



# CONNECTION

MOVING TOWARD A WORLD FREE OF MS

Volume 2 • Issue 4

Ohio Valley Chapter

In 2003 I was officially diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Compared to many who have had to deal with the news of living with MS, my symptoms have been less severe. For several months in 2002, my entire left side of my body felt numb. I had trouble hearing. I also experienced some cognitive challenges and occasional memory loss. That diagnosis led to many important changes in my life. Wanting to be as proactive as possible in dealing with MS head-on, I voluntarily left a high stress job as a book editor for an educational development firm and returned to my first love of teaching history at the University of Cincinnati. I also started to exercise for the first time in my life.

rewarding at the same time. Some days the numbness in my lower legs and feet is so pronounced that I have little feeling below my knees. Simply put, I run because it helps me manage stress in my life. I run because it is good for me. I run because I can. When I went to pick up my packet for the Columbus Half Marathon this year, I discovered a



program called Run MS, sponsored by the Ohio Buckeye Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. The program encourages runners to pick races (5k, 10k, half marathon, or marathon) as a fundraiser for MS. The Ohio Valley Chapter is preparing to launch its own Run MS program just in time for the Flying Pig Marathon in May 2009. Please consider joining me as one

**I RUN** because it is good **FOR ME.**  
**I RUN BECAUSE I CAN.**

Bob Miller

One day, I decided to “run” on a treadmill. I remember feeling very winded after a quarter of a mile. I kept at it and ran for a little over a mile. That was the beginning of a new passion for running in my life. I continued to exercise and run, building up endurance levels as the weeks and months progressed. As an added benefit, I lost thirty pounds in the process. I ran my first 5k in June 2005. I continued to train and set the bar a little higher. In October 2007 I completed my first marathon in Columbus. I have also completed five half marathons. Running with MS has been challenging and

of the first area runners in this new program. I will be training for either the half marathon or the full. The Flying Pig weekend offers everything from a 5k to the full marathon. By becoming a member of Run MS, your participation at a Flying Pig race will enable our chapter to raise awareness of our important mission of ending MS and also to raise much needed funds for ongoing research and client services for our over 6000 area clients. For more information, and to help us expand the “sea of orange” at the Flying Pig Marathon, please call Angela Brock at (513) 769-4400 option 2.

**MS Connection**

**Winter 2008**

513.769.4400

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

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Have you ever wondered where you can get a shirt with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society Walk MS or Bike MS logo? Are you trying to get your hands on one of the fleece jackets that the staff wears with the Society logo? Search no longer, because it is with great excitement, that we announce our new e-store partnership with the Cintas Corporation!!

We have developed this partnership with the goal of increasing community awareness of our mission to inspire everyone to "Join the Movement" in moving toward a world free of MS. It also gives us the opportunity to offer a centralized, and easy to use, location from which to obtain your logo merchandise.

The added benefit of this partnership with the Cintas Corporation is that the Ohio Valley Chapter will receive 20% of all sales! The value this partnership adds to the Society is immeasurable and we cannot wait to see all of the logos out there!

You have plenty of time to order and still receive for the holidays. With the Cintas Corporation being right here in our chapter territory, the turn around time quick!

Anyone can access the [e-store](#) and place an order.

## Learn how to make medical decisions

**A** diagnosis of MS brings with it a mountain of information, many decisions to make—and many questions to ask. How to sort through it all? A new Society program called **My Life, My MS, My Decisions** takes you step-by-step through the process of making decisions about your medical care.

The program features a DVD and four online courses that cover the following topics:

- Teaming Up with Your Health-care Providers
- Navigating the Medication Maze
- Considering Clinical Trials
- Achieving Optimal Wellness

The courses can be accessed online wherever there is Internet access, whether at home, a community center, public library, or chapter. The DVD is also available separately if Internet access is unavailable.

### Registering for better health

Three of the courses are now available and the fourth (“Achieving Optimal Wellness”) will be available in winter 2008. The DVD includes three separate segments, each featuring a different person journeying through medical decision-making:

- Annie is a recently diagnosed 20-something who is a bit reluctant to begin taking disease-modifying medication.
- Diagnosed 10 years ago, James, who is in his 30s, finds that his MS is affecting his walking and his physical relationship with his partner.

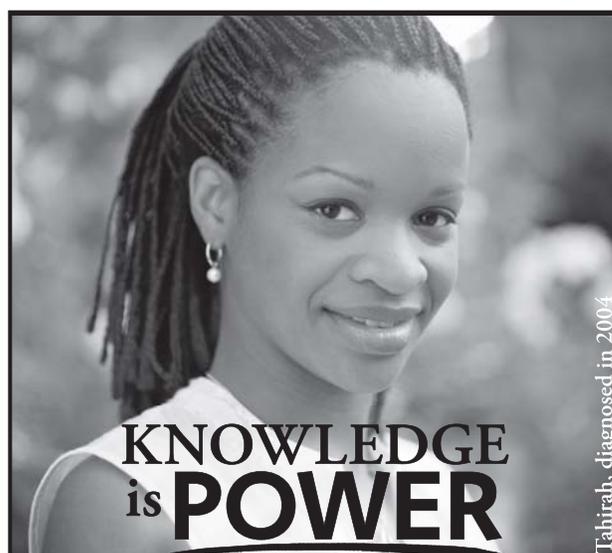
- Joann is in her 40s and uses a wheelchair to get around. She feels her MS is getting worse and would like to change doctors.

The DVD follows Annie, James and Joann through the decisions they make and how they arrive at them, including researching medications, communicating with their doctors, and exploring clinical trials.

For more information, visit [www.nationalMSSociety.org/mydecisions](http://www.nationalMSSociety.org/mydecisions).

To register, call 1-800-344-4867, or e-mail [programsonline@nmss.org](mailto:programsonline@nmss.org).

**My Life, My MS, My Decisions** is partially funded by an unrestricted educational grant from Biogen Idec, Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals, Genentech, EMD Serono/Pfizer Inc., and Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation.



**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](http://nationalmssociety.org/knowledge).

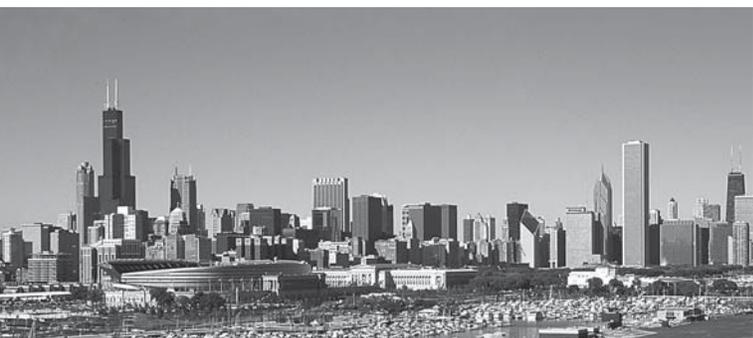
Join the movement.



## Society's National Conference offers something for everyone

Every leader in the MS movement will find something of value at this year's National Conference.

Those of a scientific bent can ask about MS research at two open panel discussions. The first session features Marcia L. Finlayson, MSc, OTR, PhD, Stephen D. Miller, PhD, and Anthony T. Reder, MD; the second session features Howard Lipton, MD, David C. Mohr, PhD, and Betty C. Soliven, MD. At the MS Fellows Poster Session, people can meet many of the "best and brightest" new MS researchers attending the first ever Research Fellows Conference, being held in conjunction with the National Conference.



Those looking for inspiration will hear keynote speaker Malcolm Gladwell, author of **Blink**, **The Tipping Point**, and a new book, **Outliers: Why Some People Succeed and Some Don't**.

Many workshops will discuss advocacy issues, including what the election's outcome may mean for the Society's Health Care Agenda. Other workshops address how to get our message out to a wider range of people with MS, reaching communities diverse in both culture and geography.

## Bold Moves by our Hispanic/Latino Advisory Council

Under the leadership of noted neurologist Victor Rivera, MD, the Society's National Hispanic/Latino Advisory Council has established bold goals for the next three years. They include:

- Promoting more participation by Hispanics and Latinos in clinical trials
- Promoting studies on the experiences of Latinos and Hispanics with MS
- Developing more resources to educate health-care professionals about this community
- Increasing the number of Hispanic/Latino volunteers on chapter boards or as participants in Society fund raising, programs and events.
- Including Hispanic/Latino outreach dimensions in the proposed federal study of MS prevalence by the CDC.

The Council has already created the Spanish-language glossary of MS terms on our Web site and been instrumental in developing the national telephone support group, Café con Leche.

Currently, Dr. Ron Duran, a council member and a professor at the Alliant International University, is doing field work in collaboration with the Society to identify the unique challenges faced by Hispanic/Latino families living with MS. And Dr. Debbie Victor, an occupational therapist and recent graduate of the University of Illinois at Chicago, developed a set of action steps for outreach to Hispanics and Latinos to be distributed to all chapters in the new year.

# An invitation to join a national discussion by Weyman T. Johnson, Jr., chair, National Board of Directors

This coming January a new federal administration will begin asking questions about how to address our national health-care crisis. The major presidential candidates may hold different views on how to fix the current system, but almost every voter in the country agrees without reservation that the status quo is unacceptable.

We at the National MS Society certainly agree. The impact of under-insurance, uninsurability, lack of coverage for maintenance or off-label therapies, disparities in quality and availability of care—especially of long-term services—and the consequences of inconsistent and expensive medical record-keeping are all harmful to those of us in the MS world.

Last May, the National Board unanimously adopted a set of health-care reform principles to guide our active participation in the national discussion. Our board leads a movement that seeks a world in which we may live as powerfully and productively as possible, despite what MS may do. Based on that, we agreed on seven principles, listed in the box.

The full principles are, like MS itself, complex. You can find the complete text at [www.nationalMSSociety.org/healthcareprinciples](http://www.nationalMSSociety.org/healthcareprinciples) or by calling us at 1-800-344-4867. I urge you to get it, read it, talk about it with family, friends and associates, and to send copies to your elected officials.

Fixing our health-care system will involve federal, state and local action. We will need all your voices to ensure that these priorities are taken seriously when reforms are in planning stages. Times are not easy, and the economy may take time to regain momentum. People with MS can and should contribute to a renewal. But we know that productivity of all kinds hinges on enabling people with chronic illness or disabilities to live their best lives. This in turn requires having access to high-quality medical care.

To learn more about the Society's health-care reform activities and to join in, call your chapter or go to [www.nationalMSSociety.org/advocacy](http://www.nationalMSSociety.org/advocacy).

National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
National Health Care Reform Principles



MS  
National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society

## We believe meaningful health-care reform must involve these seven principles:

1. Accessible health-care coverage
2. Affordable health-care services and coverage
3. Standards for coverage of specific treatments
4. Elimination of disparity in health care
5. Comprehensive high-quality health care available to all.
6. Increased value of health care
7. Access to high-quality long-term supports and services

## Chasing the blues away

Depression strikes an estimated 47% to 54% of people with MS—but a new study suggests that you can lift your mood by taking positive actions.

The study was an outgrowth of a longitudinal MS quality of life study conducted at the University of Texas at Austin, funded by the National Institutes of Health and conducted by Dr. Lorraine J. Phillips, PhD, APRN, BC, FNP, and Dr. Alexa Stuifbergen, PhD, RN, FAAN.

Stuifbergen started the study by surveying 443 people with MS yearly, asking how often they felt depressed, and to describe the symptoms they experienced. But one of the participants, Doris Varnell, a 57-year-old retiree, told Stuifbergen she found the questions “depressing.”

“I wanted to know what people were doing to make themselves feel better,” said Varnell.

Varnell wrote up a list of positive actions she engaged in to lighten her mood. She sent her list to Stuifbergen who, to Varnell’s surprise, began to ask study participants if they tried similar things. The results were dramatic. People who checked off the most items on Varnell’s list for a given week were the least depressed. Actions included:

- Saying “thank you” and meaning it
- Phoning a friend
- Visiting a friend

Bill Stanton



- Saying something pleasant to someone else who didn’t expect it
- Crossing off something on your to-do list because you finished it
- Learning something new
- Volunteering or agreeing to become a volunteer
- Going to the library and checking out a book to read
- Going shopping and buying something for yourself
- Taking a nap
- Pampering yourself with a manicure, massage or relaxing bath

Although the study does not prove that the actions alone were responsible for boosting the participants’ mental health—

## Vote for your insurance!

There's another election looming: the annual coordinated election period. Every year, from November 15 to December 31, people eligible for a Medicare prescription drug plan can enroll or elect to switch plans.

### Your current plan may change in 2009

Carefully read the **Annual Notice of Change** that you received in October from your current prescription drug plan. (If you haven't yet received it, call and ask for it.) Any changes will take effect on January 1, 2009. Look for changes to your plan's:

- monthly premium
- annual deductible
- co-pays or co-insurance increases
- list of covered drugs (also known as the plan's "formulary").

If you are on an MS disease-modifying drug, pay special attention to the tier that this drug is on. The lower the tier, the lower

your out-of-pocket expenses.

### Special request?

If your doctor made a special request in 2008 to your plan, such as a preauthorization or exception request that allowed coverage for a specific drug, call and ask what you can do to maintain coverage for that drug.

### Help!

Overwhelmed? Give us a call at 1-800-344-4867 and ask to speak to an MS Navigator® about your Medicare Part D coverage.

But don't wait too long—Medicare advises making any changes well before the December 31 deadline to allow for processing.

### Chasing the blues away (cont.)

people who were happiest could have just been born that way—it does suggest that incorporating more positive actions into the day may improve quality of life even for a person with severe limitations.

"People who suffer from ongoing depression should always consult their doctor," Stuijbergen added.

"The Influence of Positive Experiences on Depression and Quality of Life in Persons with Multiple Sclerosis" is in **The Journal of Holistic Nursing**, V. 26, #1, March 2008, pp. 41-48.

## Treatment update— Betaseron only

Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals will launch a very thin (30-gauge) needle and a new autoinjector (BETAJECT LITE) at the end of October. The new autoinjector will replace all previous autoinjectors for Betaseron. The use of any autoinjector other than this latest version may result in people not receiving their full dose of medication. Go to [betaseron.com/thinner](http://betaseron.com/thinner) or call 800-788-1467 for more information and to request the new autoinjector.

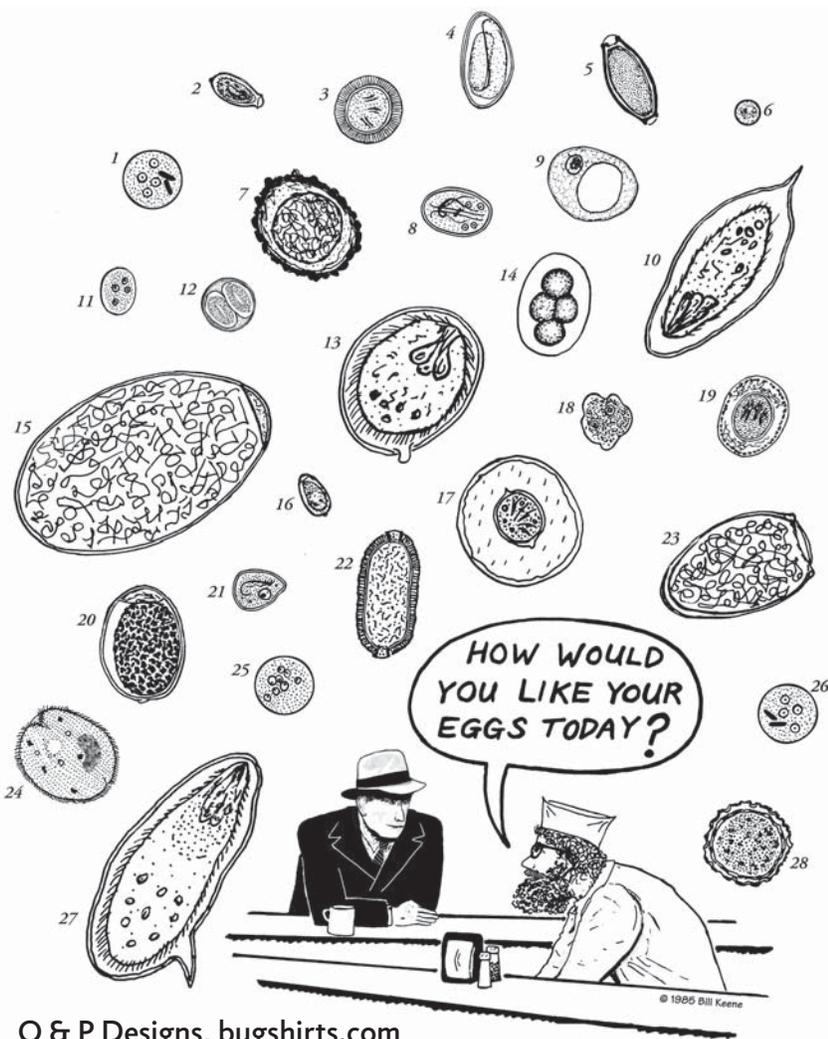
# The "Yuck" Factor

John Fleming, MD, calls it the "yuck factor." But people with MS might happily drink parasitic worm eggs if it meant a reduction in disease activity.

In a study run by Dr. Fleming, five people with MS will ingest the eggs of the whipworm, or *Trichuris suis*, a virtually harmless organism, to see if they will divert the immune system from attacking myelin. If the experiment shows promise, Dr. Fleming hopes to enroll 15 more people with MS and follow them for a year.

The study is based on the "hygiene hypothesis," which theorizes the low incidence in MS in developing countries may be due to early exposure to infectious agents. "Modern sanitation is of course an important advance for public health," explained Dr. Fleming, a professor of neurology at University of Wisconsin, Madison, "but it is possible that autoimmune diseases may be an unanticipated consequence of extremely hygienic environments."

A recently published study involving a small number of people with MS underscores the potential of the worm egg approach: Investigators from the Raúl Carrea Institute for Neurological



O & P Designs, bugshirts.com

Research in Argentina found that helminth-infected people with MS showed evidence of anti-inflammatory immune activity,

compared to uninfected people with MS and those with a different infection. The investigators also found that immune cells isolated from the helminth-infected individuals produced nerve growth factors, which may translate into beneficial nerve protection.

**Researchers need you!** ←

Scientists are testing new medications for MS in clinical trials across the country. Some will result in groundbreaking new treatments for the disease. Clinical trials depend on volunteers—people like you—who want to participate. For information on clinical trials taking place in your area, visit [www.nationalMSSociety.org/clinicaltrials](http://www.nationalMSSociety.org/clinicaltrials)

by Natalie Karlin

## Can medical expenses reduce my taxes?

- **Specific rules must be met** on what percentage of income went to medical expenses for tax deductible status. See IRS publication 502 or visit [www.irs.gov/publications/p502/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/publications/p502/index.html).
- An **air-conditioner** can be a medical expense according to the IRS!
- Before purchasing a **wheelchair**, check with a tax adviser about your medical plan's specific restrictions and deduction status.

**Answer: Yes, if you meet requirements.**

## Does it make sense to transfer medical debt to a credit card?

- It only eliminates the debt to the **medical provider**.
- The **debt still exists** to the credit card company but isn't considered "medical."
- **Medical expenses can be used to offset income** in many states which could make you eligible for Medicaid or other assistance programs based on a "medically needy" status.

**Answer: The best option is to negotiate a payment plan with the medical provider.**

## Is it wise to take a loan from a 401k to pay off debt?

**Some 401k plans do allow loans** against funds already contributed to the plan.

**Factors** to consider

- How much is in the 401k?
- How enormous is the debt?
- Can it be paid off without the loan?
- What is the person's cash flow?

**Answer: Once that money is taken out, it is not growing for future benefits.**

## Is it possible to reduce education loan payments?

- **Contact the agency or organization** that provided the loan. Qualifications exist for some forms of payment relief. Take action before late fees are charged.
- Under the U.S. Department of Education, a **completely disabled individual can qualify for a loan to be forgiven**. But strict rules apply. Visit <http://www.ed.gov/index.jhtml>.

**Answer: It's worth trying.**

**Where to turn for help:** The Society has enlisted 600 volunteer financial advisers nationwide to give free advice through The Financial Education Partners Program. Call us.

**Guidestar.com** verifies a nonprofit's legitimacy regarding credit counseling services.

**Bankrate.com** can figure how much of a monthly credit card payment goes to pay down the original debt.

*Natalie Karlin is a freelance reporter who was diagnosed with MS in 2005.*

# Join the Movement—without leaving your office

## Designate the National MS Society in your employee giving campaign

Every year, over 1.5 million employees support important non-profit organizations nationwide through employee giving campaigns. If you are a federal government employee or your private employer offers a charitable giving campaign, you can help move us closer to a world free of MS by designating a contribution to the National MS Society.

Most charitable giving programs offer employees the opportunity to make an annual pledge, which means a portion of their donation is automatically deducted

**Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)**

If you work in the public sector or you are in the military, contributions can be made through the CFC by selecting the designation number 11409. If you work in the private sector, look for us listed under Community Health Charities or ask your campaign coordinator about designating a gift to the Society.

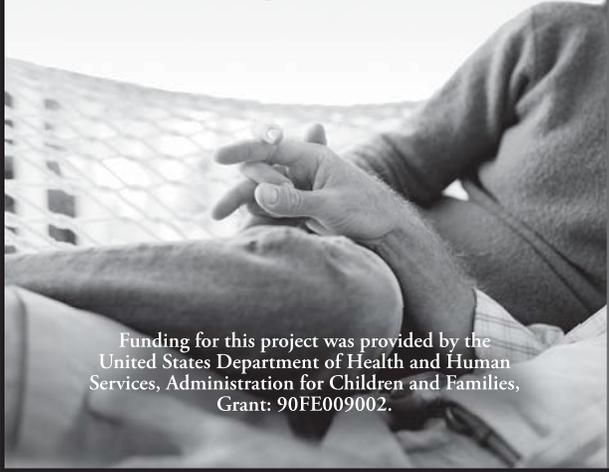
from each paycheck. Donations can also be made as a one-time contribution by writing a personal check. When you choose the National MS Society your donation comes directly to our chapter.

Your company doesn't offer an employee giving program? Talk to your benefits administrator about starting one. And call us. We can give you the resources you need.

Participating in a charitable giving program is an easy way to help provide vital services, spark public policy advocacy, and fund cutting-edge research.

# Relationship Matters

## A Program for Couples Living with MS



Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Grant: 90FE009002.

**Take charge. Get smarter. Live better.**

A positive approach to MS and your relationship.

Free classes for couples:

- Communication and conflict resolution skills
- Financial planning • Career decisions
- Intimacy • Having fun together

When you know how to take charge as a couple, MS doesn't have to rule your relationship.

Contact us:

1 800 FIGHT MS (1-800-344-4867)  
or couplesprogram@nmss.org

Relationship Matters when MS moves in.

# BIKE MS: VENTURE THE VALLEY

AUGUST 29-30, 2009

## BIKE MS

Bike MS: Venture the Valley 2009 is a fully supported, two-day bicycle ride through some of the most scenic countryside and quaint small towns in Southwest Ohio. Bike MS will start, finish and overnight at Camp Kern located in Oregonia, Ohio. The figure eight route will direct all levels of cyclists on a different picturesque 25, 50 or 75-mile route each day.

Are you up for the challenge and ready for the ride of your life? The sense of accomplishment you'll feel crossing the finish line will be matched only by the difference you'll be making in the lives of people living with MS.

At Camp Kern you'll enjoy great food, music, a Beer Garden, camaraderie, fun, friendship and a weekend full of memories.

## CAMP KERN

Camp Kern is located on 485 beautiful acres in the Little Miami River Valley of Southwestern Ohio. Riders have the option of cabin lodging, camping or hotel accommodations. Camp Kern will also offer their Olympic-size pool, high ropes courses, climbing and repelling tower, Giant Swing, Elk Lake, Optimist Pond, the Nature Center, Rotary Chapel, Tango Tower and Pete's Tower. Talk about an adventure!

The National MS Society believes that moving forward is not just something we can do, but rather is who we are. This is why Bike MS is vital in raising funds for research as well as comprehensive programs and services for those living with MS.



**bike to  
create a world  
free of MS**

Register at [www.fightMStoday.org](http://www.fightMStoday.org)

or call: 800-344-4867

## CURRENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We currently have numerous volunteer and intern opportunities available. If any of the opportunities below interest you, please call the office at 513.769.4400 or email us at [volunteer@ohg.nmss.org](mailto:volunteer@ohg.nmss.org)

Data Entry Volunteer

Health Fair Volunteer

Walk MS Committee

Bike MS Committee

Women of Courage Luncheon Committee

MS Champions

Faces of MS

Bike MS Intern

## Life with MS

### Greater Cincinnati

#### Butler County

Knights of Columbus Hall  
930 Hamilton-Cleves Road, Hamilton  
Meets 3rd Tues./month 7 p.m.  
Contact Judy, 513.523.6786  
Jan, 513.726.4789

#### College Hill

College Hill Recreation Center  
5545 Belmont Ave., Cincinnati  
Meets 2nd Sat./month, 10 a.m.  
Contact Carolyn, 513.641.3156

#### Care Partners Group

Panera, Community Room  
8420 Winton Road, Cincinnati  
Meets 4th Wed./month, 7 p.m.  
Contact Jody, 513.575.2660

#### Beechmont

Lutheran Church of the Resurrection  
1950 Nagel Road, Cincinnati  
Meets 3rd Tues./month, 7 p.m.  
Contact Joyce, 513.943.7547

#### Men's Social Group

Chapter Office, Blue Ash  
4440 Lake Forest Drive, Suite 120  
Meets last Thurs./month, 7 p.m.  
Contact Ryan, 513.769.4400

#### Mason

Mason Community Center, the Bridge  
6050 Montgomery Road, Mason  
Meets one Monday a month  
(call for date), 11 a.m.  
Contact Meryl, 513.573.9583

#### Newly Diagnosed Open-House

Chapter Office  
4440 Lake Forest Drive, Suite 120, Blue Ash  
Meets 3rd Thurs./month, 5:30 p.m.  
Contact Ryan 513.769.4400

### Greater Dayton

#### Miami County

Dettmer Hospital Dining Room  
3130 N. Dixie Highway, Troy  
Meets 2nd Tues./month, 7 p.m.  
Contact Sam 937.676.5877

#### Dayton

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church  
9100 North Main Street, Dayton  
Meets 4th Thur./month, 7 p.m.  
Contact Joyce 937.898.7704

#### Kettering Power Lunch

Christ UMC  
3440 Shroyer Road, Kettering  
Meets 1st Tues./month 12 p.m.  
(bring a bag lunch)  
Contact Judy 937.293.3151

#### South Dayton

Charles Lathrem Senior Center  
2900 Glengarry Drive, Kettering  
Meets 2nd Wed./month, 6:30 p.m.  
Contact Deneko 937.270.1156

#### Champaign County

Mechanicsburg Public Library  
60 South Main Street, Mechanicsburg  
Meets 3rd Mon./month, 7 p.m.  
Contact Michael, 937.834.4020

#### Fairborn

Fairborn Senior Center  
325 N. 3rd Street, Fairborn  
Meets 2nd Tues./month, 6 p.m.  
Contact Phyllis 937.879.3735

## Life with MS

### Eastern Counties

#### Lawrence

New Hope United Methodist Church  
 111 Township Road 1130, Proctorville  
 Meets 3rd Thurs./month, 7 p.m.  
 Contact Jody, 740.886.0532

#### Gallia

Holzer Medical Center, Conference Room A  
 100 Jackson Pike, Gallipolis  
 Meets 2nd Mon./month, 6 p.m.  
 Contact Amber, 740.367.0517

#### Ross County

Adena Regional Medical, West Entrance  
 272 Hospital Road, Chillicothe  
 Meets last Sun./month, 3 p.m.  
 Contact Larry, 937.981.4622

### Get Involved...

#### Host Your Own Event!

Have you ever wanted to join the movement by hosting your own event to benefit people living with multiple sclerosis? Making a difference locally in the movement to create a world free of MS is a relatively simple process and the money raised from your fundraising event helps provide many programs and services for people living with MS across our chapter area.

Community Events are hosted by groups and individuals not officially affiliated with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and the Chapter bears little responsibility in getting them organized. Many events can be planned and held without Chapter staff involvement, but if you have questions or need assistance in getting started contact Zoe Seuberling at 513.769.4400 or at [zoe.seuberling@ohg.nmss.org](mailto:zoe.seuberling@ohg.nmss.org)

## Two New Life with MS Support Groups

The Ohio Valley Chapter is excited to announce two new Life with MS support groups.

The Newly Diagnosed Social Group will be a gathering of people diagnosed with MS since 2006. People attending will have the opportunity to get to know chapter staff and the wide range of programs and services available. You will also have the opportunity to meet and share experiences with others going through similar experiences. Come once or come every month, the goal is to provide you with the information that you need, however it might be beneficial to you. The Newly Diagnosed Social group will meet on the third Thursday of every month at 5:30pm. The first meeting will be on January 15th.

The Men's Caregivers group will be a gathering of men who care for a spouse or partner with MS. We will trade tips with each other on how to be supportive of your partner, and how to maintain a healthy mental state for yourself. Chapter resources dedicated to caregivers will be available at the meetings. The Men's Caregivers group will have a planning meeting on Wednesday January 14th at 6:30pm. We will discuss a regular monthly meeting time at this meeting. Both groups will meet at the chapter's new office 4440 Lake Forest Suite 120, Cincinnati, OH 45242. For more information please call Ryan Kulik at (513)769-4400 ext. 106.

## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

Since 1986, MobilityWorks has been empowering individuals with special mobility needs to live full and active lives with maximum independence. Their focus is to provide quality adaptive vehicles to people with disabilities through the sale and service of:

- Wheelchair Accessible Vans – New and Used
- Wheelchairs and Scooter Lifts
- Driving Aids
- Custom Automotive Seating

The company has 12 store locations serving 7 states, in addition to a Commercial Business Group that supplies ambulettes and paratransit buses to businesses nationwide such as nursing homes, medical centers, schools and hotels. MobilityWorks opened their Cincinnati facility in late 2004. Soon after, Tim Sigmon, a certified mobility consultant with the company contacted our chapter to inform, educate and begin building what has evolved into a wonderfully positive relationship for all. Tim’s connection with the battle against MS came by watching the strength and determination with which the mother of a close friend battled her illness. Shandyn Massengill, our chapter’s Direct Services Coordinator, commented about working with Tim: “The work that MobilityWorks does

is really amazing when you consider what a huge obstacle vehicles can become with the loss of mobility. Tim knows so much about the options available to overcome these obstacles and it’s a true pleasure to work with him.”

In 2005, MobilityWorks came aboard as an Ohio Valley chapter MS Walk/Bike sponsor by offering in-kind donations of new and gently used equipment for the benefit of chapter members. Our friend Samantha Steinmetz recently received a new exterior platform lift to transport her scooter and had this to say about her experience: “I had a great experience with Mobility Works. I really feel as though they went out of their way to help me and I really appreciated it. They were so helpful; they even came out to my car and demonstrated how the lift on my van operates. They gave me more information about Mobility Works than I could have ever imagined- information that might be beneficial for me to know down the road.” When asked how she has utilized her lift since receiving it she said, “It has been wonderful. I can no longer work due to my MS but I can do the one thing in life I have wanted the most and that is be a good mother to my children. They are so happy that I am able to get out and go places with them. This truly has been a blessing for me.”

CONTINUED ON PG 16

**MOBILITYWORKS®**  
**ADAPTIVE VEHICLES**  
 MAKING THE WORLD ACCESSIBLE

## Message from the Chapter President

Perhaps you're wondering why this column is not on the front page of the newsletter as has always been the case, and I can tell you the reason is that there is a certain phrase no longer used here at the Society, that being "Because we've always done it that way." Our momentum in moving toward a world free of MS is increasing at staggering speeds, and there are many examples of this momentum that should be highlighted on the front page.



That being said, there are, of course, highlights from

2008 that I would like to share. Advocacy efforts are ramping up at lightening speed, as can be seen through examples such as the \$5 million that has been awarded for an historic MS research project within the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), thanks in large part to the tireless work of MS activists across the country who helped to secure the funding. This is a tremendous victory for the MS movement as it is the first time that multiple sclerosis has ever received its own line item allocation under CDMRP, a program funded through the Defense Department.

I'd also like to take a moment highlight a few things in the pipeline for 2009. First, we plan to significantly expand our Care Management program into the Dayton area through a contractual relationship with CareStar, Inc. CareStar is a case management agency located in all 88 Ohio counties with a proven history of 20 years in the business.

They have 250 case managers on staff, all licensed social workers and nurses, and have worked with people with MS more so than with any other chronic illness. The best part? These case managers are located in and are a part of the Dayton community.

Affordable and accessible housing for people with MS is a priority for both the Ohio Valley Chapter and our home office in 2009. Our chapter is currently working with Miller Valentine Group to develop such housing locally, housing with a priority for people with MS and other neurological diseases. More information to come!

On a final note, please extend a warm welcome to our new Director of Client Programs, Mr. Maurice Huey. Maurice has



Maurice Huey

an extensive non-profit background having served as the Associate Executive Director of the American Cancer Society in Lansing, Michigan and more recently, as the Director of Community Relations for

Lutheran Social Services of Michigan. We are thrilled to have Maurice join our team!

I'd like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season, and don't forget to visit our brand new e-store to make those last minute holiday purchases!

## SHOPPING FOR A CAUSE

Just in time for the holidays, the Ohio Valley Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society is pleased to announce a new partnership with Arbonne International. From this point forward, for every purchase made using the below code, Arbonne will donate 35% of the proceeds to the Ohio Valley Chapter! Arbonne International offers a full line of botanically based products for everyday, healthy living for every member of your family. Arbonne's premium skin care products are formulated in Switzerland at the Arbonne Institute of Research and Development and made in the U.S.A. Just go to [Arbonne.com](http://Arbonne.com), enter the code 17991248 and go shopping! The best part? You get to enjoy the variety of products Arbonne has to offer while making a donation to the society at the same time!

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## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

### CONTINUED FROM PG 15

Over the past three years, nearly a dozen chapter members and families have purchased accessible lowered floor mini-vans from Tim and MobilityWorks. All describe these marvels of engineering as a true blessing in their day-to-day lives, providing the vital elements of freedom and independence to meet personal family demands. As one chapter member put it, "Let's face it, without wheels we're stuck in this society." At their Blue Ash location, MobilityWorks keeps a large inventory of new and used vans. They also offer daily, weekly and monthly rentals.

The company emphasizes finding the right van and equipment for the individual based on their specific needs and travel requirements. Says company president, Bill

Koeblitz: "MobilityWorks is people. They are passionate individuals who live and serve in the communities where we operate. Our consultants take great pride in solving mobility challenges, answering questions and building relationships with drivers and passengers. Providing a really positive experience is our highest priority."

If you would like to learn more about accessible vans and other mobility equipment, contact Tim Sigmon at the MobilityWorks Cincinnati showroom located at 8980 Blue Ash Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45242, just off the Ronald Reagan Highway. You can reach him by phone at 513-791-4000; toll free at 800-638-8267 or by email at [tsigmon@mobilityworks.com](mailto:tsigmon@mobilityworks.com). Call Tim today to "Keep you on the road!"

## Upcoming Dates

### March 9, 2009

The Women of Courage Luncheon, presented by Women on the Move at the NKU Student Center.

### April 18, 2009

#### Butler County

Oxford Community Park  
930 Hamilton-Cleves Road, Hamilton  
6801 Fairfield Rd, Oxford, OH 45056

#### Dayton

Kettering Middle School  
3000 Glengarry Dr  
Kettering, OH 45420

#### Miami County

Troy Memorial Stadium  
150 W Staunton Rd  
Troy, OH 45373

#### Cincinnati North

Liberty Jr. School  
7055 Dutchland Pkwy  
Liberty Twp, OH 45044

#### Gallipolis

Haskins Memorial Park  
Ohio Ave & Mill Creek Rd  
Gallipolis, OH 45631

#### Northern Kentucky

Dixie Heights High School  
3010 Dixie Hwy  
Edgewood, KY 41017

### April 25, 2009

Sawyer Point  
705 E Pete Rose Way  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

### May 2009

Dinner of Champions at the Cincinnati Hilton Netherland Plaza honoring Cincinnati Bell Telephone, and Jack Cassidy, President and Chief Executive Officer.

### August 29 & 30, 2009

Bike MS: Venture the Valley located at YMCA Camp Kern, Oregonia, Ohio