



bike ~~MS~~ | champions

Name: Don Bowles

Diagnosed: 1987

Age: 65

Hobbies: Volunteering, playing games,
watching his grandchildren

In late August of 1987 while at our lakeside home, I began to notice my left foot was dragging and my left arm was very weak. I made a doctor's appointment when I returned home thinking that I had a pinched nerve in my neck. When I visited the doctor, he immediately wanted to call an ambulance to take me to the hospital. He was afraid I was having a stroke or something more serious. After a two-day stay in the hospital and having an MRI, I was diagnosed with MS. After a course of heavy steroids, all symptoms disappeared for a period of about 10 years. I was able to complete my 25 years of service with the Tulsa Fire Department and retire with full benefits.

I have gradually gotten worse with each passing year since 1998. At this point, I am confined to a wheelchair. I no longer can walk and my stamina is very limited. Heat is a very big hardship on me as well. I had a 5-bypass heart surgery in July 2010 and am continuing my recovery. MS makes that recovery much worse because I can't use my arms for 5 more weeks. Makes it very hard to transfer from chair to bed and back. I am very thankful for my friends with the MS Society and in our MS support group who have helped us during this recovery.

I loved to do stained glass for a few years but, unfortunately, I cannot do the necessary steps because of limited use of my hands and fingers. I keep busy by playing games on the computer and volunteering with the MS Society, my church and the senior citizen center. I also enjoy helping babysit with our wonderful grandsons

Anything I can do to help the MS Society is a real pleasure because I'm very aware of how much they help those all across the state who suffer from the disease. The office staff is always very appreciative and treats me royally!!

No one wants to find a cure more than me. It would be wonderful if I could regain some use of those abilities I haven't been able to use for years. I would love to see all my friends with MS be able to benefit from new discoveries made toward a treatment or cure. I would like to thank all those who are taking part in Bike MS because it means so much all of us who suffer from MS.