LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

WE CAN’T SAY IT ENOUGH!

Volunteers are the backbone of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Everything we do, including helping people with MS, raising money and setting policy, relies on the time, talent, and dedication of volunteers. For us, it really transcends the simple act of volunteering and becomes a much larger endeavor we call “Community Engagement.” Our relationships with volunteers represent a connection between the Society and every community we operate in around the country.

Society volunteers are most commonly thought of as supporting a fundraising event, or stuffing envelopes in our office for a large mailing. That’s not wrong. Our volunteers do that, but our volunteers also do much, much more. For example, we often draw on the medical community to provide volunteer support to educate people about MS and about MS research. Health professionals and MS researchers volunteer their time because they share our belief in helping people with MS live their best lives, and one really good way to accomplish that is through education. Another example is our day of service volunteers. Teams of volunteers go to homes of those living with MS to help them with household chores.

Another key group of volunteers that support our mission is the Chapter Board of Trustees. They do vital work to set policy, leverage personal networks to generate resources for the Society, actively engage in both program delivery and fundraising, and recruit new volunteers to the table. Their leadership and engagement in our work is core to our success.

If you have a particular skill set that you feel might be helpful to the Society, please do contact us and start the conversation. Who knows where it might lead? By sharing your talents and passion, you can truly make a difference in the lives of those touched by MS.

We hope to hear from you soon!

Lori Espino
President
ANNUAL MEETING RESEARCH UPDATE & EXPO
BREAKTHROUGH MS
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2016 • 9 A.M. - 2 P.M. • 5 LOCATIONS!
Join us for this conference that includes the annual meeting of members, updates on cutting edge MS research, volunteer recognition, and a health, wellness & resource EXPO. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to visit the exhibitors to learn about health, recreation, independence products and services and to network and share experiences with others living with MS. Brunch included.

LOCATIONS AND RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS:
• **Maine**: Hilton Garden Inn, Bangor  
  Speaker/Topic: Nicholas G. LaRocca, PhD, Research: What We Know about Wellness & MS
• **Massachusetts**: Four Points by Sheraton, Norwood  
  Speaker/Topic: Tim Vartanian, MD
• **New Hampshire**: Church Landing, Meredith  
  Speaker/Topic: Tanuja Chitnis, MD, CLIMB Study
• **Rhode Island**: Radisson Airport Hotel, Warwick  
  Speaker/Topic: To Be Determined
• **Vermont**: Capitol Plaza Hotel & Conference Center, Montpelier  
  Speaker/Topic: Maria Houtchens, MD, Women and MS

[PROXY FORM]

Name _________________________________________________
Phone _________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________

___ I will not attend, I assign my proxy vote to Chapter Chair Piper McNealy
___ I will not attend, and I assign my proxy vote to: ________________

Mail this form to:    Lori Espino  
                      National MS Society, Greater New England Chapter  
                      101A First Ave. Waltham, MA 02451

[To attend, go to MSnewengland.org or call 1-800-344-4867.]

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 Society does not endorse products, services, or manufacturers. Such names appear here solely because they are considered valuable information. The Society assumes no liability for the use or contents of any product or service mentioned.
The National Multiple Sclerosis Society has committed $25.3 million to 60 new MS research projects that hold promise toward stopping MS, restoring lost function and ending MS forever. In addition, funding for one-year grants for 11 new pilot projects will allow MS researchers to investigate high-risk, high-potential strategies to understand, treat and manage MS.

Studies that delve into genetic and environmental risk factors for MS include how vitamin D might protect individuals from developing the disease and how the influence of genes on immune cell activity might be a clue to stopping or preventing MS. Other studies are focusing on a range of strategies to stop MS progression or restore function. Following is a sampling of these promising projects.

THE WHY OF PROGRESSIVE MS

Despite advances that have produced disease-modifying therapies for relapsing forms of MS, treatments for progressive MS have remained elusive.

To address that gap, the Society is supporting a large-scale study, SUMMIT (Serially Unified Multicenter Multiple Sclerosis Investigation), to leverage extensive information from long-term monitoring of more than 1,000 people with MS to understand factors that lead to progression. The five-year study will bring together two MS Centers of Excellence, Harvard’s Brigham and Women’s Hospital and the University of California, San Francisco, to develop a database of invaluable information that will be open to researchers anywhere in the world.

THE NATIONAL MS SOCIETY HAS ALSO RENEWED ITS SUPPORT OF PEDIATRIC MS RESEARCH.

Another study, led by Dr. Claudia Lucchinetti and Charles Howe, PhD, at the Mayo Clinic and Foundation in Rochester, Minnesota, will conduct “metabolic profiling” of people with MS in order to better understand the role that metabolic stress, which spans a variety of problems in cells, including energy deficits and failure to recycle unneeded proteins, may play in MS progression.

An interesting study at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis explores the role that sex differences may play in the transition of relapsing-remitting MS, the most common form of the disease in women, to secondary progressive MS. Researchers have found that the entry of harmful immune cells into the brain during MS is partially mediated by a molecule called S1PR2, which occurs in high levels in women with MS. Blocking S1PR2 in mice with an MS-like disease appears to improve disease severity in female, but not male, mice.

RESTORING LOSSES

Research dedicated to restoring what’s been lost in MS focuses on understanding how nerves and their protective myelin coating normally work, how we can repair those critical tissues, and how restoring function may also include new strategies to manage common issues of MS.
RESEARCH

DOES DIET IMPACT MS?

BY MARK ALLEGRETTA, PHD

It's so interesting to see new studies on the potential impacts of diet on multiple sclerosis. Is there something people can eat, or not eat, that would actually help make life with MS better?

Studies presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) held last April in Vancouver showcased this growing area of research, but did not find all positive results. That's OK. All of these study results are arrows that may point us toward—or away from—solutions for people with MS.

A PROMISING ANTIOXIDANT

Walk down any grocery aisle and you'll find products marketed as antioxidants. Antioxidants block the action of free radicals, which are normal byproducts of bodily processes that in MS may cause tissue injury. A poster presentation by Dr. Rebecca Spain and colleagues from Oregon Health & Science University reported promising results from a clinical trial of lipoic acid, an antioxidant supplement, in 51 people with secondary progressive MS.

The first outcome they studied was reduction in brain atrophy (shrinkage). They also evaluated secondary outcomes such as atrophy of spinal cord and brain substructures, changes in neurological exam, walking, cognition, fatigue and quality of life. Their most significant finding was that after two years, those taking lipoic acid showed less brain atrophy than those taking placebo. Overall, treatment was safe and tolerable, with stomach upset being the most pronounced issue reported by those taking lipoic acid. This is wonderful news, and I hope it bears out in larger studies.

RESEARCHERS ARE STUDYING IF, WHEN, AND HOW SALT MAY MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN MS.

PROGRESS ON FATTY ACIDS

Fatty acids, like omega-3, are always a hot topic in discussions of diet research for any disease and MS is no different. Dr. Aiden Haghikia and a team from Ruhr University in Germany found that a fatty acid called propionic acid increased a type of immune cell called regulatory T cells or “Treg” cells, which work to regulate and dampen the immune response, in mice with an MS-like disease.

The researchers did preliminary tests of this oral fatty acid in 60 people with MS and 30 controls without MS. They found that Treg cells increased in both groups, and reduced levels of cells that are considered inflammatory. The investigators say that other results, which will soon be published, show that the effect on Treg cells was even stronger in people with MS. The team reports no side effects. It will be important to see if larger studies prove propionic acid to be safe and effective.

UPDATE ON SALT

Recent lab reports have suggested that dietary salt might speed the development of the immune attack in mice with an MS-like disease. Dr. Marianna Cortese
In her late 30s, Maria Cote’s full-time work was being a mother to her three teenage children. Family life in their home in Snohomish, Washington, was busy for her and her husband Don with pets, hiking and school projects.

That changed just before her 40th birthday, in 2000, when Cote’s general practitioner referred her to a neurologist to investigate the tingling in her toes and ankles. “She was running all these tests and I had no idea what she was looking for,” remembers Cote. “Then she said it was multiple sclerosis—which I had never heard of. I asked, ‘Is that fatal?’”

She and her neurologist discussed several options, all of which were injected or intravenously infused. Cote tried three of those options over the next several years, but her fear of needles affected her mental outlook and she found some of the side effects intolerable. “I gave up,” she says.

But when her neurologist mentioned an upcoming clinical trial for an oral MS medication, Cote felt a glimmer of hope. She volunteered in hopes that the non-needle treatment would be made available to her and others living with MS. While the study was a “lot of work,” she says it was worth it, and then some. “That I wasn’t getting poked with a needle once a week made a big difference,” she says. And her participation helped guide the trial medication through the process necessary for U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval.

There are many ways people living with MS and even family members can advance MS research. Cote chose to participate in a clinical trial of a potential MS therapy. Others have responded to surveys, shared their ideas, or participated in studies about symptom management, rehabilitation, wellness and diet approaches, and more.

Today, Cote works part-time in information technology and is the executive director of FurKidz 911 Connection, a nonprofit organization that provides foster care for dogs when their owners are hospitalized. She also participates in Bike MS® with her team, Swedish Smyelin Babes. “I keep a positive attitude,” she says. “I feel like a strong person—not always—but that’s what I like to show to the world.”

Researchers are committed to finding solutions for everyone affected by MS — the very people who hold the key to the answers. Without participants in research studies, MS research would come to a standstill.

To learn how you can advance MS research, visit nationalMSsociety.org/research/participate.
SALT, CONT. FROM PAGE 5

(University of Bergen, Norway) and researchers at Harvard assessed the intake of salt and other minerals in the Nurses’ Health Study group, which involves more than 150,000 female nurses in the U.S. followed over time. None of the minerals, including salt, seem to alter the risk of developing MS. If salt is a factor in MS, it’s good to have studies such as this one help us to fine tune if, when and how it may make a difference.

INVESTIGATING THE GUT

We know that gut bacteria are important in MS and research into impact presents the exciting possibility that probiotic strategies to treat the disease may ultimately be developed.

Dr. Stephanie Tankou and another Harvard team investigated a probiotic product (VSL#3) in 15 people with MS and mice with an MS-like disease. The investigators were looking at the ability of VSL#3 to push immune cells in a less inflammatory direction and study results may tell us something about how probiotics may be working to balance the immune system. Treatment was well tolerated in people with MS, and the investigators reported finding some signs from blood cells suggesting a reduction of inflammatory signals. However, most did not reach statistical significance. Treated mice had less severe disease. We need more research to know if VSL#3 can work, and work safely.

I’m hopeful that studies like these will lead to practical solutions for stopping disease activity and restoring function to people with MS.

Mark Allegretta is associate vice president at the National MS Society, leading commercial research including partnerships developed through Fast Forward.

Originally published on MSconnection.org/blog.

PARTNERS IN MS CARE

MS CENTER AT UMASS MEMORIAL

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is pleased to recognize the Multiple Sclerosis Center at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester, MA, as a Partners in MS Care, Center for Comprehensive MS Care. The MS Center at UMASS Memorial has been a Partner in MS Care, Center for comprehensive care since 2010. Peter Riskind, MD, PhD is the medical director at the MS Center and has over 30 years of experience in caring for individuals living with MS. He serves on the society’s Healthcare Advisory Committee and is a regular speaker for the society’s patient and professional education programs. Together with Dr. Carolina Ionete, Dr. Roberto Bomprezzi, and Dr. Jennifer Moodie, the MS Center cares for over 1,400 individuals living with MS across Massachusetts and neighboring states.

The MS Center provides comprehensive evaluation, diagnosis and treatments for MS and its symptoms. The goal of the Multiple Sclerosis Center is to help individuals reach maximum independence through health lifestyle adjustments, medications, rehabilitative treatments and clinical trials. Patients of the MS Center have full access to complementary therapies such as physical, occupational and speech therapy, in addition to access to mental health practitioners, neuro-ophthalmology and neuro-urology specialties.

The MS Center has a close working relationship with the National MS Society, as advisors and speakers, and participates in WalkMS every year. The center prides itself on its multi-disciplinary team approach and is pleased to offer appointments Mondays-Fridays during regular business hours, allowing for flexible appointment times.

Contact information: UMASS MS Center, 55 Lake Avenue North, Worcester, MA. Phone: 855-862-7763 (ask for MS Center).
FAMILY MATTERS

LIVING THE EVOLUTION

Diagnosed 27 years ago at age 30, Donna Epps Garris says she has been through “the evolution of multiple sclerosis.” At the doctor’s office, she was told that there was nothing anyone could do for her. Today, she takes an oral treatment that works for her.

“We didn’t have computers or Internet,” Garris remembers, “so I would go to libraries and read about MS.” One book mentioned a doctor whose words resonated with her. “He said, there is no cure, but I can make your life comfortable living with MS,” she says. “I thought, this is the doctor I want to see.” So she drove eight hours to Atlanta from her home in Barr, Mississippi, to see him. Since then, she has tried different treatments to find one that was right for her. “It’s just been tremendous,” she says. “I’ve had only one exacerbation in two years.”

However, that’s not to say Garris doesn’t still face challenges, such as accessing care and support in a rural area, and with her job. As an independent sales representative, she is not covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act and has found it difficult to overcome misconceptions at work about her MS. “People with MS who work independently really are vulnerable,” she says. So she is turning her energy toward MS activism, working to support funding for MS. “I met with our local congressman last year and told him my story — how important it is to keep pushing through those funds.”

Garris also eagerly follows the world of MS research. “MS affects people in many different ways, whether it’s relationships, jobs or depression, and there are many different ways to help us live a life that’s manageable,” she says.

She cites “tremendous” family support and her husband, Pete, as important factors, as well. “I couldn’t do it without him. He knows exactly what to do” — things like bringing home a single rose or sending cards in the mail.

“Just little things like that,” she says. “It’s not all about physical intimacy, but things that, for us, keep the romance alive.”

DONNA EPPS GARRIS WITH HER HUSBAND, PETE
CONNECTION CORNER

BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE

BY BONNIE NORTON

I was diagnosed with MS in March of 2012. I was living in the land of denial. I didn’t have MS! I was sure it was just my Carpal Tunnel. Or…I was just overweight and out of shape. But I couldn’t deny the foot drop and the fatigue were both more pronounced in my daily life. It took some time for my denial to turn to acceptance...this was MS!

I was no longer able to fulfill the job requirements as Assistant Director of a child care center. I had to leave the job that I was good at and loved. I felt that I wasn’t ME anymore.

I had to take charge and become my own advocate. I found an MS specialist who was accompanied by a whole TEAM! I now had a Neurologist, Urologist, Physical Therapist, Nutritionist and a Mental Health Specialist.

I began to attend events and programs. I gained information and relationships with my MS peers. I now felt I was not alone! One woman gave me information about a MS support group that met every month. I have been attending those group meetings for over two years now. Last year I had the opportunity to participate in a Health and Wellness Grant from Concord Hospital’s Multiple Sclerosis Center. I joined a gym with a therapy pool and a women’s workout room. This led to positive outcomes emotionally, socially and physically. I have recently renewed my gym membership for another year and I am now a Mentor to help guide others in their own personal Health and Wellness plan.

I was asked to design a logo for a MS Journey of Hope Walk Team. A week before the event I asked myself “Why can’t I walk too?” I registered to participate and in one week I raised almost $500. I was able to walk 1 1/2 miles. This I feel was possible because of my commitment to my health and wellness.

I am now a peer supporter at the Concord NH Hospital’s MS Center, working along with staff from the MS Society. Also, this June I was asked to be part of a panel to speak to those newly diagnosed at the Living Well with MS Conference in New Hampshire.

This is the NEW ME, being the best I can be, having a positive attitude while giving back and helping others. ■

Bonnie lives in Londonderry NH with her husband. She keeps busy with her peer support and mentoring, going to the gym, and tending to her flower gardens.

HOME LINKS CAN HELP YOU!

Need help locating a health care provider or community resource in your area? Need information on benefits and services for which you may be eligible? Could you use assistance applying for health insurance, food stamps, or accessible/affordable housing? Feel unsafe and need assistance in your home? Home LINKS may be right for you!

Home LINKS is the Chapter’s free, short-term case management program. Our case managers provide a home visit to help prioritize goals and create a step-by-step plan to reach them.

MSFRIENDS® AND PEER SUPPORT

The MSFriends® program connects you with volunteers living with MS. Connect today by calling the MSFriends help line at 1-866-673-7436.

Through the Peer Connections program you can search for and connect with a peer support volunteer who has “been there” and can provide you with helpful tips, suggestions and emotional support for the challenges that MS throws at you. For more information: peerconnections@nmss.org.
SCHOLARSHIP

THE FIRST YEAR

BY EMILY TABERS-KWAK

One year ago, I sat at my desk as my dad gave himself his triweekly injection to treat his multiple sclerosis.

Today, for everything that has changed in my life this past year, many of the challenges of having a parent with MS remain.

Now, as I begin my second semester of college, I reflect upon how I looked forward to attending. As an Asian-American, I appreciated how I was invited into a learning community that expanded outside our classroom walls. I shared in organized events where our teams took public transportation to grapple with some of the challenges that people with disabilities may experience. I put these into context as I contemplated the resilience it takes for someone with a disease like MS to travel around town for daily errands.

Another key connection I made was during a trip to a biotech lab for my class in bioethics. We got to see DNA and learned about stem cells. I felt like I was on the cutting edge when I was able to share something that nobody else knew: I had just read an article talking about research supported by the Society where they found that by blocking a molecule present in specific stem cells, they may be able to stimulate myelin repair (nationalMSsociety.org/myelinnews2015). It was also relevant because my dad had just had an MRI and, afterward, we had talked about the myelin sheath and how wonderful it would be if it could be repaired.

This year, I learned to integrate academics and community service within the context of the world in which we live. I would not have made this vital connection so early in my college career without the support of a Society scholarship. Since I love literature and am an avid reader, I am looking forward to declaring my major in English and hope to become a head librarian someday. Despite the challenges that MS has presented to my family, the scholarship has allowed me to grow and start achieving my life goals.

Society Scholar Emily Tabers-Kwak is currently attending Edgewood College in Madison, Wisconsin.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

MS shouldn't stand in the way of an education. This is why the National MS Society's scholarship program exists. Enrollment for the 2017 scholarship program (for the 2017-18 academic year) is expected to be open by November 1, 2016 (possibly sooner). Please check back in October for an update. To learn more, visit nationalMSsociety.org/scholarship.
DEAR SCHOLARSHIP DONOR

BY SYDONNIE MCMILLIAN

It is with eyes full of tears and a heart full of gratitude that I write this letter.

I am a 35-year-old mom of two children, Jason and Jocelyn. When they were born, I was working while pursuing a degree in business administration. However, when my youngest was about six months old, I was taking her for a walk when my legs began to feel heavy and I fell. I began a two-year journey of testing and seeing specialists, with no answers until I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2012. I knew my children were growing up. They were so full of life and I felt like my life was being sucked from me one nerve cell at a time.

I continued with school, but I could not work anymore. Then, even with Social Security Disability Insurance, I could no longer afford school. My financial aid and loans had run out and, as I wasn’t working, my credit was not good enough to secure a private loan. My school could only offer a payment plan. I convinced myself that I didn’t need a degree because my life was now going to be centered around MS.

But I knew in my heart that I wanted that degree, and that I wanted to start a business from home that might possibly be a charity for people with disabilities due to autoimmune disease. So when I opened the letter yesterday saying I had been awarded a scholarship from the National MS Society, I nearly fell to the floor (and not because of a relapse!). If paper could talk, you would hear my screams of happiness. I want to share with my children that there are still amazing people in this world and that their mom just encountered some of that greatness. I have such joy and hope in my heart right now because getting my degree was something I didn’t think was possible and now, because of you, it is possible. With the biggest heart, I thank you.

Sydonnie McMillian lives in Jersey City, New Jersey.

52 scholarships were funded in the five states of the Greater New England Chapter (Maine, Mass., N.H., R.I., and Vermont) for a combined total of $65,000. The following list is comprised of those who gave permission to be identified in the press.

Kendra Adams
Bella Ballin
Madeline Basso
Jordyn Binaghi
Jacob Bleau
Joshua Brodeur
Alison Brown
Darcie Brown
Kaitlin Carnahan
Jason Carrier
Kelly Carvalho
Courtney Cohan
Katherine Cyr
Julia Dion
Victoria Esselman
Hilary Faust
Maddison French
Gerry Summer
Alexandria A. Henderson
Ryan Herman
Emily Holt
Nick Jean
Ethan Jones
Taressa Jones
Tristan Jordon
Kelcie Krujjac
Yalexis Lopez
Jami Malvarosa
Nicole Malvarosa
Logan Martineau
Sarah McCarthy
Ashley Meehan
Kate Parks
Madison Poitrast-Upton
Gabrielle Rozumek
Samantha Silvestri
Julia Ubaldo
Kyle Weymouth
Matthew-James Yirril
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA isn’t just about making transportation accessible to people with disabilities. In fact, it applies to a large range of facilities and everyday activities, including employment.

For instance, under the ADA, you legally do not have to disclose your MS to an employer or discuss your disability status unless you are requesting an accommodation. Otherwise, it is up to you whether or not to disclose your MS. This is a big decision, one that should be made thoughtfully and carefully. (For more information on the disclosure decision, visit nationalMSsociety.org/disclosure.)

To learn more about the ADA and how it protects people with disabilities, visit ada.gov or call an MS Navigator at 1-800-344-4867.
MAINE

LD 365, Maine’s Home Modification Tax Credit Bill now law (P.L. Chapter 503) introduced by the National MS Society, takes effect at the end of July. The chapter is actively participating in meetings with the Maine State Housing Authority to construct the rule of the program. It is anticipated that this process will take several months and an actual launch of the program is to be determined but won’t be available for at least a year.

FEDERAL

On July 26th the Americans with Disabilities Act turns 26! The National MS Society is committed to continuing to help advance the rights of individuals with disabilities and make communities more inclusive. What can you do to partner with us?

Make an In-District Congressional Visit – The National MS Society will be conducting in-district meetings with members of Congress during their recess break. Issues that will be discussed will be; advancing Neurological Data bills H.R. 292 and S. 849, research funding, and access to MS medications. Visit www.nationalmssociety.org/augustrecess for more information.

MASSACHUSETTS

Highest Priority Issues:

On May 11th, more than 50 MS activists gathered at the State House for the annual MS Action Day to meet with legislators to urge support to advance priority issues: state funding for the chapters Home LINKS case management program, SB 1323—an Act relative to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board to better align with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), HB800—an Act promoting continuity of care for multiple sclerosis treatment to ensure patients can remain on their disease modifying treatments. Funding for the Home LINKS program was included in the enacted budget and the amount will be confirmed this summer. HB800 did not pass but will be re-filed next session. Though the AAB bill did not pass, legislators and advocates continue to work to ensure that the Architectural Access Board (AAB) code is aligned with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Chaptered Law 0304 (SB 471), an act relative to parking for persons with disabilities, will take effect January 1, 2017 and modifies state laws on access aisles. Among the changes are that access aisles will now be designated as no parking areas and clearly marked via sign or stenciling. Any violators will be subject to a $250 fine, of which 20% will now be paid to the city or town that the violation occurs.

RHODE ISLAND

Two Legislative Victories! The chapter is celebrating two legislative victories in Rhode Island. SB 2499, a bill expanding the State’s definition of off label prescription drug coverage to include drugs to treat chronic diseases, passed the legislature before the end of session and was signed into law (Chapter 095 effective January 1, 2017). Another bill, SB 2294, requiring insurers to give 30 days’ notice before making changes in preferred or tiered drug formularies, passed the legislature before the end of session as well. The bill is awaiting transmission to the governor for signature and is not yet enacted.
NOVEMBER IS FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

10 TIPS FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

1. Seek support from other caregivers. You are not alone!
2. Take care of your own health so that you can be strong enough to take care of your loved one.
3. Accept offers of help and suggest specific things people can do to help you.
4. Learn how to communicate effectively with doctors.
5. Caregiving is hard work so take respite breaks often.
6. Watch out for signs of depression and don’t delay getting professional help when you need it.
7. Be open to new technologies that can help you care for your loved one.
8. Organize medical information so it’s up to date and easy to find.
9. Make sure legal documents are in order.
10. Give yourself credit for doing the best you can in one of the toughest jobs there is!

From the National Family Caregiver’s Network
www.caregiveractio.org

ADVOCACY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13.

The home modification tax credit legislation that the chapter re-introduced did not pass the legislature this session. Despite the disappointment, great progress was achieved in expanding our coalition partners who will continue to work on the bill next session.

VERMONT

S. 216, an act relating to prescription drugs, passed the legislature and signed into law (Act 165 effective immediately). The law will require the State to identify 15 prescription drugs that it spends significant health dollars on and have drastically increased in price. The attorney general will make these reports public and require each manufacturer to provide reasonable justification for the increase.

The home modification tax credit legislation that the chapter introduced did not pass the legislature this session. The coalition is currently reviewing its strategy regarding advancement of the bill for next year.

ACTIVISTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

State Government Relations Committees - new members wanted.

The chapter is seeking committed individuals to join our monthly meetings in person or by teleconference to help determine and advocate for our priority issues and activities. Are you a person with MS or have a connection to the disease? Or do you have professional expertise in the area of law, medicine, insurance, disability, fundraising, policy, or community organizing? Are you willing to speak before government officials, at public hearings or with the media? Are you committed to working as a team and working on projects? If yes, please contact virginia.morse@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867 opt. 2.

Find resources and support

MS happens to family members, not just individuals. Learn about the variety of resources available for you and your family at http://www.nationalmssociety.org/Resources-Support/Family-Matters

Find resources and support

MS happens to family members, not just individuals. Learn about the variety of resources available for you and your family at http://www.nationalmssociety.org/Resources-Support/Family-Matters
VOLUNTEERS

WE WANT YOU AT CHALLENGE WALK MS!

The success of so many MS fundraising events depends on dedicated volunteers and Challenge Walk MS is no exception. Each contribution, whether large or small, is critically important and the only requirement to volunteer is a desire to end MS now!

When you become part of the Challenge Walk MS Crew, you join hundreds of people who play an integral role at Challenge Walk MS, a three-day, 50-mile trek that tests the strength and spirit of our walkers and makes an extraordinary difference in the lives of people with MS and their families. Challenge Walk MS will be held on Cape Cod September 9-11, 2016, with a goal of raising $1 million.

The Challenge Walk MS Crew is devoted to supporting the event for all three days and each member pays a $75 registration fee, which helps to cover their housing and meals costs, ensuring that all donations go directly to the National MS Society’s mission to end MS forever.

What you do as a member of the Crew will vary according to your skills and interests. Once you register, we’ll figure out the best place for you. We need doctors, nurses, EMTs, paramedics, physical therapists, massage therapists, ham radio operators, and people who will support the 50-mile route. Crew members may set up rest stops, help with the registration and check in process, supervise luggage, distribute food, take photos and videos, drive support and gear vehicles, and more. They also get dressed up in fun costumes and form cheering squads to cheer our walkers every step of the way! It’s that enthusiasm and team spirit that makes Challenge Walk MS such a memorable experience.

Families and corporate groups, youth clubs, and service-oriented community groups are welcome to be a part of this unforgettable weekend. We also welcome one-day volunteers who help cheer on walkers and assist at the Cape Cod Sea Camps. One-day volunteers can work up to two days of the weekend and do not stay at the Cape Cod Sea Camps.

When you decide to be part of Challenge Walk MS, you become part of the MS movement – a collective of passionate individuals, moving together to create a world free of MS. Register at Challengewalkmscapecod.org or contact Danielle Paonessa at Danielle.Paonessa@nmss.org or 800-344-4867. We want you!

SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER TODAY!

We’re looking for individuals at our events to:

- Help with registration
- Distribute T-shirts
- Setup and Breakdown
- Cheer-on participants
- Staff the mission table
- Photograph the participants and volunteers
- Medical professionals
- Drivers, and more!

Have questions? Need help registering for an event? Please contact Sarah Chuckran, Volunteer Manager, sarah.chuckran@nmss.org or 781-693-5156.
CHALLENGE WALK MS
SEPTEMBER 9-11
REGISTER AT CHALLENGEWALKMSCAPECOD.ORG
3 DAYS. 50 MILES.

Day 1: 20 miles from Hyannis to Brewster, via Yarmouth.

Day 2: 20 miles through Orleans and Eastham, then back to Brewster.

Day 3: 10 miles to Dennis and return to Hyannis.

DINNER OF CHAMPIONS VERMONT
OCTOBER 13, 5:30-9:00 P.M.
HILTON BURLINGTON HOTEL

Honoring DONALD J. BAKER
KEYBANK VERMONT MARKET PRESIDENT
MS Hope Award
One of the highest awards bestowed by the Society, the MS Hope Award recognizes Donald J. Baker for his exceptional leadership and his outstanding commitment to the Burlington community, including Vermonters whose lives are affected by the unpredictable challenges of MS.

KEYBANK and NATIONAL LIFE GROUP
MS Community Champion Award
Recognizing years of service to the community, helping the National MS Society and all Vermonters with integrity and quality.

For tables, tickets, and corporate sponsorships, contact adele.forbes@nmss.org, 802-871-5231 or msnewengland.org

FASHION PLATES
PICK YOUR STYLE!
REGISTER AT MSNEWENGLAND.ORG

NOVEMBER 4
SHERATON BOSTON HOTEL
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
11 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.


WALK MS THIS FALL

REGISTER AT: WALKMSGNE.ORG

MAINE
September 10 - Caribou: Cary Medical Center
September 25 - York: York High School

MASSACHUSETTS
September 17 - Sturbridge: Town Common
September 25 - Falmouth: Mullen-Hall School

NEW HAMPSHIRE
September 17 - Laconia: Opechee Park
September 17 - Gorham: Gorham Common
September 24 - Keene: Wheelock Park

VERMONT
September 24 - St. Johnsbury: St. Johnsbury School

JOURNEY OF HOPE

SEPTEMBER 25
CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

REGISTER AT WALKMSGNE.ORG

Funds raised from Journey of Hope are distributed directly to participating MS Clinical Centers that are formally affiliated with the Chapter.

VOLUNTEERS
CREW RULES!

Volunteers are awesome; let’s state that up front. Challenge Walk MS Crew Volunteers are wicked awesome!! We’re fortunate to have so many dedicated and caring individuals who volunteer to support fundraising events and programs, and to work in our office. Challenge Walk Crew take it to an entirely different level.

First of all, they pay $75 for the privilege of volunteering. Crew agree to pay the registration fee, because they know it offsets the cost of their room and board. And, they don’t want walker fundraising used for anything other than helping people with MS.

Secondly, even though they’re not required to raise money, collectively the Crew raises over $40,000 each year. That’s a huge number, and it illustrates the depth of compassion of our Challenge Walk Crew members.

Thirdly, the Crew includes medical staff who take care of walkers, sleeping overnight in the medical center to be available 24 hours a day! Whether it’s a blister, a sprain, or dehydration, or something more serious, these skilled health professionals give their time to keep walkers in good health.

Lastly, the Crew really know how to have fun! And, it’s infectious! Walkers can hear them cheering as much as a mile away from the rest stop. That means a lot to a tired walker who’s struggling to keep up their energy. When they see Crew dressed up in costumes and they get a hug or a high five and a refill on Gatorade, they’re good for at least another three miles.

The Crew start planning their themes in January. It’s not uncommon for them to spend money out of their own pockets to make a costume or create a fun environment for the walkers. It’s those little touches that make Challenge Walk MS: Cape Cod the rewarding and meaningful experience that it is. At the end of the 2016 Challenge, we’ll have raised in excess of $15 million over 15 years. We couldn’t do it without the most wonderful volunteers on the planet!

THANK YOU CHALLENGE WALK MS CREW!
There are close to 100 Bike MS rides around the United States offered by the National MS Society. In the Greater New England Chapter, we offer seven rides each year with one-day and two-day options, and a variety of route distances ranging from 18 miles to 100 miles. Our rides offer spectacular beauty along coast lines and through quintessential New England countryside. In 2016, BikeMS brought together 3,990 participants, who raised a combined $4.306 million towards finding a cure. Join the movement at www.bikeMSgne.org.

- **Ride the Rhode** (June 18-19) The beauty of the Ocean State coastline and winding country roads were highlighted in our second largest ride.
- **Cape Cod Getaway** (June 25-26), our largest ride took riders from Boston to Provincetown, the Bourne Bridge crossing over the Cape Cod Canal, and a ferry ride home across Cape Cod Bay.
- **Great Maine Getaway** (August 13-14) offered stunning ocean front views, an overnight along the shores of the Saco River, and a traditional Maine lobster bake.
- **Ride the Vineyard** (April 30) Riders enjoyed the quaint charm and beautiful ocean views on Martha's Vineyard.
- **The Minuteman Ride** (July 16) riders viewed colonial-era homes and beautiful rural Massachusetts.
- **Green Mountain Getaway** (August 6) took riders over Lake Champlain and offered the inspiring Green Mountains as a backdrop.
- **New Hampshire Seacoast Escape** (August 27) riders traveled Southern New Hampshire’s scenic villages and bustling seaside towns.
WAYS TO GIVE ON A WHIM

Michele Campbell, 53, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2010. In 2015 she entered the Milwaukee Running Festival and, through the Finish MS® program, raised $3,400 for the National MS Society. Here is her story.

When did you first get into running?
After my youngest was born, I tried running on a whim and loved it. I have started to do 5Ks because they are a lot of fun and the energy is amazing.

What made you decide to sign up for the Milwaukee Running Festival?
It seems like my “on a whim” decisions have been the best ones. I simply got an email and saw that I can raise money for a cause I believe in. That was my motivation and a sign it was time to start doing 5Ks again.

How did you fundraise?
Once again, on a whim, I added the fundraising link to my Facebook page and in less than 24 hours, I raised $1,000! I didn’t want to be too pushy, so I would do an occasional progress post as well as emphasizing my deepest gratitude. Within that week, I raised $2,000. The amazing generosity of my friends pumped in another $400 by race day for a total of $3,400.

While I was completely blown away by the donations, what was even more special were the words of encouragement, the prayers and even how I inspired others.

I’ve made it a mission to do the things I love to do as much as I can, while I can. I am checking things off of my bucket list so I can talk about the memory of doing it, instead of regretting that I didn’t.

To learn more about Finish MS, which offers people a chance to work toward a world free of MS while pushing their own personal limits, visit finishMS.org.

A longer version of this story was originally published in Wisconsin’s MS Connection

RUN MS

BOSTON VOLVO VILLAGE 5K ROAD RACE
THANKSGIVING DAY, NOVEMBER 24
REGISTER AT: RUNMSGNE.ORG

www.bostonvolvo.com | www.runMSgne.org

MS JET PULL
SEPTEMBER 24, 9 A.M. REGISTRATION
T.F. GREEN AIRPORT, WARWICK, RI
REGISTER AT MSJETPULL.COM or 800-344-4867
Gather friends, family, and/or co-workers to create a team. $1,500 team fundraising minimum.
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 Society does not endorse products, services, or manufacturers. Such names appear here solely because they are considered valuable information. The Society assumes no liability for the use or contents of any product or service mentioned.

STAY INFORMED. READ MSCONNECTION ONLINE AT MSNEWENGLAND.ORG

You may request a printed newsletter if you have impaired vision or if you do not have Internet access. Call 781-693-5133

CALENDAR

EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

SEPTEMBER

9-11.......................... Challenge Walk MS: Cape Cod, MA
10.................................Walk MS: Caribou, ME
13..............................Webinar: Health Insurance: What Everyone Needs to Know
13................................Vermont Dinner of Champions VT
17... The Multicultural Connection: Wellness, Dorchester, MA
17..............................Walk MS: Gorham, NH
17..............................Walk MS: Laconia, NH
17..............................Walk MS: Sturbridge, MA
19................................Fatigue: Take Control, Colchester, VT
24..............................Walk MS: Keene, NH
24................................Walk MS: St. Johnsbury, VT
24..............................MS Jet Pull Warwick, RI
25..............................Walk MS: Journey of Hope, Concord, NH
25..............................Walk MS: Falmouth, MA
25..............................Walk MS: York, ME
29..............................Mood & Cognition, Warwick, RI

OCTOBER

11..............................Webinar: Together in MS: Supporting Family and Friends
22................................Annual Meeting ME, MA, VT, NH, RI
25-26..............................Raise the Bar Hire Conference and Career Fair: Norwood, MA

NOVEMBER

04..............................Fashion Plates Fashion Show, Boston, MA
08..............................Vote! Election Day
08..............................Diet and Multiple Sclerosis: A Neurologist’s Perspective
24 ..............................Boston Volvo Village 5K Road Race

DECEMBER

5................................Annual Holiday Bazaar, Cranston, RI
17-18 ...........................The Nutcracker Ballet, Providence, RI
Register at nationalMSsociety.org/telelearning or call 1-800-344-4867
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SEEKING CONNECTION GROUP LEADERS

Create a vibrant MS network in your community. The Chapter is seeking new volunteer Connection leaders to start and lead affiliated MS Connection groups. Contact Jaye at jody.vandussen@nmss.org.
GET YOUR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS ANSWERED
Submit a request to generalmailbox@nmss.org. Include your name, mailing address, and phone number. Or call 1-800-344-4867 Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Our MS Navigators are highly skilled professionals who can help you navigate the challenges of MS by providing:

- Up-to-date Information
- Practical Resources and Referrals
- Find information about MS
- Deal with a crisis
- Connect with others living with MS
- Find what you need to maintain independence
- Access comprehensive educational programs & more

MS NEXT STEP
Take your “next step” toward getting the information and support you want and need after diagnosis. This program includes a booklet and DVD (closed captioning in English and Spanish.) The materials cover what MS is, possible causes, how it is treated, and some of the life challenges a person with MS may face early on, such as disclosure. Learn more about what the Society offers.

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

SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW AT www.MSConnection.org.
You can share information about the topics that are most important to you, connect with people, and have expert MS information and opinions right at your fingertips. Join today!

LIVE INDEPENDENTLY NAVIGATING KEY SERVICES
Home Links Can Help You!
Need help locating a health care provider or community resource in your area? Need information on benefits and services for which you may be eligible?
Could you use assistance applying for health insurance, food stamps, or accessible/affordable housing? Feel unsafe and need assistance in your home?
Home LINKS is the Chapter’s free, short-term care management program. Our care managers provide a home visit to help prioritize goals and create a step-by-step plan to reach them.

MS LEARN ONLINE
LIBRARY & EDUCATION PROGRAMS
Includes web and tele-learning, DVDs, CAN DO programs, books, videos, and more at www.nationalMSSociety.org
REGISTER NOW!

Because MS affects more than just the individual diagnosed, our programs welcome friends and family members unaccompanied by a person with MS.

BREAKTHROUGH MS: ANNUAL MEETING RESEARCH UPDATE & EXPO

Date: Saturday October 22, 2016
Time: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Join us for this conference that includes the annual meeting of members, updates on cutting edge MS research and a health, wellness & resource EXPO. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to visit the exhibitors to learn about health, recreation, independence products and services and to network and share experiences with others living with MS. Brunch included.

- Maine: Hilton Garden Inn, Bangor
- Massachusetts: Four Points By Sheraton, Norwood
- New Hampshire: Church Landing, Meredith
- Rhode Island: Radisson Airport Hotel, Warwick
- Vermont: Capitol Plaza Hotel, Montpelier

THE MULTICULTURAL CONNECTION: MS AND THE WELLNESS APPROACH

Date: Saturday September 17
Time: 9:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.
Location: Carson Place, Dorchester, MA

Please join us for this education and networking event for persons of color to learn strategies to stay well with MS beyond disease modifying treatment. Learn how general wellness, fatigue and nutrition can affect how you live well with MS. Learn the benefits of massage and self-care. Lunch included. Pre-registration by September 9th is REQUIRED. This program is free to a person with MS and up to 2 adult guests.

MOOD AND COGNITION

Join us to learn about the types of mood changes common to MS, as well as the types of cognitive challenges that people with MS may face. It also outlines the most successful ways that individuals, researchers, and clinicians have developed for approaching these challenges, including physical activity, medications and counseling, and self-management strategies. Light refreshments provided.

Date: September 29, 2016
Time: 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Location: National MS Society, Rhode Island office, Warwick, RI
Program Fee: Free for people with MS

FATIGUE: TAKE CONTROL

will be offered in a session that will include addressing key aspects of MS fatigue. Group discussion and individual goal-setting is designed to help participants clarify the individual steps they need to make to manage their fatigue.

Date: Monday, September 19, 2016
Times: 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Location: Fanny Allen Hospital, Colchester, VT
Facilitator: Timothy Bissonette, PT, DPT, NCS
Advanced registration is required by September 9th.
Limited Space - Light refreshments provided
**REGISTER NOW**

**SIGN UP FOR A FALL WALK**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 9-11</td>
<td>Cape Cod, MA</td>
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<td>Sept 10</td>
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<td>Sept 17</td>
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<td>Sept 25</td>
<td>Journey of Hope, Concord, NH</td>
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**SAVE THE DATE**

**6TH ANNUAL MS HOLIDAY BAZAAR**

Bring your friends and neighbors and get a jump on your holiday shopping! There will be a wide assortment of handmade products from local artists and crafters. Products include jewelry, quilted and crocheted items, ornaments, holiday décor, children’s items, gourmet goodies, gift baskets, and much more! In addition to the fine crafts, there will also be a raffle, bake sale, and refreshments. Free admission!

**Date:** Saturday, December 5; 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 2115 Broad Street, Cranston, RI 02905**

**THE NUTCRACKER BALLET**

Experience this holiday classic performed by Festival Ballet Providence as part of their Discover Dance Series.

**Date:** Thursday, December 17 and Friday, December 18; 10 a.m.

**Providence Performing Arts Center, Providence, RI 02903**

**KIDS AND TEENS**

**MIGHTY SPECIAL KIDS:**

An Activity Book for Kids with MS. For younger children diagnosed with MS. This color booklet helps kids understand MS through articles and fun activities.

**YOUNG PERSONS WITH MS**

A network for families with a child or teen with MS

A collaboration between the National MS Society and the MS Society of Canada. For information: 1-800-344-4867

**TEENS WITH MS PHONE SUPPORT GROUP**

**SUNDAYS 5:30 - 7 P.M.**

A monthly group that offers teens (ages 13-19) with MS an opportunity to openly share experiences, coping strategies, concerns about their diagnosis and school, or the impact of MS on the family. Free. Register at www.MSnc.org or 1-800-344-4867 option 1, or moyra.rondon@nmss.org.

**KEEP S'MYELIN NEW!**

The Keep S'myelin Activity Book is an engaging, informative, and reassuring interactive publication to help children and their parents talk and learn about MS together. It is filled with stories, interviews, games, and activities on a variety of topics related to MS. **Special separate section for parents.** To request a copy, call 1-800-344-4867, or download it at: http://www.nationalmssociety.org/Resources-Support/Library-Education-Programs/For-Kids-Keep-S-myelin

**REGISTER AT: WALKMS.ORG**

**WATCH YOUR INBOX FOR DETAILS**
COMPUTER OUTREACH PROGRAM
Stay connected! COP provides simple computers to individuals isolated in their own homes or living in long-term care facilities without access to a computer. For more information, contact Amber at 800-344-4867, option 2 or amber.stalker@nmss.org.

How you can help: The Program depends on gently used donated laptops or tablets. Please contact the Chapter for minimum requirements.

PARTICIPATE IN MS RESEARCH
ONLINE! These are conducted by investigators seeking to answer scientific or health policy questions about MS, or by pharmaceutical or medical device companies conducting market research efforts to develop or improve products for people with MS. For details about survey studies and how to participate go to www.NationalMSSociety.org > Research

VOLUNTEER
Volunteers work behind the scenes and are the reason we succeed. Being a volunteer is fun! You can help for an hour, an evening, or a whole weekend.
Find out more at MSnewengland.org > volunteer

PCA DIRECTORY
PCA DIRECTORY AVAILABLE FOR MASSACHUSETTS, NEW HAMPSHIRE AND VERMONT RESIDENTS
Need help finding home care services? Rewarding Work has recently launched a website for residents in New Hampshire to help find home care providers. The new site, NH ProviderLINK Directory, is an expansion for Rewarding Work, which already provides this service in Massachusetts and Vermont. This website was developed to help seniors and people with disabilities find and hire personal care assistants. The database houses over 7000 “active” resumes, from people who are currently looking for work.

How to access the service:
- Visit www.rewardingwork.org to sign up and begin searching! There is a monthly charge to access the resumes of providers.
- New Hampshire and Vermont Residents or Massachusetts residents who don’t have MassHealth: contact the Chapter at 800-344-4867 option 2 and ask for Chapter Direct Services Staff. You will be assisted in accessing the resources.
- Massachusetts residents who receive MassHealth: this is a free service for you.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS VOLUNTEERS
Connect people affected by MS to the National MS Society with information, resources and others to ensure that they have what they need to live their best lives. They provide meaningful, organized activities that are easily accessible to members of the local community who have MS or know someone who does. Events may be educational or social, one-time, annual, or ongoing. Email: Amber.Stalker@nmss.org for more information.
GET FIT! HAVE FUN!

Studies show that regular exercise can increase muscle strength, reduce fatigue and depression, and improve bladder and bowel control. Exercise is also an important element in managing MS.

PHYSICAL WELLNESS REIMBURSEMENT

If an instructor is part of our network of trained providers, you are eligible for reimbursement to help pay for your classes or membership! Check our website for providers and reimbursement. Don’t see your instructor on the list? Have your instructor visit ntl.MS/fitwellpros to take a FREE online training course, receive CEU credits, and become part of our network!

WHEELCHAIR HEALTH IN MOTION (WHIM)

WHIM is a free peer-driven program. It provides the tools for increasing quality of life and promoting wellness in individuals living with a physical disability through innovative chair exercise and peer support. For more information, contact WHIM at 603-938-2562 or WHIM4wellness@gmail.com.

MS ENCOMPASS - YWCA CENTRAL MASS.

The Chapter collaborates with the YWCA of Central Mass., Worcester to make available their accessible pool, cardio equipment, accessible weight training equipment, and aerobics classes. Childcare is available at the facility for a nominal fee. Registration is required through the National MS Society. Fee: $10 per month. To register, contact Amber.Stalker@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867.

MS WELLNESS PROGRAM - HOCKOMOCK YMCA

Developed specifically for people with MS, the program focuses on regular physical activity and improved nutrition. Program available at these three branches, Foxborough, North Attleboro, and Franklin, MA.

For information: Contact the PHL (Prescription for a Healthy Lifestyle) Coordinator, 508-772-1310 or email phl@hockymca.org

B.FIT! - THE BOSTON HOME, DORCHESTER

An innovative wellness program for adults with MS and other advanced neurological diseases. Socialize and access outstanding care and assistive technology. A sliding fee scale is available. Contact: Glory Wideman-Hughes, 617-825-3905 x300 or gwideman@thebostonhome.org.

FREE ONLINE COURSE INTRODUCTION TO MS FOR FITNESS AND WELLNESS PROFESSIONALS

0.4 continuing education credits provided by the American Council on Exercise (ACE). Designed for fitness and wellness instructors, including aquatics instructors, yoga teachers, coaches, personal trainers, and others who want to learn more about MS. Encourage your instructor, gym or local providers to join our network! Visit ntl.MS/fitwellpros for information about online wellness instructor trainings.

EMPLOYMENT & BENEFIT RESOURCES

ASK THE EMPLOYMENT SPECIALIST

Get answers to: Workplace disclosure, Social Security benefits, reasonable accommodations, thinking about returning to work, and more!

Please send your employment issue questions to: EmploymentQuestions@nmss.org

An Employment Specialist will respond within 48 hours.

SSDI QUESTIONS?

Do you have questions about SSDI? Check in with our "expert," please call 781-693-5155 to schedule a phone consultation.
**ADVOCACY**

**MS ACTION ALERT**

- Join the MS Action Alert Network, the center for advocacy at the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.
- Together, we represent the interests of people with MS as important policy decisions are made in both the public and private sectors.
- The MS Action Alert Network works on important issues at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Your voice matters. One link will register you to receive federal and state e-alerts to take action and contact your elected officials on key issues impacting people with MS. Recruit a friend!
- Or visit: www.nationalmssociety.org/Get-Involved/Advocate-for-Change/Take-Action
- For more information or to join the MS Action Alert network, email: GNEadvocacy@nmss.org

**SHARE YOUR STORY!**

Are you a person with MS in Maine, Rhode Island, or Vermont who faces difficulty affording modifications to home for safety or accessibility? Or, have you made modifications that are financially burdensome? If so please share your story as we continue to advance state legislation to offset the costs to individuals and families.

**MS ACTIVIST BLOG**

Check out the latest federal news and share your views. MSACTIVIST.BLOGSPOT.COM

**ARE YOU A GRASS TOP?**

*Do you have:* A close personal connection with a local official; a state or federal legislator; an individual serving at a key government agency; or an influential staff person for any of the above figures?

A relationship that you can leverage on behalf of the National MS Society to facilitate an introduction with Society staff.

**GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**NEW MEMBERS WANTED!**

The chapter is seeking committed individuals to join our monthly meetings in person or by teleconference to help determine our priority issues and activities.

- Are you a person with MS or have a connection to the disease?
- Do you have professional expertise in the area of law, medicine, insurance, disability, fundraising, policy, or community organizing?
- Are you willing to speak before government officials, at public hearings or with the media?
- Are you committed to working as a team and working on projects?
- If yes, please contact virginia.morse@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867 option 2

**VOTER INFORMATION**

NATIONALMSSOCIETY.ORG

Be informed of your voting rights and take action regarding the issues that matter most to you.

Resources available to you on the Voter Information page include:

- Access to registration, deadlines and voting information — alphabetical by state
- Join the MS Activist Network
- Read more about MS activists at work
- Know Your Voting Rights
- Register to Vote Online
- Polling Place Accessibility

Please be aware the Society is not able to offer guidance on any particular candidate or to assist with questions such as “which candidate will be best for the MS movement?”.

For more information check out Current Advocacy Issues http://www.nationalmssociety.org/Get-Involved/Advocate-for-Change/Current-Advocacy-Issues
**SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

**CAFÉ CON LECHE: CONVERSACIÓN Y APOYO PARA PERSONAS VIVIENDO CON LA ESCLerosIS MÚLTIPLE (EM)**

Un grupo telefónico, totalmente en español. Aproveche la oportunidad para hablar de sus preocupaciones y conozca a otras personas que entienden su situación. Además, invitaremos a expertos de diferentes ramas de especialidad en la EM para conversar sobre temas importantes para Ud. Para más información o para inscribirse llame al 1-800-344-4867, opción 3. Horario: 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Un martes al mes: Junio 9 (Receso - Julio – Septiembre)

**CAREGIVER’S CHAT ROOM**

**WEDNESDAY NIGHTS, 8:00 P.M.**

Join this weekly, moderated chat with those who have similar questions and experiences. To access, log onto MSworld.org and sign up for a username. Go to General Chat Room and click on the Caregivers chat on Wednesday nights.

**IN TOUCH PHONE GROUPS**

Professionally facilitated phone groups meet monthly. You can listen, learn and talk to other people with MS from the comfort of your own home. For those who cannot attend a traditional support group. Contact meredith.sheehan@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867, option 2.

**Two groups from which to choose:**
- Second Monday/month, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- Second Tuesday/month, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**COFFEE & CONVERSATION**

Join others with MS for a coffee break! People with MS and their friends and family are encouraged to socialize and meet people in the area who are living with MS. Food and beverages are available for purchase or you can just come for the conversation.

**MAINE**
- R&R Chocolate 913 Post Rd (Rt. 1) Hanford Plaza, Wells; Second Friday; 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
- Auburn Public Library Café LA, 49 Spring St. Auburn; Last Tuesday; 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
- Pats Pizza, 292 State St Augusta; First Thursday; 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- Hatchet Mountain Publick House, 42 Hatchet Mountain Rd., Hope; Second Thursday; 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- St Mary’s Hospital, LePage Conference Center, 99 Campus Ave, Lewiston; Second Wednesday, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
- Panera Bread, 11 Main St, Westbrook; Last Friday; 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
- Lobster Cove Restaurant, 756 York St, York; Second Saturday; 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

** MASSACHUSETTS**
- Lickety Split at Mass MoCA, North Adams; Second Sunday; 3:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**
- Panera Bread, 7 Colby Court, Bedford; First Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
- Panera Bread, 52 March Ave., Manchester; Second Thursday, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
- Panera Bread, 75 Fort Eddy Rd., Concord; Third Thursday, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
- White Heron Tea & Coffee, 601 Islington St., Portsmouth; First Thursday 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**VERMONT**
- Panera Bread, 1184 Shelburne Road, South Burlington; First Saturday, 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
CONNECT WITH PEERS ONE-ON-ONE

ONE-ON-ONE PEER CONNECTIONS

Through the Peer Connections program you can search for and connect with a peer support volunteer who has “been there” and can provide you with helpful tips, suggestions and emotional support for the challenges that MS throws at you. You can connect with your peer via one-on-one ongoing telephone or email conversations. Peer Connections volunteers have been through a rigorous screening and training process.

- Pick your own peer from a list of trained peer support volunteers from many different walks of life, including family members of those living with MS.

- Connect with your peer via email, telephone or the online community.

- Have confidential conversations with the same person about the topics most relevant to your life.

Connect to a peer of your choice: www.msconnection.org/Support/One-on-One-Peer-Connections or email peerconnections@nmss.org.

MSFRIENDS®

The MSFriends® program connects you with volunteers living with MS. MSFriends volunteers complete a rigorous screening and training program and are focused on the needs of those who call for support.

- Having someone who knows first-hand what it is like to live with MS to talk with and share your story. MSFriends is there to help you deal with the changes brought about by MS.

- Having a sounding board for good decision-making and problem solving.

Call the MSFriends helpline at 1-866-673-7436 9:00 a.m. to midnight EST. All calls are confidential.

BECOME A PEER SUPPORT VOLUNTEER

Qualifications to be a peer support volunteer include:

- Personal relationship to MS (person with MS, partner or family member of a person with MS.)

- Strong listening and communication skills; empathetic listener.

- Knowledge of and access to Internet/e-mail technologies and equipment.

- Dedication to the mission of the National MS Society and a desire to make a difference for those living with MS.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact us at peerconnections@nmss.org.

FACILITATED SUPPORT GROUP

FACILITATED GROUP - UMASS MS CENTER

For people diagnosed with MS regardless of symptoms or disease course. Members do not have to be patients of the UMASS MS Center. Friends and family invited as well. Led by MS Certified Nurse.

Contact Carolyn Griffin, RN at 508-856-5006 or carolyn.griffin@umassmemorial.org

- Third Wednesday of the month (Sept. through June)
  5:45 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.

- UMASS MS Center, University Campus
  55 Lake Ave North Worcester, MA

- MS Center’s waiting room

- Parking: $2 handicap access or garage rates

Explore the MS Society’s programs, services, resources and connection opportunities to help you live your best life.
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Greater New England Chapter
101A First Avenue
Waltham, MA 02451

Maine
74 Gray Road, Falmouth, ME 04105

New Hampshire
One Bedford Farms Drive, Ste 105, Bedford, NH 03110

Rhode Island
205 Hallene Road, Suite 209, Warwick, RI 02886

Vermont
75 Talcott Road, Suite 40, Williston, VT 05495

For more information about Chapter Programs, call: 1-800-344-4867

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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.

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