

MS = skating on thin ice



Central & Southeast Ohio  
651G Lakeview Plaza Blvd.  
Worthington, OH 43085  
800.344.4867

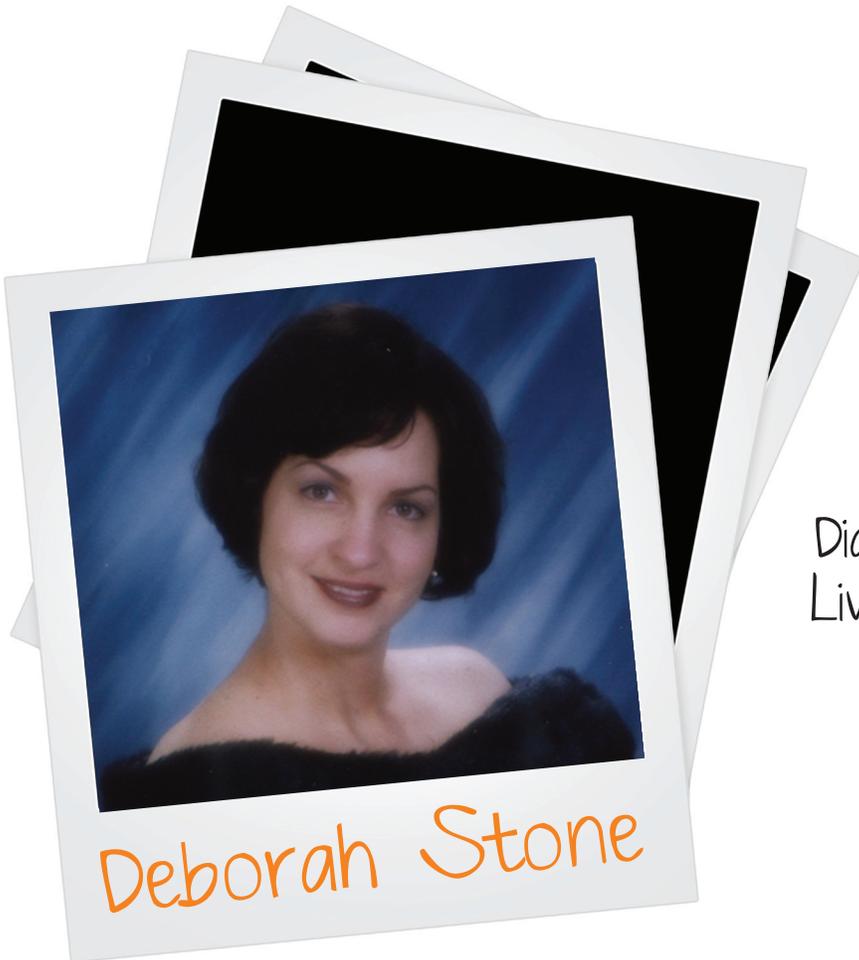
Northeast Ohio  
6155 Rockside Rd., Suite 202  
Independence, OH 44131  
800.344.4867

Established in 1953, the Chapter is an important part of a nationwide network that advances the Society's mission to achieve a world free of multiple sclerosis. We provide quality programs and services to over 10,000 Ohioans living with MS and their families in a 38-county area. Areas served include the Akron, Cleveland, Columbus and Youngstown metropolitan areas as well as all Central and Eastern Ohio counties. Our two offices are located in Independence and Worthington.

## National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Ohio Buckeye Chapter



National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society  
Ohio Buckeye  
Chapter



Diagnosed with MS in 2007  
Living with MS for 5 years

This is my story...

### What is your connection to multiple sclerosis?

I have multiple sclerosis.

### How has MS impacted your life?

I have been unable to work for the past 18 months. I have applied for Social Security benefits and been denied for the third time. I am awaiting a hearing with Social Security and had to hire an attorney to represent me. I suffer from depression, fatigue, numbness, memory loss, and deal with pain constantly. I have lost many friends and miss daily interaction with my former coworkers and clients. MS can very isolating and unpredictable. I have several doctor appointments monthly and receive a five hour infusion treatment once a month. I often have to cancel or change plans due to my MS symptoms. I have an eight year old daughter that I can't play outside with if it is too hot or too cold, because it exacerbates my symptoms, or I am too weak. It has financially drained my family. Over the past three years we have filed bankruptcy, foreclosed on our two-story home, had my car repossessed, and I lost my wonderful and fulfilling job.

### Are you receiving or have received assistance from any services or programs?

I have not received assistance.

### Have you experienced issues with any services or programs? If so, which ones?

I have experienced issues with care giving, durable medical equipment, employment, housing, insurance, medications and prescriptions, and Social Security.

### Please tell us about the issue.

My husband does most of the cooking and housework. I have had to purchase a cane, walker, shower chair, and grab bars in the bathroom. After being diagnosed with MS in 2007, I went back to work on a part-time basis after my initial medical leave which was about nine months. I was terminated due to the fact that I exhausted my FMLA. I was rehired and worked part time. In 2008, I needed a hysterectomy-which was MS related due to a prolapsed uterus-and was again terminated because I did not qualify for FMLA. I returned to work after surgery and about one year later I resigned. I kept calling in sick and was unable to be reliable and timely as I used to be.

I was forced to move out of my two-story home because I initially was unable to walk up the stairs easily. Our house foreclosed and my generous mother purchased our family a one-story flat condominium close to her in order for her to help. Insurance co-pays, premiums and prescriptions are a constant stressor because we cannot financially afford these doctor appointments and treatments. Social Security process was and currently creates anxiety with the lengthy and confusing, long and drawn out process.

### What else should we know about your unique story?

I used to be a vibrant, reliable employee who was very outgoing and had lots of friends, energy, and drive. I loved my job working at a day spa and was in decent shape physically and mentally. After MS took over my life, I am now a depressed person that can barely take care of myself and my eight year old daughter. My marriage of 16 years has suffered so much from this disease that we are on the verge of divorce. I now feel out of touch with the world I once new and it has taken over life as I knew it. I often get sick frequently due to my low immune system and that exacerbates my symptoms and makes me utterly worthless. Most days I require nine to ten hours of sleep and will often nap for one or two hours due to major fatigue. I experience pain on a daily basis which is very taxing on my body and mind. I currently visit a psychologist twice monthly and a psychiatrist twice a year. I am taking two antidepressant/anti-anxiety medications.

Thank you for listening to my story!

Deborah Stone - Powell, Ohio

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