the Metro Detroit area. Names will also be collected from the two MS Clinics in Detroit. A mailing will be sent to the eighteen self-help groups in the Metro area requesting names of their primary care physicians. Names of physicians will also be selected from various sources.

The goal of this awareness campaign is to increase visibility with these primary care doctors so that they will encourage their patients to contact the National MS Society as well as providing information for the physicians themselves.

2006 da Vinci Awards most successful ever



Award winners along with leadership chair and keynote speaker at 2006 gala.

The 2006 *da Vinci Awards*[®] presented by Microsoft were awarded on Friday, September 29, 2006 at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Dearborn, Mich.

Founded in 2000, the *da Vinci Awards* is a national competitive awards program, created by executive committee member Michael Rokosz, to recognize individuals, organizations, and corporations in the engineering, construction and technical realm for innovative developments and research in adaptive and assistive technology that embraces the Universal Design Principle. Nominations were sought worldwide and subsequently critiqued by a qualified panel of judges.

Microsoft Chief Research and Strategy Officer and soon to be Bill Gates' successor, Craig Mundie served as Leadership Chair, while Rhonda Walker, local news anchor served as Mistress of Ceremonies along with special presenter Brooke Maroth, 2006 Michigan Chapter Ambassador and wife of Detroit Tiger's Pitcher Mike Maroth.

The winners of the 2006 *da Vinci Awards*[®] were:

- **C-Leg[®]** (*Otto Bock HealthCare: Duderstadt, Germany*)
Microprocessor-controlled leg prosthesis system with a linear hydraulic unit that is completely controlled electronically and in real time.
- **Freedom Tent** (*Designed by BlueSky Designs, Manufactured by Eureka: St. Paul, MN*)
Easy-to-open zipperless door and spacious vestibule camping tent designed to be accessible to people with disabilities.
- **MoPix[®]** (*WGBH Media Access Group: Boston, MA*)
Rear Window, Captioning and DVS Theatrical Systems that make it possible for the nation's deaf, hard-of-hearing, blind and visually impaired moviegoers to enjoy first-run theatrical films on the day of release.
- **NÜberwalker** (*IDEA at Northwestern University and the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago*)
Portable body weight supported treadmill-training system, intended for stroke and spinal cord injury patients to practice a normal gait pattern.
- **PEBBLES** (*Telbotics: Toronto, Ontario, Canada*)
World's first robotic student and the first-ever fully functional "telepresence" application, which virtually places homebound or hospitalized children with their classroom at school.

da Vinci Awards, cont. from pg. 15

- **Sendero GPS** (*Sendero Group: Davis, CA*) BrailleNote GPS is a fully accessible PDA location tool for blind and visually impaired individuals.

Three special recognitions were awarded to:

Lifetime Achievement Award

- Lt. Col. Paul Pasquina, medical director of Walter Reed's amputee program and chairman of physical medicine and rehabilitation, recognized for his lifetime of significant contributions to advancing accessibility.

Spirit of da Vinci Award

- Rudy Garcia-Tolson, six-time triathlete, five-time American swimming record holder and four-time national track record holder, recognized for his use of assertive technology.

Founder's Award

- Major David Rozelle, who after losing his right foot in Iraq became the first troop commander to redeploy to the same battlefield as an amputee, was personally selected by da Vinci Awards® founder and Steering Committee member, Michael J. Rokosz, to be honored for his incredible heroism and courage in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds.

The National MS Society, Michigan Chapter along with the da Vinci Planning Committee extends another congratulations to all of the award winners and a sincere thanks to all sponsors and guests for supporting and celebrating innovation.

ACTIVISM

THE MS MOVEMENT NEEDS ACTIVISTS! NEW VIDEO SHOWS WHAT IT TAKES

If getting involved with public policy issues seems out of your league, a new video from the Society shows that pitching in to make changes that benefit people with MS is easier than you think.



Obama

From Advocate to Activist features MS activists from across the country who talk about their experiences, their successes and how getting involved to help themselves and others has enriched and changed their lives. Their stories reflect how one person can make a difference and that even small efforts can make big waves when many people participate.

Senators Barack Obama (D-IL) and



Smith

Gordon Smith (R-OR) and Representative David Price (D-NC) explain how important MS activists are in helping to educate legislators like themselves on important issues.

Take a stand

Join the MS Action Network on our Web site at nationalmssociety.org/ActionNetwork. You'll receive an Action Alert via e-mail when important legislation needs a quick response. It's easy to call or e-mail your representatives in Congress, sign a petition, or visit your district offices. If you don't have e-mail, call us to get involved: 1-800-FIGHT-MS. To see the video, go to nationalmssociety.org/advocacy, or call us.



Price

Program Calendar

The Clues of Epidemiology, the 2007 North American Education Program.

Recognized experts in the field of epidemiological research discuss the ways in which epidemiology (the study of disease patterns) is contributing to the efforts to identify the risk factors for the disease, develop more effective treatments, and find a cure. This video program will be facilitated by a research advocate volunteer. Participants will also receive a 112-page program booklet. The program will be held at the following self-help group meetings:

Thursday, January 11 in Hudsonville (Fellowship Reformed Church) at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call Brenda at 616-399-8402

Tuesday, February 20 in Monroe (Center for Independent Living) at noon. For more information, call Linda at 734-242-5919.

Saturday, February 17 in Lansing (Sparrow Professional Building) at 11:00 a.m. For more information, call Amy at 877-242-3784.

Tuesday, March 6 in Flint (First Presbyterian Church) at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call Jackie at 810-733-2642.

Saturday, March 10 in Alma (Gratiot Community Hospital) at 10:30 a.m. For more information, call Dan at 989-775-8475.

Tuesday, March 6 – *Building an Emotional Bank Account in Southfield*

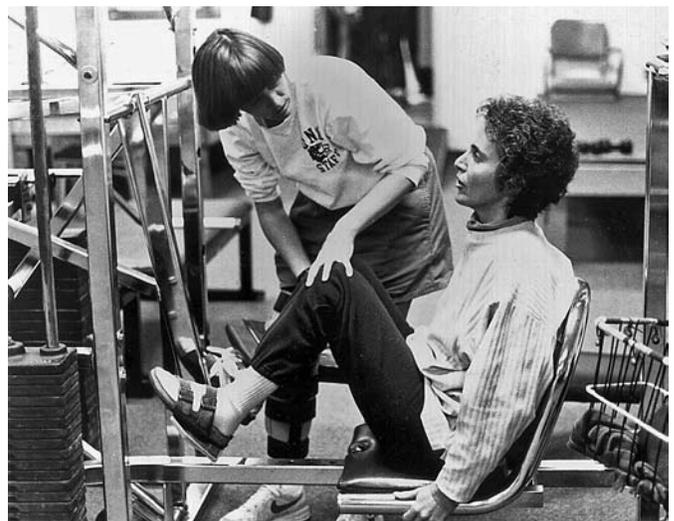
How can we develop trust, respect consideration in all of our relationships?

What happens when our emotional bank account of trust is overdrawn?

This program presented by Sue Chapman, M.A., M.S.W., is based on the work of Stephen Covey. It will be held at the Education Center of the Michigan Chapter Office in Southfield at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Sarah at 1-800-243-5767.

Check the spring issue of the *MS Connection* for dates of additional programs to be held in Adrian, Grand Rapids, Kalkaska, Muskegon, Port Huron, Warren, West Bloomfield, Zeeland and the Upper Peninsula.

March 5-11 *National MS Awareness Week*
Every hour someone is newly diagnosed with MS. What can you do in an hour during MS Awareness Week to improve their lives?



TeamMS

Congratulations to the 2006 Top Teams!

A special congratulations goes to the following teams who have earned the title of "Top Teams" in their event for the 2006 season. Each of the following teams were recognized at the annual TeamMS Recognition Reception, and were honored with a special team award.

MS Walk

Team Ford*	\$50,379
Roz's Rangers	\$23,962
Champagne & Marx Exc, Inc	\$20,421
Pat's Parade of Champions	\$16,411
Hillary's Hairem	\$16,071
Sleepwalkers	\$15,675
Comerica Footnotes	\$14,274
Team One Credit Union	\$13,318
TEAM UCS MONFORT	\$13,186
Katie Kats	\$13,032

MS 150 Bike Tour

Team GM*	\$108,961
Dow/TCC	\$98,198
Team Ford	\$55,024
Cyclomaniacs	\$36,024
Loose Spokes	\$30,752
CRA Metro Wings	\$25,136
Team Altair	\$21,011
TEAM AOSE	\$20,007
MACH 150	\$14,683
Visteon	\$11,488

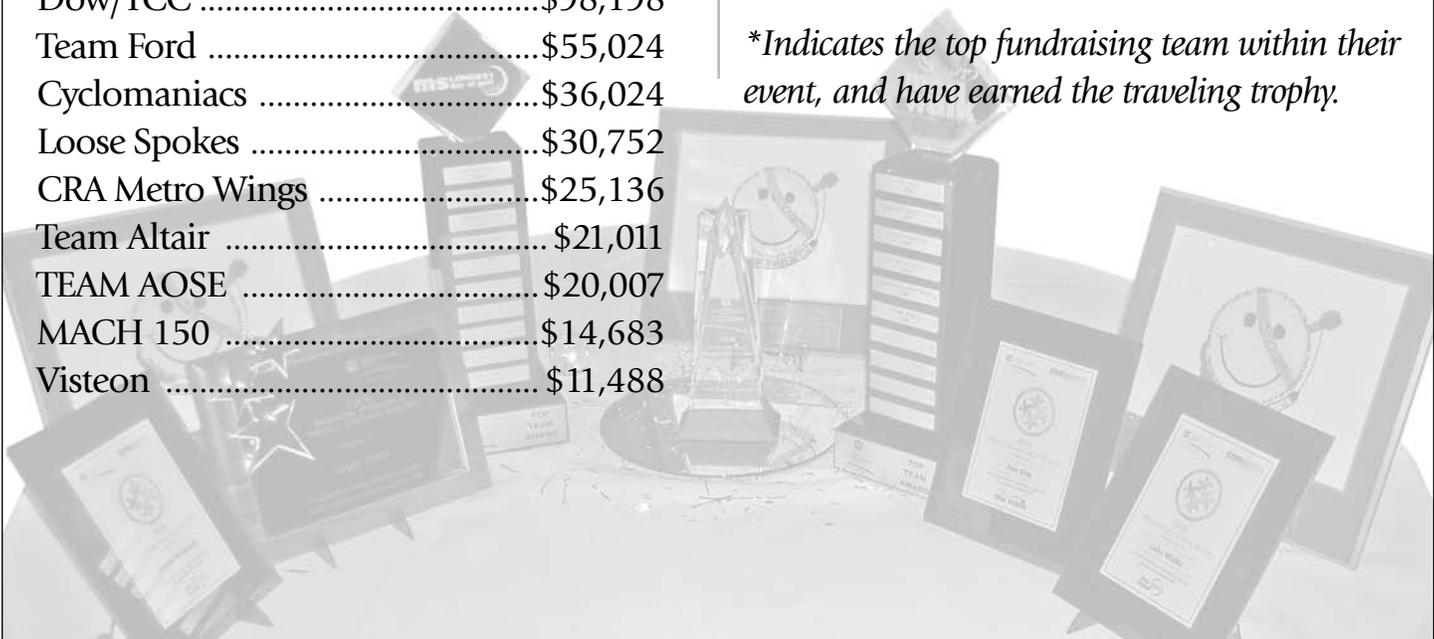
MS Longest Day of Golf

Team Ford*	\$59,693
Team Pfizer	\$28,289
Team Grip It & Rip It	\$10,740
Team General Motors	\$10,223
Team Miller	\$6,164
Team Balmforth	\$5,590
Team Golf 4 Nancy	\$4,840
Team Angela	\$4,715
Destiny	\$4,537
Team State Farm	\$4,090

Marathon Strides Against MS

Fartlek Founders*	\$8,155
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**Indicates the top fundraising team within their event, and have earned the traveling trophy.*



TeamMS...Together closing in on a cure.

Community raises record-breaking numbers for MS!

Nearly 9,000 people participated in the 2006 Christopher & Banks MS Walk. Not only did they participate, but with the support of friends, family and sponsors of the National MS Society, they rose to the challenge and raised \$100,000 over goal, totaling more than \$1.4 million! This incredible effort will help us continue to fight MS by contributing to the sorely needed dollars for research, programs and services. This is why we walk!

Plans for the 2007 Christopher & Banks MS Walk are already underway at 13 locations statewide. As always, the Society thanks everyone for their commitment to the MS community and hopes to see everyone out in the spring ready to walk over MS!

Putt with a Purpose in 2007, Register Today!

It's almost that time of year again...grab your clubs and get ready to hit the links for the 2007 General Motors MS Longest Day of Golf. In 2006, we saw a 30 percent increase in participation to nearly 900 golfers and we hope to continue this amazing surge of involvement in 2007. Fifty great courses across the state are waiving their greens fees throughout the month of May...don't delay, organize a team and register today!

MS Bike Tour...new and improved

Meeting a challenge that can change the lives of thousands is extremely rewarding, therefore, it's back and better than ever. With new names in 2007, the MS Bike Tour will give riders a great sense of accomplish-

ment. The West Michigan Tour (June 9-10) has added a one-day 30-mile option, while the Mid Michigan Tour (July 14-15) has a new start/finish location at Lake Fenton High School. Together we will Start to Finish MS...ride on!

Bowling spectacular will return for another year

Mike and Brooke Maroth will join the Society for a second year as hosts of the Annual Strike Out MS Bowling Spectacular on Sunday, August 12, 2007. The partnership with the Detroit Tigers is also back in full swing with the National MS Society Night at Comerica Park taking place on Monday, August 13, 2007 as the Tigers take on the Oakland A's. With the support of the entire Maroth and Detroit Tiger's families, this year's event is sure to be another out of the park success.

Marathon runners took to the streets of Detroit

Marathon Strides Against Multiple Sclerosis (MSAMS) wrapped up the 2006 season with the Detroit Free Press/Flagstar Bank International Marathon on October 29, 2006 with more than 100 participants. Great spirit filled the more than 40 volunteers who braved the chilly weather to distribute fluids to more than 15,000 runners. There are many more opportunities nationwide to raise money to eradicate MS. If you have plans to lace up your running shoes this spring...register now for MSAMS and join in the fight against MS! Find out more about MSAMS by visiting www.nationalmssociety.org/mig

Amigo Deluxe Wheelchair and Amigo Lift for van, seat lift goes up and down, needs to be unbolted from van floor, \$5,000 total.

Call Bob 586-786-0368.

Condo, fully handicapped accessible, located in Troy, 3 bed ranch, \$145,000. *Call Darlene 248-703-4823.*

Jazzy 1103 Ultra Electric Wheelchair, brand new, power lift seat, reasonable price. *Call 517-625-7754.*

Pride Health Care Legend SC-300 3-Wheel Electric Scooter, expandable flip-up padded arms, 360 degree orthopedically designed swivel seat, handy storage compartment, Anti-tip wheels, coinvent on board battery charger, ample foot space, fingertip controls, electronic variable speed control, \$350. *Call Jim 248-553-9428.*

Rebo Scooter, three wheeler, one and a half years old, used twice, \$800. Six foot aluminum folding ramp, new, \$250. *Call 248-250-4236.*

Bruno Scooter Lift for trunk of car, like new, \$300 or best offer. *Call Patricia 616-891-8892.*

Electric Wheelchair, five modes to operate (hand or mouth), battery recharger, two cushions (Gel and RHO), **Bed Assist Rail, Hand Control Extension for Driving a Car, Walker, Transfer Board, Grab Bar, Hand Straightener.** *Call 810-672-9542.*

Electrical Wheel, never been used, reversible for left or right hands, color blue, leg rests, oxygen holder, \$5,000. *Call Shirley 231-832-4455.*

Pronto Sure-Step Electric Wheelchair, new, \$3,000. *Call Ralph 989-922-4111.*

Pride Jazzy Power Chair 1103 Ultra, Indoor and Outdoor, Excellent Condition, Never used outside, Under 2 years old, new batteries, \$3500. *Call 616-791-7646.*



Michigan Chapter, Inc.

National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Michigan Chapter, Inc.
21311 Civic Center Drive
Southfield, MI 48076-3911

Closing in on a cure

**FREE MATTER
for the Blind &
Handicapped**