



CONNECTION

MOVING TOWARD A WORLD FREE OF MS

January - March 2008

Central North Carolina Chapter

\$250,000 Gift to Fast Forward™ Pledged by Dr. and Mrs. Michael J. Morykwas at 'An Evening with David Lander' Dinner

We are grateful to those of you who supported or attended "An Evening with David Lander," presented by Dr. and Mrs. Michael J. Morykwas, honorary chairs and event underwriters, on Friday, August 24th at the Old Town Club in Winston Salem. Paul Donohoe and Barbara McWhorter served as general chairpersons of this tremendous event that not only yielded funds for both our local Chapter and the Fast Forward™ initiative, but also raised awareness about MS. Comedian and MS Ambassador, David Lander gave the keynote address and Joyce Nelson, President and CEO of the National MS Society, shared a promising research update about genetics. David Lander is best known for his role as 'Squiggy' on the Laverne & Shirley show.



Dr. and Mrs Morykwas with David Lander and Joyce Nelson

The highlight of the evening was the surprise presentation of a \$250,000 pledge by Dr. and Mrs. Michael J. Morykwas to the Fast Forward™ initiative. This National MS Society project was founded to bring people with all forms of MS more effective treatments, faster. Its goal is to dra-

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With the 2007 BB&T MS Tour to Tanglewood a Success, Planning for 2008 is Underway!

The Central NC Chapter held its 22nd BB&T MS Tour to Tanglewood on September 15 & 16, 2007. The Tour started at Volvo of North America in Greensboro and the cyclists rode to Tanglewood Park in Clemmons. More than 1,400 cyclists cruised along a scenic rural route through parts of Guilford, Forsyth and Davidson Counties ranging from 20 to 140 miles. The cyclists did the return trip on Sunday. The cyclists raised a record **\$1, 115,513** for MS services and programs and to support national MS research. Also involved were more than 700 volunteers! We could

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**Publication of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Central North Carolina Chapter**

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If You or Someone You Know Has MS

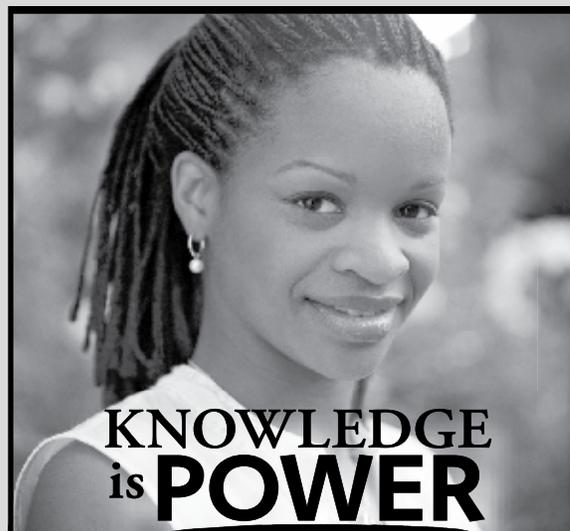
Studies show that early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can reduce future disease activity and improve quality of life for many people with multiple sclerosis. Talk to your health care professional or contact the National MS Society at www.nationalmssociety.org or 1-800-344-4867 to learn about ways to help manage multiple sclerosis and about current research that may one day reveal a cure.

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Information provided by the Society is based upon professional advice, published, experience and expert opinion. Information provided in response to questions does not constitute therapeutic recommendations or prescriptions. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society recommends that all questions and information be discussed with a personal physician.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is dedicated to ending the devastating effects of MS.

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Central North Carolina Chapter



Knowledge is Power is a six-week, free, at-home educational program for people who are newly diagnosed. Mail or e-mail formats. To register, call 1-800-344-4867, or visit nationalmssociety.org/knowledge.

This is why we're here.

HOW TO CONTACT US

National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Central North Carolina Chapter
2211 West Meadowview Road, Suite 30
Greensboro, NC 27407
336-299-4136
1-800-FIGHT-MS

National Multiple Sclerosis Society
www.nationalmssociety.org
Email: nat@nmss.org

Central North Carolina Chapter
www.nationalmssociety.org/ncc
Email: ncc@nmss.org

Chapter Podcast and Blog
www.cncmschapternews.com

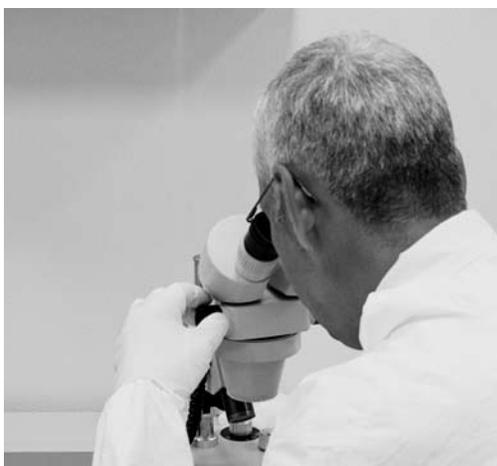
Society-Funded Researchers Discover Two New “MS risk” Genes

MS is not a single-gene disorder. Researchers have already concluded that the disease involves many genes interacting with some environmental trigger or triggers.

Locating the specific genes that are associated with a higher risk for MS can tell scientists more about how the disease works—and may lead to new therapies.

For more than a decade, the National MS Society has taken the lead, aggressively funding MS genetics research. It helped launch the International

Multiple Sclerosis Genetics Consortium (IMSGC), a collaborative group of researchers with expertise in genetics, database design, and immunology who pool the large amounts of data needed for genetics studies.



New findings

This year, the IMSGC completed the largest genome scan for MS to date. Using a DNA chip that maps 500,000 individual genetic locations they found two genetic variations strongly associated with MS.

The variations were found in the genes for interleukin-2 receptor-alpha and interleukin-7 receptor-alpha, both of which control cytokines—the messenger proteins that regulate immune cells. Interleukin-2 and -7 have been associated with T cells that have the power to turn off an immune attack.

Research has shown that interleukin-2 is involved in other auto-immune diseases, including type 1 diabetes.

The IMSGC published these findings in an early online edition of *The New England Journal of Medicine* (July 29, 2007). The study was jointly funded by the Society and Harvard University. All of the data from the gene scan is being made publicly available to aid future research.

Two studies confirm findings

Two papers published online in *Nature Genetics* on July 29 reported similar findings associating interleukin-7 with MS.

In the first, an international group of collaborators funded in part by the Society explored three genes that had earlier been associated with MS. The group was able to confirm an association with the gene for interleukin-7.

The second paper—by collaborators in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Norway—followed up an earlier study and also identified interleukin-7.

The road ahead

The findings of all three studies suggest possible new targets for better MS therapies. One therapy is already being tested. The monoclonal antibody “daclizumab” (PDL BioPharma and Biogen Idec) targets interleukin-2 receptor-alpha.

Some Plain Talk About Life Insurance

Can a person with MS purchase life insurance? This is one of many insurance-related questions that may arise after a diagnosis of MS. The facts provide a somewhat mixed outlook for those who hope to include life insurance in their personal financial plans.

A survey of Society members living with MS conducted last year revealed that nearly 70% have a life insurance policy, although most of them obtained it prior to diagnosis. Slightly more than half of those who tried to get life insurance for the first time after diagnosis were turned down. But among those who obtained it after diagnosis, 70.1% reported no difficulty in purchasing it. About 16% reported being charged a higher rate because of MS and 20% said their coverage was limited



due to their disease. (It is not known if the applicants who were turned down were different from those who were accepted. Were they older, for example, or more severely disabled?)

Risk is a complicated concept, because it relies on averages. A few people with MS who develop very progressive disease die prematurely of its complications (such as respiratory infections, for example). Thus overall life expectancy in MS is considered to be 95% of normal. Insurance companies give their best policy terms to the “best bets”—to people who are in perfect health. But that doesn’t mean a person with MS can’t obtain a policy, as our research showed. Here are some general tips for shopping for life insurance:

- Maximize your opportunities to obtain life insurance through your own or your spouse’s employer. (Your spouse should do the same!)
- An insurance broker could save you a lot of time and frustration. Call an MS Navigator at our Chapter to help you find one.

- Apply for life insurance as early in your disease process as possible, before MS has a chance to impair your functioning any further.
- Never try to hide your diagnosis from an insurance company or a broker working on your behalf. Failure to disclose any requested information is fraud, which could bring very severe (even criminal) penalties.
- If you are not satisfied with the offers you receive, keep searching.

If you are ultimately unable to purchase the life insurance coverage you are looking for, a good financial planner may be able to suggest other strategies to help you reach your financial goals and provide protection for your future. Ask your MS Navigator to help you identify a financial planner with whom you can review all the issues.

Program Updates - Mark your Calendars!

Yoga for MS

Sunrise Yoga Studio
 Clemmons, NC
 Wednesdays 10:00 – 11:00 am
 Fee is \$8 / class
 Classes taught by Valerie Kiser, RYT.
 Call 336-778-1233 for more information or
 visit www.sunriseyoga.net.

You can still register for these teleconferences held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30pm:
 January 8 – **“Mood, Memory and MS”**
 February 12 - **“MS and Intimacy”**
 March 11 – **“MS 101”**
 Register online at www.nationalmssociety.org/ncc or call 1-800-FIGHT-MS.

“Boot Camp and Beyond”

4 sessions to educate, enlighten and entertain you!
 All sessions held at the Embassy Suites in Greensboro
 February 19, 6:00pm: **“Just the Facts”** with Kathleen Costello, MS, CRNP, MSCN
 March 4, 6:00pm: **“Keeping an Eye on MS”** with Dr. Tariq Bhatti
 March 18, 6:00pm: **“For the Health of it: MS and Nutrition”**



Call now to request information packets for:

- “Camp Carefree Goes Country”** in Stokesdale, NC, May 2-4, 2008
- “Refresh and Revitalize”** Couples Retreat at Caraway Conference Center in Asheboro, NC, May 30 – June 1, 2008.
- “Building Your House of Wellness”** Retreat for people diagnosed with MS 3 years or less at the Broyhill Inn and Conference Center, September 26-28, 2008

Save the Date:
 May 21, 2008
 For Research Evening
 with Special Guest Dr. John Richert, EVP,
 Research and Clinical Programs
 National MS Society
 Location: TBA

Are you a person with MS who is looking for a way to help others affected by MS?

You may want to look into becoming a volunteer peer supporter. In 2008, the Chapter will be holding a peer supporter training that will teach you how to offer information, companionship, emotional support, and encouragement via the telephone to peers affected by MS. Call the Chapter at 1-800-FIGHT-MS to request an application into this program.

What is CIS?

A person diagnosed with CIS, or Clinically Isolated Syndrome, typically has experienced a single neurological symptom, such as partial vision loss, vertigo, double vision, or weakness. The symptom lasts at least 24 hours and may even continue for weeks, but then goes away, often without treatment.

"[CIS] typically occurs out of the blue in an otherwise healthy person," said J. Theodore Phillips, MD, PhD, director of the MS Center at Texas Neurology in Dallas. "It appears to be occurring in an isolated fashion." To be diagnosed with CIS, all other explanations for the symptom have

to be ruled out.

Is CIS an early sign of MS?

The big question with CIS is whether it indicates early development of MS. The second question is whether early intervention can help slow down that development. In three large clinical trials, early treatment appeared to delay a second episode. The results were so positive, the FDA extended the labeling of Avonex and Betaseron to include people who have had just one clinical

episode if they have multiple MRI-detected lesions consistent with MS.

Is early intervention necessary?

"If started early in the appropriate person, these medications can be important in slowing down the progression into classic MS," Dr. Phillips said. "But who is the appropriate person? Do I know that this single event will evolve into MS?" Disease-modifying drugs are expensive, inconvenient, and do not cure MS, he pointed out.

MRI evidence makes the case

Long-term studies show that what a person's MRI looked like at the time of a CIS largely indicated whether they went on to develop MS.

"If the MRI is completely normal with the exception of abnormality associated with the CIS, then that person has a relatively low risk of MS even 15 years out," said Dr. Phillips. "But if there are multiple lesions consistent with MS, that person has a pretty high risk." When that's the case, many neurologists recommend early intervention with a disease-modifying drug. Insurance coverage for Avonex or Betaseron shouldn't be a problem, since the FDA now includes CIS as an indication for both drugs.



MS Awareness Week 2008: JOIN THE MOVEMENT



The Central NC Chapter staff members at a downtown awareness event during MS Awareness Week 2007.

Last year, the Central NC Chapter 'hit the streets' in downtown Greensboro with staff, volunteers and clients to spread the word about MS and give out some cool stuff in the process. We wanted to inform people what it means to live with MS. We challenged street-goers to "Make Their Mark on MS" by signing our posters and wearing an MS sticker for the entire work day.

This year, we're building on our good start.

Mark your calendars: MS Awareness Week is March 10-14, 2008

We want you to join the movement.

We are planning several activities during the week to raise awareness about the chapter and living with MS. We will be mailing more information, so be on the lookout for a **MS Awareness Week Calendar of Events!** We will include things that you can participate in and some new ideas on how you can help us in our fight!

MS stops people from moving. We exist to make sure it doesn't.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Make a difference...be a MS Advocate

The Central North Carolina Chapter is in the process of organizing a Chapter local advocacy network which consists of local Activist Teams for each of the counties that the Central North Carolina Chapter Serves. This local CNC Network will collaborate to support the NC CAN (state and federal) advocacy issues. If you would like to know how you could participate and make a difference, please contact Jessica Thomas, Chapter Programs and Services Manager, at 336-299-4136 or at jessica.thomas@ncc.nmss.org.

Central NC Chapter Self-Help Groups

Burlington

2nd Thursday of the month, 10:00 AM
Alamance Regional Medical Center
Harriet 336-538-1143
Carolyn 336-584-6888

Davie County

2nd Monday of the month, 6:00 PM
Davie County Hospital
Carolyn 336-998-6398
Kathy 336-998-3314

Elkin / Tri-County

4th Monday of the month, 11:00 AM
Hugh Chatham Memorial Hospital, Elkin
The Synergy room
Deb 336-835-8419
Kim 336-835-3835

Greensboro

But You Look So Good
2nd Saturday of the month
Lisa 336-454-6785

Greensboro

Aquatics Exercise Group
M-W-F 11:00 AM
Spears YMCA
Denise 336-643-3648

Lexington

Shelia 336-746-5420

Men's Group - Greensboro

Every Wednesday, 8:30 AM
St. Francis Episcopal Church
St. Mike's House
John 336-545-0100

Spouses Group - Greensboro

2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30 PM
Hemphill Branch Library
Donna 336-379-0994

Women Let's Talk - Greensboro

1st Wednesday of the month, 10:30 AM
St. Francis Episcopal Church
St. Mike's House

Jen 336-392-4006
Sharon 336-638-7152

Kernersville

Support Works - Women's Group
Sandy 336-993-6360

Kernersville

Newly Diagnosed Group
4th Thursday of the month, 6:30 PM
Panera Bread in Kernersville
Jen 336-392-4006

King

MS P.A.L.S.
2nd Tuesday of the month, 6:30 PM
First Baptist Church
Candy 336-985-5636
Paula 336-375-0713

Reidsville

Friends with a Purpose
4th Tuesday of the month, 6:00 PM
Annie Penn Hospital
Ana 336-616-1001

Rockingham County

Let's Talk MS
3rd Thursday of the month, 1:00 PM
Morehead at the Mall, Eden
Debbie 336-623-5098
Jan 336-432-5619

Winston-Salem

You, Me and the Lord, too!
Every Tuesday of the month, 10:00 AM
Cornerstone Baptist Church
Dolores 336-784-8460

Wilkesboro (Postponed until April)

2nd Thursday of the month, 6:00 PM
Pa-Paw's Bar-B-Que Restaurant
Wanda 336-667-1889
Kent 336-903-1539

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not possibly manage such an extraordinary event without all of their help!

"This is an extraordinary event for a very important cause. Not only do I ride because of the fantastic route and the great exercise, but because my friend has MS and I want to support her and the thousands of others living with this disease," said Bill Nance, who has participated in the event for 17 years. "With our help, I know that we will move towards a world free of MS."



On November 13th, the annual Bike Awards Party was held to honor some of the shining participants in 2007. Among the recipients were Ron Booker, who accepted the Suzanne Bland Hustle Award; Carolyn Myers, who accepted the Charles Brockington Outstanding Achievement Award; Frank Harris of Team Canterbury received the Team Captain of the Year award; and Road-worthy for Best Rookie Team. We gave out a lot of awards and had a good time wrapping up the 2007 BB&T MS Tour to Tanglewood season!

The 2008 bike MS: BB&T Tour to Tanglewood is already well underway in the planning stages and we want you to mark your calendars! This year the "ride" will be the weekend of SEPTEMBER 6 & 7! Registration opened January 1st so be sure to sign up early! We will see you in September!



Featuring Ellen Sue Stern
Motivational Speaker and Author

Featuring Wendy Booker
Marathoner and Mountain Climber

Winston-Salem MS Luncheon

8th Annual Greensboro Women Against MS Luncheon

Tuesday, February 5th
Forsyth Country Club

Wednesday, March 12th
The Empire Room

Dedicated in Memory of Ann Parrish Griffen

Table hostess, sponsorship and honorarium opportunities available.
For more information call 299-4136 or visit
www.nationalmssociety.org/ncc

Walk MS: If Not You, Then Who?

You've seen it, the ripple effect you get when you throw a stone in a pond. Such small, easy movements, but those little waves eventually reach all the way to the edge of the pond. Just as stones in a pond, the simplest of efforts can have powerful and far-reaching effects...

We're passionate about eradicating multiple sclerosis. We know you are, too, but we have a surprising statistic to share. Based on last year's Walk MS records, only about 4-5% of those living with MS are participating. That means 95% of those who have the most to gain are not involved.

So this year, we're calling on everyone (and that means you!) to put their passion into action and join the movement to end this devastating disease by walking, fundraising, and spreading the word about Walk MS.

With three walks in the Triad area, there are plenty of opportunities for everyone to get involved in whatever way is best for them. How?

- Join us at a Walk MS event near you as a walker or a volunteer and experience what happens when thousands of people who share our vision let the light of hope shine.
- Take it a step further and form a team through your church, school, club, or place of employment and recruit others to walk and fundraise with you.
- Can't be on site that day? Register anyway and commit to raising funds that just may lead to a breakthrough therapy.
- Ensure the word about Walk MS ripples through your community. Talk about the walk with colleagues, send information to your network of contacts, post registration brochures at your gym, or on your community bulletin board.

Registration is open, teams are being formed, and fundraising progress is already underway, but there's still plenty of time to organize and plan how you'd like to participate in this year's activities. No matter what you decide, the National MS Society offers the tools you need to make it easy including fundraising aids and a fully functional online system that tracks personal as well as team fundraising progress.

Of course it would be great if the entire community came out to support the Walk MS event in their area, but the ripple effect has to start somewhere. We hope it's with you. Go ahead. Jump in. Because if not you, then who?

To register, or for more information on how to get involved, visit <http://walkncc.nationalMSSociety.org> or call 1-800-FIGHT-MS or 336-299-4136.

**If not You,
then Who?**



<http://walkncc.nationalMSSociety.org>

SIGN UP FOR THE 2008 WALK MS EVENT!

Fill out this form and send to: 2211 W. Meadowview Road, Suite 30; Greensboro, NC 27407
OR you can fax it to (336) 855-3039

SAVE TIME! REGISTER ONLINE AT <http://WalkNCC.NationalMSSociety.org>

Mr. Mrs. Miss Other: _____
 First _____ MI _____ Last _____ Suffix _____
 Email _____ Home Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (_____) _____
 Employer _____
 Gender (circle one): M F
 Date of birth: (MM/DD/YY)

WALK LOCATION

- 3/29 Asheboro: NC Zoo
- 4/12 Rockingham County: Penn House, Reidsville
- 4/26 Triad: Fourth of July Park, Kernersville

TEAM SIGN-UP

Team Name: _____
 Team Captain: _____
 Team Type: Corporate Friends/Family Place of Worship Organization School Other
 I would like more information on forming a team.

PARTICIPATION TYPE:

- Walker
- Virtual Walker

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

How many years have you participated in the Walk MS? If this is your first year, enter 0.

Your connection to MS: _____

- Please send me a fundraising kit
- Please send me Walk MS brochures and a poster
- GEMS Club: I agree to turn in at least \$400 in contributions by March 12 (must sign up by Feb 29)

Linking Lives:

- I have MS
- I walk in honor of someone I know with MS
- I would like to get to know someone with MS. Please give me a Linking Lives partner.
- I enjoy the event and walk to support the cause

T-shirt size (circle one): S M L XL XXL

Personal Fundraising Goal \$ _____

MS Caucus Gains Power

This summer the Society announced the new Congressional Multiple Sclerosis Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives. This Caucus is the first of its kind, and provides the MS movement with champions in Congress to support MS issues. Congressmen Russ Carnahan (D, Missouri) and Michael Burgess (R, Texas) are co-chairing. As of late September, 38 members have joined. (For the current list, visit msactivist.blogspot.com.)



Congressman Russ Carnahan

Keep the momentum building

The MS Caucus gives the movement to end MS an effective presence on Capitol Hill. If your U.S. Representative has not yet signed on, encourage him or her to do so. Go to nationalmssociety.org/advocacy, click on **Announcing New Congressional MS Caucus**, and enter your ZIP Code.



Congressman Michael Burgess

The push for new MS research funding

For the past year, the Society and thousands of MS activists have been aggressively pursuing a new avenue of federal funding for MS research: Legislation that would designate \$15 million for MS research through the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) at the Department of Defense.

Unfortunately, the bill that passed in the House on August 5, 2007, did not include funding for MS research. But MS activists did not give up. In late September, Congressman John Murtha (D, Pennsylvania) finally agreed to fight for at least \$10 million for MS research during the conference committee, which came after the Senate voted on the bill.

When the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee approved their FY 2008 spending in mid-September, the bill included language to support MS research. Even though it was not in the program we requested, it will provide a new avenue for funding. We will continue pursuing CDMRP.

About the funds

The CDMRP provides funding for research through the Department of Defense as directed by members of Congress. Activists believe that MS research would be an appropriate target of these funds: A study published in 2004 identified more than 5,000 cases of MS among veterans that were deemed "service-connected."

In late 2006, the Society began a nationwide petition drive urging Congress to support funding for MS research through the CDMRP. The petition garnered more than 100,000 signatures.

In March 2007, MS activists who attended the annual MS Public Policy Conference in Washington, DC, brought the issue to Capitol Hill in person.

What's next

For the latest, go to msactivist.blogspot.com, and to learn how to help, join the movement at nationalmssociety.org/advocacy.

Local Woman Walks 50 miles, Raises Thousands Each Year for a Cure Through MS Challenge Walk

"The walk will challenge you, the experience will change you."

Sarah Minnick was listening to the radio one day in 2002, when she heard an ad that peaked her curiosity. Having been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in the late 90s, the ad was for an event called the MS Challenge Walk, a 3-day, 50 mile physical and philanthropic journey where participants raise a minimum of \$1,500 to participate. She called the MS Society for more information and after learning about the tools and resources available to help her succeed, signed up.

Sarah has returned every year since then, and inspires others with her courage and spirit to join her—her team last year consisted of friends from across the state and raised more than \$21,000. In 2007, her daughter, Ashley, age 11, helped her fundraise for the event and volunteered that weekend for the first time, giving the event even more meaning for Sarah and her hope that one day the world will be free from MS.

"The MS Challenge Walk has given me hope and strength that through "numbers" we can find a cure," says Sarah when asked why she returns every year. "I walk because I can and don't take my steps for granted. Even though this disease has challenged me, it has not gotten the best of me, yet."

To join Sarah and hundreds of others April 25-27, 2008 at Palm Key, SC or learn more about the event, call 336-299-4136 or register online at www.nationalmssociety.org/hope.



Sarah Minnick and her Walk MS Team

New Self-Help Groups: Join one in your area today!

Leaps and Bounds Self-Help Group

Old Town Community Center
 4550 Shattalon Dr
 Winston-Salem
 Meeting schedule:
 1st and 3rd Monday / 10:00 am – 12:00 noon
 2nd and 4th Monday / 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
 Contact: Theresa: 924-2707

Greensboro Self-Help Group

Calvary Christian Center
 811 Jefferson Rd
 Greensboro
 Every 3rd Tuesday / 11:30 am – 12:30 pm
 Meetings begin January 15th
 Contact Jackline: 681-4025

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matically increase the number of projects in the MS drug pipeline, thereby increasing the probability of effective new treatments to reach the people who need them.

Dr. Morykwas became familiar with the Fast Forward™ initiative through his work on the Board of the Directors for the National MS Society. In addition he and his wife Mardene, who was diagnosed with MS several years ago, have been honored with the National MS Society's Circle of Distinction Award for their service, among several other awards.

This exceptionally generous pledge demonstrates the Morykwas' ongoing dedication and willingness to serve as a catalyst to end the devastating effects of MS for the approximately 2.5 million people living with MS worldwide and those who may be diagnosed. There is no cure for MS, but initiatives like Fast Forward™ offer

hope. They further challenged event attendees to follow their lead and pledge their support to end MS. In addition to the pledge from the Morykwas, the dinner raised more than \$19,000 for the Central North Carolina Chapter.

Over the past several years, the Morykwas' tremendous generosity through events like this one and additional contributions has allowed the Chapter to expand our public education programs and increase programs for our clients and their families. Their support has allowed us to greatly enhance our equipment loan closet, our physician outreach, financial assistance, respite care, scholarship and care management programs, as well as many other programs and services. They have also given their exceptional support to the Promise:2010 campaign and other MS Society approved research projects.



Everyday Heroes

Last year Jeanne Clem of Kentucky wrote the national office: "What I want for Christmas is to hear from everyday heroes who deserve to be heard. You hear celebrities' stories on the news. But you don't hear, "Two years ago today, Jeanne Clem was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and her employment along with bits of her life were terminated—but here she is now, celebrating small victories!"

To accommodate this universal need, the Society created **FaceofMS.org** in March 2006. People have been posting stories there ever since. Here are two of them.



Tom Young, Ohio

About 10 years or so ago, I was

diagnosed with "probable" MS. Later the diagnosis became more definite....

My family MD said, "expect interesting symptoms." He was certainly right about that. Some of the interesting symptoms included a sensation of flashing lights when I was in total darkness. Of course the less interesting symptoms bother me the most. The real bummer is that I have almost no sense of balance. I can only remain upright if I can see a horizon.

The progression of the disease has been very slow because I've been taking a very expensive drug. I'm still working. I did, however, give up flying airplanes. If my sense of balance ever comes back the first thing I'm going to try to get is the required medical certificate and fly an airplane again.

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Michele Mogck, Montana

I was diagnosed six years ago, shortly after the birth of my beautiful daughter. People look at me strangely when I tell them that I feel MS is probably one of the best things that has ever happened to me. I have always been very driven—focused—never letting anything stand in my way. I was so focused, I was never, really, in the present.



I've learned not to take things for granted—and to be thankful for everything that I do have. I shudder to think that had it not been for my MS, how quickly life would have passed without me taking the time to cherish, love, and just enjoy.

Visit FaceofMS.org for many many more stories—and to add (or update) your own!

Linking Lives: A Partner's Perspective

I loved the whole idea and experience of Linking Lives. It breaks my heart that David and I haven't met yet, but it will happen, I just know it will. He has been so nice to me. We talk to each other still via email.

I am so proud to have been linked with someone as dedicated as David. He cares a lot about helping to find a cure.

The program helps the rider get a chance to know a person with MS (if they don't already). When they are riding and get tired, they can think of that person to keep them going.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be in Linking Lives. Next year I want to be David's cheerleader. I want him to know how much it means to me for him to have done the ride in my honor. He will always have a place in my heart.

On a personal note, I was diagnosed in 2003. I am married to John. We have two daughters, Samantha and Haley, ages 6 and 2. I work part time as a substitute teacher for grades K-5. I also make crafts; I do wood burning. I also like to cook and try new recipes all the time.

Note from Jen Horton, Linking Lives volunteer coordinator: Carlann partnered with David for the 2007 MS Tour to Tanglewood. Both were new to the Linking Lives program. I asked Carlann for her story because she and David showed real perseverance to forge their special partnership. This is what Carlann had to say about the experience.

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

We are excited to announce that we have brand new volunteer opportunities with the Chapter. We are recruiting specialized volunteers such as attorneys, dietitians, personal trainers, financial advisors, counselors and handy persons to volunteer their services to assist people with MS. As a volunteer you could be involved by answering questions, being a speaker at a Chapter program or doing handy work around someone's house and yard. This is a great chance to use your expertise and talent to help your community!

As the year ends, we are starting to prepare for the upcoming walks in the spring. We are CALLING ALL WALK VOLUNTEERS for Walk MS in Asheboro on March 29th, Rockingham on April 12th and the Triad Walk held on April 26th.

If you are interested in being a specialized volunteer or walk volunteer or know someone who is interested, please contact the Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator, Stephanie Phipps, at stephanie.phipps@ncc.nmss.org, call 336-299-4136 or visit www.nationalmssociety/ncc for more information.



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