



Making Strides



WINTER 2010

Couples Getaway!

The Couples Getaway is a weekend retreat for couples living with Multiple Sclerosis. The getaway is held at Camp He Ho Ha which is a wheelchair accessible facility. The weekend offers you the opportunity to spend time away with your partner, meet other couples living with MS, discover renewed appreciation for your partner, and leave the stress of everyday behind.

A couples program planning committee is starting to meet to prepare for this year's activities.

Past activities have included:

- Information sessions on healthy living, positive communication, symptom management, and many more
- Various recreational activities, including a wheelchair accessible swimming pool
- Social events like a murder mystery, yankee swap, musical entertainment, games



The details of the event include:

- Dates: March 12-14, 2010
- Cost: Early Registration: \$225 After February 19th, 2010 - \$250 Other Chapters - \$375

The deadline for registration/payment is on March 5th, 2009.

For more information visit our website at www.mssociety.ca/edmonton/couples or please contact the MS Society – Edmonton Capital Region Chapter at (780) 471-3034, and ask for either Jennie Malone, or Cassy Lawson. We look forward to seeing some of you out for this year's Couples Getaway!

Connections 2009 a Success!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2009 MS Connections Conference on October 23 and 24 at the Century Casino and Hotel! The weekend was a very big success thanks in large part to a very well organized and thorough conference planning committee made up of MS Society staff from the Edmonton and Calgary Chapters, Alberta Division, as well as local health professionals.

The conference had over three hundred registrants attend two days of excellent educational sessions. All of the great speakers that attended gave quite extraordinary presentations. Nearly thirty volunteers assisted in making the registration process go quite smoothly on both days and they were a great help in ensuring people were directed properly to the various rooms for sessions and into the appropriate lines for food. The information and resource fair had fifteen exhibitors in attendance that were quite busy during the transition breaks between sessions.

A very special thank you to our presenters who all gave extraordinary presentations, to our volunteers who were instrumental in our success, to our venue host the Century Casino & Hotel for providing a spectacular venue, to our sponsors for support this endeavor, and of course to you, for taking time out of your busy lives to participate in this experience. Thank you all for making this a memorable event!

The next Connections Conference is slated for October 29 and 30th in Calgary, Alberta. For more information, please contact the Calgary Chapter at 403-250-7090 or visit their website at www.mscalgary.org. The Edmonton Chapter will host this provincial conference once again in October of 2011.

Message from the Vice President



Dear Friends and Members

I am delighted to bring you my report on progress at the now Edmonton and Capital Region

Chapter as we approach our year end. Yes, as of October 24th 2009 at the Annual General Meeting we have now officially renamed the chapter. This is to reflect our intention to expand our Chapter Boundaries to the 'old' Capital Health Region and subsequent to an Alberta MS Society Chapter Boundary Expansion plan approved by the Alberta Division Board in September of 2008.

This has been a fantastic year for the Edmonton and Capital Region Chapter. It is appropriate we are changing our name since it is symbolic of the great progress we have made over the last 5 years and provides a launch pad for our new business plan for 2010 which you will recall we have titled, "Breaking Out

2010.'

I have told you about our innovative programming in the last newsletter in the Fall and I am delighted to report that we continue to make strides with our Friendly visiting program; the Sherwood Park Community Group; our Advocacy and Education program, our youth programs and all our core services.

But perhaps our greatest achievement this year; one which signals the end of a successful year and serves as a launch pad for 2010, is the "Community Connections Conference 2009" hosted by the Edmonton (and Capital Region) Chapter on October 23rd and 24th 2009. This conference represented a year and a half of careful planning and rigorous seeking of speakers and sponsors, and involving both the Edmonton (and Capital Region) Chapter team and senior program directors at Alberta Division.

Our combined efforts resulted in our being able to host a marvelous event, attended by over 350 persons with MS, their families and support networks, volunteers, staff and health professionals, during which a highly qualified program faculty delivered educational presentations on a number of key areas with regard to the management of the symptoms of MS. Highlights included, the engaging and vivacious Dr Al Condeluci speaking on the power of community; Dr Mary Lou Myles' superb overview of the recent research in the area of Vitamin D and MS; Dr Giuliani's fascinating 'video' of nerve damage in progress; and Dr Yeung's excellent overview of research. Combined with a number of other key presentations, this was likely one of, if not the, finest conference ever hosted by the Edmonton (and Capital Region) Chapter. This truly was a magnificent way to both celebrate the development of the current Chapter team and programs and to launch us into the next fiscal year.

At this point I must publicly

congratulate the Edmonton and Capital Region Staff Team for their incredibly hard work in putting on this event and thank Scott Rattray for his leadership during the final two weeks leading up to the event during which it was critical that every small detail was attended to. As well, thank you to the Division communications, volunteer management, and leadership giving staff for all their support in this venture. This was indeed a fantastic success, so congratulation to all involved and a very big thank you to all our speakers and volunteers who made this such a memorable event.

We plan to host this event every alternate year in Edmonton. Next year will be Calgary's turn to host, what we hope becomes a major Provincial conference and of course, we hope to see you in Edmonton in 2011. We shall certainly keep you updated as to the 'where' and 'when' regarding this event. As well, we invite you to attend our programs and take part in all our social events. As always I invite you to contact us at the Edmonton and Capital Region Chapter should you require our assistance or if you are able to help us in our mission to enhance the quality of life for persons with MS in the Capital Region.

Respectfully submitted
Garry Wheeler PhD RPsych.
Vice President

Edmonton Chapter's John Soars Retires

For the past seven and a half years, John Soars has planned and facilitated the majority of the Edmonton Chapter's Community Support Groups. Joining the Society in 2002, mainly because of a former co-worker and good friend's MS diagnosis, John quickly became an integral part of the MS Society's staff team. John has been involved in Community Support Groups including

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MS SOCIETY OF CANADA
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Chairperson: Bob (Robert) Macklon
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Our Mission:

To be a leader in finding a cure for multiple sclerosis and enabling people affected by MS to enhance their quality of life.

Education Update

Over the past year there have been a variety of education sessions held for our members and their families. Last September the first Facilitation Training Series was held with 15 people attending the four days. During that time the participants learned and developed their facilitation skills. Since then some of the people involved in the training have gone on to co-facilitate the Fall MS IS 6 week session and presented to various community and educational groups including to students of the adapted physical activity class at the University of Alberta.

The Fall MS IS 6 week session supported 27 individuals to learn more about MS and related concerns. The sessions held were interactive and had many discussions about symptoms

and symptom management, finding out about financial and community resources and recognizing losses and learning to cope with change and loss as a result of MS.

The Connections 2009 conference was a huge success with 300 plus attending the 1 ½ day conference held at the Century Casino in Edmonton. The conference streams included information on research, health and wellness and community advocacy throughout Saturday. The presenters included international, national and provincial speakers on topics such as physical activity, community inclusion, future of MS Therapies, symptom management and human rights and CPP-D. For a copy of any presentations please contact me at Valerie.borggard@mssociety.ca or at 780-471-3034.

Financial Planning Session

In times of financial concern people often worry and wonder what they can do to maintain their present lifestyle, pay off debts and save for the future. When a family member is living with a chronic illness this worry and stress over financial concerns can escalate. Want to learn about steps you can take to reduce these worries? Want to learn about the benefits of planning ahead of time and making informed decision about financial matters? Then it is time to attend the upcoming financial planning session.

John Soars Retires

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from Next Generation, Sherwood Park, St. Albert, Leduc, Parkland, West End and Partners of Persons with MS. In his time with the Edmonton Chapter he has also co-facilitated MS IS, conducted community education presentations and has spearheaded the MS Communities initiative with active

Speaker: Marie Ryski, CFP is a certified financial planner who helps people decide where they are going and then empowers them to make it happen.

Date: Tuesday, February 9, 2010

Time: 7:00-9:00 pm

Location: Program Room, Victory Centre, #150, 9405 – 50th Street Edmonton

Light snacks and refreshments will be provided.

To register for this free session or for more information, please call **Valerie Borggard** at 780-471-3034 or email at Valerie.borggard@mssociety.ca.

MS groups in Sherwood Park and Parkland County. John will be dearly missed for his sense of humour, his empathy and his excellent facilitation skills. We encourage all staff, clients and volunteers to wish him well in his retirement. John's last day with the Society will be February 28th, 2010.

MS Awareness Days

A number of very successful Awareness Event ran this Fall. Events that ran included a booth at the Downtown Edmonton Farmers Market, a booth at the Discover your Community Connection at Shaw Conference Center, a Meet and Greet in the Redwater Community in Partnership with the FCSS in Redwater, the Lifestyles Fair in Fort Saskatchewan in Partnership with the FCSS in Fort Saskatchewan, a booth at the Strathcona Farmers Market and the Fort Saskatchewan Information Session

The MS Awareness Days initiative has a number of events being planned for 2010:

- The Sherwood Park Awareness Committee will continue to meet on a monthly basis discussing and planning a Month of May MS Awareness Event. They have also planned an Awareness Day in partnership with Salisbury Greenhouse in Sherwood Park. The Committee and volunteers will have an information booth set up as part of the Farmers Market on Dec. 3, 2009.

- To follow up from the Redwater meet and greet, community members from across Sturgeon County plan to meet in January to discuss an Education Event to run in their community sometime early in the New Year.

- To further discuss topics that came up at our Fort Saskatchewan session, a meeting will be held on January 14th from 7-9pm at Pioneers Hall.

- A staff member as well as a volunteer facilitator will be presenting in Gr.11 CALM class rooms to educate the students about MS, as well as living well with a disability.

- A staff member will also be partnering with the MS Clinic and offering information and resources to patients on site. Dates TBA.

If you have any comments or questions about any of the MS Awareness Events, have some ideas to share, or are interested in getting involved with any of the events, please give **Cassy Lawson** a call at (780) 471 – 3034. Looking forward to seeing you out at our events.

Winter 2010 Programs And Services Schedule

RETREAT WEEKENDS

Couples Getaway - March 12-14th at Camp Health, Hope and Happiness

Do you and your spouse need a break? Some time away from work and the kids? Do you need to learn more about MS and it's impact on couples and families? If so, this retreat is for you! Couples Getaway is a weekend retreat for persons with MS and their spouse. Over the weekend participants will attend educational sessions, take part in recreational and social activities, and connect with others facing similar issues around living with MS. Cost is \$225.00 per couple if registered before February 19th and \$250.00 per couple after this date and up to March 5th. Cost includes breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday, breakfast and lunch on Sunday and two nights accommodation. Transportation is the responsibility of the participants.

Please contact **Jennie** at **780-471-3034** to register, or for more information.

Southern Alberta Caregiver Retreat - April 23-25th at Canmore Inn and Suites, Canmore, AB

If you are a caregiver for a person with MS and would like to attend a retreat intended solely with the caregiver in mind, this retreat could be for you! Join other caregivers from across Alberta in Canmore for three days of education, sharing and great social opportunities. Cost is \$150 for a single room and \$125 for a shared room. Cost includes two nights accommodation, breakfast on Saturday and Sunday and dinner on Saturday night. Transportation is the responsibility of the participants.

Please contact **Jennie** at **780-471-3034** for more information or to register. Please note that space is limited to [5 caregivers](#) from Edmonton Chapter.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Financial Planning Workshop - Tuesday February 9th, 7-9pm @ MS Victory Centre

When a family member is living with a chronic illness, this worry and stress over financial concerns can escalate. Want to learn about steps you can take to reduce these worries? Want to learn about the benefits of planning ahead of time and making informed decision about financial matters? Then it is time to attend the upcoming financial planning session.

MS IS 6 Week - Tuesdays February 23 to March 30th, 7-9pm @ MS Victory Centre

This six week program is intended to offer a variety of information about living with MS. Newly diagnosed individuals, families, friends, persons living with MS for some time, and others are all welcome to attend and learn the ins and outs of Multiple Sclerosis.

Please contact **Valerie** at **780-471-3034** for more information or to pre-register for the aforementioned education programs.

MS ACTIVENOW (Exercise programs at the MS Victory Centre)

Tai Chi

Mondays, January 11 - March 29, 11am-12pm
Members: \$35 Non-Members: \$45

Yoga

Tuesdays, January 12 - March 30, 9:30-11:30am
Members: \$50 Non-Members: \$60
Wednesdays, January 13 - March 31, 9:30-11:00am
Members: \$50 Non-Members: \$60

Stretching 101 (Gentle Stretching)

Fridays, January 8 & 22, February 5, & 19, March 5 & 19, 11am-12pm.
Cost: \$2.00 per class.

Please contact **Jennie Malone** at **780-471-3034** to register for the aforementioned exercise programs.

The aforementioned exercise programs will be held at #150, 9405-50 Street. The main entrance to the MS Victory Centre is on the southeast corner of the building. If you need directions, please contact the office directly at 780-471-3034. For more information on specific programs, please visit the MS ActiveNOW website at www.mssociety.ca/alberta_active.htm

MS ACTIVENOW

(Exercise programs in the community)

Various Programs @ The Steadward Centre for Personal & Physical Achievement, Edmonton. To register call 780-492-3182

Water in Motion @ The Steadward Centre for Personal & Physical Achievement, Edmonton. Tuesdays, 1 - 2pm, to register call 780-492-3182

MS Yoga @ Yoga for Today, Sherwood Park. Tuesdays, 11am - 12:15pm, for program dates and costs, please call 780-416-4211

Yoga for MS @ Acu Harmony and Health, Stony Plain. Tuesdays, 10:45-11:45am, for program dates and costs, please call 780-963-1297

Kinesis @ Servus Place, St. Albert. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:45-11:30 a.m., for program dates and costs, please call 780-418-6088

Next Step @ Glen Allan Recreation Centre, Sherwood Park

Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 10am-11:30am, for program dates and costs please call 780-467-4404

MS FUN FRIDAYS

Mind Games, Puzzles, Poker, Cribbage, Nintendo Wii Sports... these are all part of a new, innovative and interactive program that will run every second Friday (with some exceptions) from 11am-1pm at the MS Victory Centre. This program is free of charge and will operate on a drop-in basis. For more information, please contact Jennie Malone at 780-471-3034. Dates of operation for the Fall and Winter are as follows: Fridays, January 15 & 29th, February 12 & 26, March 12 & 26th.

BOWLING

The Edmonton Chapter is very excited to continue offering a five-pin bowling program! This program will run every second Monday from 11:30am-1:30pm at Bonnie Doon Lanes. Cost is \$5 per day, which allows the participant to bowl two games, get shoe rentals and enjoy a beverage. Please note that Bonnie Doon Lanes are wheelchair accessible with an elevator going from the mall to the lanes. There are also bowling ramps available for anyone that may need assistance throwing the ball. Registration is required, so please contact Jennie Malone at 780-471-3034. Dates of operation for the Fall and Winter are as follows: January 11 & 25th, February 8 & 22, March 8 & 22.

BOOK CLUB

This group will meet next on Thursday January 21st at Laurier House in Sherwood and will consist of group members reading the same novel each month and discussing main themes, characters, etc at monthly meetings. For more information on book choices and upcoming dates, please contact **Jennie Malone** at **780-471-3034**.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Young Adults with MS in Greater Edmonton. 1st Wednesday of each month from 7-9 @ MS Victory Centre, #150, 9405-50 Street

Leduc Community Group. 2nd Tuesday of each month from 7-9pm @ Smitty's Restaurant, 5004-50 Street, Leduc

MS: The Next Generation Support Group. 2nd & last Wednesday of each month from 11:15 am to 1:15 pm @ MS Victory Centre, #150, 9405-50 Street

Partners of Persons with MS Community Groups. 2nd Thursday of each month from 6:30-8:30pm @ Fargo's on Capilano Restaurant, 5804 Terrace Road Last Thursday of each month from 7-9pm @ MS Victory Centre, 9405-50 Street

Parkland County Community Groups. Last Tuesday of each month from 7-9 pm @ Westview Health Centre, 4405- South Park Drive, Stony Plain

Sherwood Park Community Group. 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month from 10 am to 12 noon @ Strathcona Health Unit Baseline Road & Brower Drive, Sherwood Park

St Albert and Area Community Group. 1st Wednesday of each month from 7-9 pm @ King of Kings Lutheran Church, Northeast corner of St. Albert Trail and Coal Mine Road

West End Community Group. 3rd Wednesday of each month from 7-9 pm @ Hosanna Lutheran Church, 9009-163 Street

For more information on Community Groups, please contact **John Soars** or **Cathy Buchanan** at **780-471-3034**

Note: Support and educational programs are intended to provide information and support. The approaches described are meant to supplement, and not be a substitute for professional, medical or psychological care. There is no fee to attend support programs or educational programs