

MS CONNECTION NEWSLETTER



**INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE**

4

**A SURPRISE
VISIT**

6

**BREAKTHROUGH
MS**

7

**WELLNESS &
RESILIENCE**

9

**GET CONNECTED
CALENDAR**



EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Breaking news, including research developments, and available resources and services: nationalMSSociety.org/signup

MS NAVIGATOR®

Call 1-800-344-4867 for:

- Area resources
- Health insurance advice
- Información en español
- Change of mail subscription(s)

24/7 INFORMATION

nationalMSSociety.org

- Información disponible en español
- **New!** Live chat

GET INVOLVED

Participate in a Walk MS®, Bike MS®, Challenge Walk MS®, MuckFest® MS, or Do It Yourself Fundraising MS event.

nationalMSSociety.org/getinvolved



DONATE

In cash, by check or online at nationalMSSociety.org/donate

LEGACY

Remember the Society in your will or estate plan: 800-923-7727

ONLINE MS COMMUNITY

People around the world are connecting to live their best lives on MSconnection.org

MS ACTIVISM

Receive MS Activist Network updates and Action Alerts: nationalMSSociety.org/MSactivist

RESEARCH

Become a research champion at nationalMSSociety.org/research

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society (“Society”) is proud to be a source of information on topics related to MS. The information provided is based on professional advice, published experience, and expert opinion, but does not constitute medical or legal advice. For specific medical advice, consult a qualified physician. For specific legal advice, consult a qualified attorney.

The Society does not endorse products, services or manufacturers. Such names appear here solely because they are considered helpful information. The Society assumes no liability for the recipient’s use of any product or service mentioned. The Society does not independently verify whether the information provided by each service provider is accurate. The Society undertakes no responsibility to verify whether the service provider is appropriately licensed and certified and has applicable insurance coverage.

Early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can make a difference for people with multiple sclerosis. Learn about your options by talking to your healthcare professional and contacting the National MS Society at 1-800-344-4867 or nationalMSSociety.org.

Cover: Alex (center), diagnosed in 2000, at **Walk MS: Chicago**.
Above: Lynne (second from left), diagnosed in 2008, and Hayley (right), diagnosed in 2015, at **Walk MS: Denver**.



Greetings!

You may have noticed this newsletter feels a little different. It's a new look in a new year! **MS Connection** is an important connection to the vital local information and resources you need to live your best life, no matter where you live.

As we welcome spring, we also welcome the **Walk MS® season**. Walk MS helps us team up with friends, loved ones and coworkers to change the world for everyone affected by MS. Together, we become a powerful force. If you have not already registered, find your location and sign up at **walkMS.org** (Southern and Central California, and Nevada locations are listed on page 9).

For the first time in the Society's history, we have a bold campaign that provides an inspiring rallying point for every person in the MS movement. It's called **Breakthrough MS**; read more on page 6.

Speak up for **MS Awareness Week** (March 5-11) and all year long; learn how on page 5. And join fellow MS activists in supporting MS-movement advocacy priorities online at **nationalMSsociety.org/MSactivist**.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter and take advantage of the myriad ways to get and stay connected. You'll find wellness and other program opportunities on page 7, with a comprehensive local calendar on page 9.

We have so much progress to make together — connecting, giving, raising funds, speaking out and more!

Julie Kaufer, Esq.
President, Southern California & Nevada

Board of Trustees: Officers

Don Fracchia
Chair

Chris Ruhe
Chair, Governance

Larry McEwen
Chair, Finance

Sue Schroeder
Secretary

National MS Society Southern California & Nevada Chapter

5150 W. Goldleaf Circle
Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90056

**nationalMSsociety.org/
CAL**

 national**MS**society

 national**MS**society

 **MS**society

 **MS**society

WALK MS® TO END MS

Walk MS helps us team up with friends, loved ones and coworkers to change the world for everyone affected by multiple sclerosis. Together, we become a powerful force. And with every step we take, every dollar we raise, we become that much closer. Together, we will end MS forever.

This spring, Walk MS will be held at 12 sites throughout Central and Southern California, and Nevada. No matter where you live — there is a Walk MS event near you.

When you participate in this exciting community event, you'll raise critical funds to help drive programs and advance cutting-edge research to **STOP MS** in its tracks, **RESTORE** lost



Missy, diagnosed in 2014

function and **END MS** forever!

With easy-to-use online fundraising tools and National MS Society staff who are here to guide you, getting started is easier than you think.

To register for Walk MS, make a donation or to start your team, visit walkMS.org.

CREATIVE FUNDRAISING IDEAS

- **Set up your fundraising page to tell your story** — after you register, you'll find your Participant Center and very own webpage. Be sure to customize it with your story and your pictures. Need help? Call us at 1-800-344-4867.
- **Ask your local restaurants to place a money jar at the front of the restaurant** — check with the restaurant managers. They may be willing to place the jar in a high-traffic area so lots of patrons can see it.
- **Start a Dress-Down Day** — ask your employer to allow an official Walk MS Dress-Down or “Jeans” Day. For the privilege of dressing more casually than usual, employees pledge \$10 or \$20 toward the event.
- **Sign your correspondence** — add a short sentence to the bottom of your email signature saying that you're participating in Walk MS and ask for a pledge. Include a link to your personal or team page.

Left: Alec and the police department at Walk MS®

Right: Alec with his retirement badge



A SURPRISE VISIT

By the spring of 2016, Alec Phillips had come to terms with his early retirement from the police force due to his MS symptoms. He and his wife Carson were expecting a child, and the couple had worked hard to recruit close friends and family to their team to raise funds for Walk MS.

The team was enjoying the morning at their team tent, when Alec turned around to find the entire police force approaching. He soon found out they'd registered for the walk months before and fundraised — significantly — in secret in order to surprise Alec with their support that morning.

“I was speechless. I mean I knew they had my back, but it meant a lot [to have their support],” says Alec, “Especially for my friends and family to see it.”

The group included “the entire department — everyone from the Chief down. They even did a convoy



to the event [in police vehicles].” The morning culminated with an on-stage presentation of Alec’s retirement badge.

Now Alec is embarking on a photography business, and he, son Mack (born November 2016), Carson and their friends, family and colleagues — old and new — are moving life forward. Walk MS and other fundraising for the MS movement are surely in their plans for years to come. ■

To register for Walk MS, make a donation or to start your team, visit walkMS.org.



THANK YOU TO OUR NATIONAL SPONSORS

Genentech
A Member of the Roche Group

SANOBI GENZYME





Top: Amy, diagnosed in 1997, doesn't let MS stop her from dancing. She dances from her chair and is also a choreographer.
Bottom: Steve, diagnosed in 2006, still keeps surfing central in his life in spite of his MS.

MS AWARENESS WEEK MARCH 5-11

You can help ensure that more people understand what life with MS can be like, **and** engage more people in the MS movement to do something about it.

When we connect with one another, we become stronger than MS — we make breakthroughs that we could not do alone. Please share your breakthroughs on any social media with the hashtag **#WeAreStrongerThanMS**. We'll bring your post together with those shared by others across the nation — in a single location where all can find solutions, strength and inspiration through collective experiences during MS Awareness Week and throughout the year.

**Together we are stronger.
Together we will Breakthrough MS.**

Visit WeAreStrongerThanMS.org

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK — APRIL 23-29

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

The Society has celebrated National Volunteer Week annually since the 1970s by honoring YOU!

Thank you for all you've done so far, and all that you will do and give in the years to come as part of the MS movement. Volunteers are changing lives every day!

Find your next opportunity at
nationalMSSociety.org/volunteer



Volunteers at Walk MS®



WHATEVER IT TAKES.

The National MS Society has embarked on a

\$1 BILLION DOLLAR FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

to fuel breakthroughs that will change the world
for people with MS.

People affected by MS are relying on us to do whatever it takes
to accelerate breakthroughs — life-changing breakthroughs
that enable people to live their best lives today and research
breakthroughs that will end MS forever.

**Every breakthrough matters.
Every dollar counts.
Give your best gift today.**

TOGETHER WE WILL BREAKTHROUGH MS.

Learn more and watch the video at
BREAKTHROUGHMS.ORG



ANQUETTE, DIAGNOSED IN 2013



JOSEPH, DIAGNOSED IN 2008



MS ACTIVISM

The Society's top policy priorities include:

- Continuous, quality health insurance coverage
- Affordability and accessibility of MS medications

Advocacy news can change rapidly — stay up to date
and take action by visiting:

nationalMSSociety.org/advocacypriorities



WELLNESS & RESILIENCE

RESILIENCE AND MS

People with MS and their families may find that the physical, emotional, spiritual or other challenges of living with the disease can feel overwhelming. But practicing behaviors that promote resilience can help not just to cope, but to thrive. Resilience helps create a mindset of growth and opportunities, of seeing obstacles as challenges rather than threats.

Some people have a natural tendency to be optimistic and to look for solutions. Even if that's not the case for you, strategies to build resilience can be learned and practiced.

A new program is available 24/7 online **and** in-person at locations across the country — find your program at nationalMSSociety.org/resilience or call 1-800-344-4867.

MS AND WELLNESS

Webinar & Telelearning Series:
A Collaboration with Can Do MS

View the full list and descriptions, and register to join (online or by phone) at nationalMSSociety.org/telelearning or 1-800-344-4867.

Held on the second Tuesday of each month, 8 to 9:15 p.m. ET

- **March 14:** Weight Management and Nutrition
- **March 21:** How to Navigate Leaving the Workforce (special date)
- **April 4:** Enhance Your Job Search with Online Resources (special date)
- **April 11:** Non-Cardio Exercise
- **May 9:** Vision/Optic Neuritis
- **June 13:** Accessibility

EVERYDAY MATTERS

The practice of positive psychology is centered on helping people thrive and become happier. Increase your knowledge of positive psychology principles and receive support to develop a personalized, concrete plan for implementing these principles and for achieving greater life satisfaction.

As one participant reported, “Everyday Matters provided me with real-life strategies I can use to handle problems, not only dealing with MS, but in life.”

Start now at nationalMSSociety.org/everydaymatters or 1-800-344-4867.



SUPPORT, CONNECTION & SELF-HELP GROUPS

Come together with people who share common life experiences or goals for support, education and mutual aid. The benefits of participation include:

- Learning new information and strategies for preventing or confronting problems
- Finding support from others — and the opportunity to help others
- Building confidence in your ability to cope and address issues

There are more than 60 support and self-help groups for people living with MS and their loved ones across Central and Southern California, and Nevada. The groups meet at various times and locations, often monthly, and are wonderful sources of friendship,

understanding, compassion and information. The groups are diverse — some broad in their focus, and others rallying around activities, life stages or specific experiences. They may discuss wellness or research topics — or just provide a great chance to socialize; participants can range from young adults to carepartners. If you are not currently a member of a group, please consider joining one.

For an up-to-date list of groups and meetings — including group-leader contact information and group location — visit nationalMSSociety.org/CALSHG, call 1-800-344-4867 or email contactusNMSS@nmss.org.

DO IT YOURSELF (DIY) FUNDRAISING MS

With DIY Fundraising MS, your talents and hobbies can become a fundraising event of your own! Whether you like to host parties, put on concerts, organize bake sales, or dance, the only limit is your imagination.

Rally your friends, family and coworkers to do something about MS today! For details on how to kick-start your DIY fundraiser, visit diyMS.org.

do it yourself
fundraising
MS



GET CONNECTED CALENDAR

Bike MS®: Coastal Challenge —

Saturday, March 25, Rose Bowl, Pasadena. **Register at bikeMS.org**

Exercise and MS (Goleta)

Saturday, April 15, 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at Goleta Valley Community Center.

Find out how integrating a functional fitness approach to exercise can benefit your everyday life with MS. To apply, contact Nicole at 310-481-1113 or nicole.stoltzfus@nmss.org

Live Fully, Live Well

This new program focuses on introducing six key dimensions of wellness that can contribute to different aspects of well-being for individuals, including:

- Diet and Exercise
- Emotional Well-Being
- Work and Home
- Spirituality
- Relationships
- Cognitive Health

Contact Nicole at 310-481-1113 or nicole.stoltzfus@nmss.org

Everyday Matters: Living your Best Life with MS (Reno)

Date TBD. Contact Zoe at 916-927-9113 x75201 or zoe.edwards@nmss.org

Join Walk MS® —

Register at walkMS.org

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

- **Conejo Valley** at Conejo Creek Park
- **Palm Desert** at Palm Desert Civic Center Park
- **San Luis Obispo** at Sinsheimer Park
- **Las Vegas** at Sunset Park

SATURDAY, APRIL 22, Inland Empire, location TBD

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, Greater Los Angeles at Rose Bowl

SATURDAY, APRIL 29

- **Long Beach** at El Dorado Park
- **Antelope Valley** at Lancaster Marketplace
- **Fresno** at Fig Garden Village
- **Reno/Sparks** at Wingfield Park
- **Santa Barbara** at Leadbetter Beach

SATURDAY, MAY 6, Big Bear at Alpine Pedal Path

Fall TBD, **Bakersfield**



“The group has got so much spirit. And so much enthusiasm.” —Sue Chapman (center), diagnosed in 1974

Over the years, this particular MS support group has gone through a lot of changes, but one thing has stayed the same: the spirit of the people who are a part of it. The group doesn't have an official name, nor does it have an official leader; instead, each person gives what they are good at, offering different activities or events each week.

“We try to keep a structure so people feel like there's a good reason to go to the meeting,” says Chapman.

Chapman, a former social worker, helps devise what she terms “mental-health activities” that the whole group does together. “We do brain-stimulation games — just fun things to stimulate our synapses and keep ourselves mentally alert.”

A different week, someone else may lead craft activities, or the group may hold a potluck dinner or watch a movie. Deena Lisak, a certified MS

nurse, often discusses medical issues and new MS research.

However, most important, Chapman feels, is the opportunity for people to interact. “I look forward to seeing people,” Sue says. “It's a good social connection.” Even if they don't meet because of weather or other reasons, they still connect by phone or email.

The group is open to anyone living with MS. “It's diverse,” says Chapman. “Not everyone has the same symptoms or limitations.” Instead, some members manage cognitive issues, while others may have mobility challenges. “We welcome new people,” she adds. “Come see what we're all about.” ■

To search groups nationwide, visit nationalMSSociety.org/groups, connect online at MSconnection.org or call 1-800-344-4867. No group near you? Talk with an MS Navigator about establishing one at 1-800-344-4867.



National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society

900 South Broadway
Second Floor
Denver, CO 80209

CAL

bike

~~MS~~[®]

It's more than a ride



ONE DESTINATION: A WORLD FREE OF MS.

Bike MS[®] is more than a ride. It's an experience grounded in camaraderie and marked by passion, inspiration, determination and pure enjoyment. It will be an experience you'll never forget, shared with new friends and old.

Much more than the ride of a lifetime, with each pedal stroke you'll be **helping us reach our goal — a world free of MS.**

REGISTER › BIKEMS.ORG

Don't just ride, Bike MS

THANK YOU TO OUR PREMIER NATIONAL SPONSORS **Bicycling** PRIMAL