



ONTARIO

FALL-WINTER 2011

Demitrius Omphroy **charges ahead of MS**



Demitrius Omphroy doesn't let MS stop him from living his dream.

Twenty-two-year-old soccer player Demitrius Omphroy leads a busy life: he's an artist, model and one of the Toronto FC's newest defenders. He also has MS.

Diagnosed with relapsing-remitting MS in February 2010, Omphroy's symptoms first began with blurred vision when he was just 17. Only two months away from signing his first contract with Sporting Lisboa Clube de Portugal, he was forced to return home to California for medical treatment. Now 22 and under contract with the Toronto FC, Omphroy's decision to continue playing soccer with MS is a monumental one. "Multiple sclerosis prevented me from signing my first professional contract," he says. "Four years later I was given the opportunity to get that dream back, and this time I didn't let it slip away."

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New horizons **for MS care in the north**

Individuals affected by MS in Ontario's northern communities often face significant challenges in accessing the medical services they need to manage their disease. These may include the need to travel for diagnosis and treatment for MS, limited access to neurologists and specialized MS clinics, access to primary care physicians and limited knowledge of MS among primary care physicians.

A survey conducted by the MS Society and Kelly & Associates of northern Ontarians living with MS noted that nearly half (47 per cent) did not have access to a neurologist and, of

those who did, 56 per cent travelled over 500 kilometres one way to reach an MS clinic, which is challenging for those who might experience fatigue or chronic pain. Moreover, at the time of the survey, 53 per cent of people who travelled to an MS clinic noted that they paid between \$300 to \$500 over and above what the northern travel grant provides. To help address these challenges, the MS Society has developed a position paper on improving MS care in northern communities.

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Annual meeting of members on April 1, 2012.

See back cover for Save the Date notice.



MSSOCIETY.CA

Message from **John & Yves**

It will be no small feat to endMS. This challenge, however, is ably met by the tremendous actions of our supporters.

From the fundraising success of school children in northern Ontario to the personal commitment of a young athlete to promote awareness of MS – these small feats have great impact that makes a difference in the lives of people living with MS. In this issue of *MS Ontario*, we feature these and other inspirational stories.

You will meet Demetrius Omphroy, a member of the Toronto FC soccer club, and Andrei Sedoff, MS scholarship recipient, MS ambassador and A&W inspirational champion for the 2011 Cruisin' for a Cause campaign. Both Demetrius and Andrei live with MS and exemplify that MS need not be a barrier to achievement.

Discover what motivates youth volunteer Alexandra Martin, whose delightful experience as a camper at the MS summer camp has motivated her to participate in Project Giveback at her school. Be inspired by the success of Louise McGinn and the students at the McKenzie Public School in Thunder Bay, who

have supported the MS Read-A-Thon program since 1999.

Read about the Ottawa Chapter's Summer Enrichment Program, which provides students with the opportunity to connect with someone with MS. Learn about steps taken by Elections Ontario to improve voting accessibility for people with disabilities in preparation for the October 6 provincial election. Read about the steps taken to improve access to MS treatment and medical services in northern Ontario communities.

Great success can be built on many small achievements. We celebrate the achievements of all our supporters. Together we will endMS. ■



John Clifford
Chair

Yves Savoie
President



Ontario Division

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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.

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President: Yves Savoie

Editor-in-chief: Kim Steele

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“ Our staff was really enthusiastic; we got together weeks before to prepare and ensured everyone knew about what multiple sclerosis is and understood why we were hosting the event. ”

Priya Dhanoa,
Mississauga A&W franchisee

Andrei Sedoff:

2011 A&W Cruisin' for a Cause inspirational champion



Andrei Sedoff will be Cruisin' for a Cause across Canada on August 24 and 25.

A&W inspirational champion Andrei Sedoff has a rich history with the MS Society. In addition to receiving an MS Society scholarship in 2008, the well-spoken youth ambassador has addressed top fundraisers, sponsors and team captains at the Toronto MS Walk, and has worked to advance positive public policy change on behalf of people with MS. He also gave an impassioned speech at Billy Talent's FUMS golf tournament, speaking eloquently about his experiences living with MS.

Diagnosed with MS in 2007, the recent York University graduate speaks about the importance of continued support from the MS Society. Andrei says, "There has never been a more promising time to be a young person living with MS. The continued generosity and leadership of donors has put us on a course toward seeing a cure for MS within our lifetime."

With this powerful message, Sedoff will move forward as A&W's 2011 Cruisin' for a Cause inspirational champion. On August 24 and 25, he will embark on a cross-country tour of A&W stores in Newfoundland, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. Follow Andrei's journey on Twitter @asedoff.

To get involved with A&W's Cruisin' for a Cause, buy a Teen Burger™ at your local A&W store on August 25. ■

August 25th

A&W Cruisin' for a Cause Day.

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Demitrius Omphroy *continued from page 1*

After his diagnosis, raising awareness of MS became a top priority: he has since been involved with the MS Society of Canada's youth strategy to let young people know that their lives don't end because of MS – in fact, they can thrive. Omphroy says, "Mostly I want those diagnosed with MS to be able to say, 'It's OK, that pro soccer guy has multiple sclerosis. It's going to be fine.'"

Omphroy recently signed on as a blogger for SomeoneLikeMe.ca, the MS Society's new online community for youth whose lives have been affected by MS. In addition to Omphroy's participation in this important initiative, the MS Society is excited to continue working with the soccer player to put a younger face on the disease that affects thousands of youth across Canada.

Find out how you can get involved with the MS Society's online community for youth at someonelikeme.ca/get-involved ■

Making the accessible **vote count**



MS ambassador Mike Augustine with MPP Linda Jeffrey, minister of natural resources, and Yves Savoie, president, Ontario Division

Over 13 million Ontarians will have a chance to vote on October 6th, and 13.5 per cent of them will require accessible polling stations. For this reason, Elections Ontario has taken steps to create a barrier-free voting process.

"The government does good work in promoting accessibility; however, adjustments such as choosing voting locations on a bus route helps those dependent on public transport," says Mike Augustine, a staunch voter who missed voting only once due to an inaccessible location. He is also an MS Society volunteer who will be climbing to the Mount Everest base camp this fall.

Recently, Elections Ontario organized public consultation on voting locations. Other initiatives, like the creation of an accessible advisory committee and an accessibility action plan, can be attributed to the introduction of the accessibility standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

"Our vote counts. Our community represents an influential voting mass since it crosses all demographics," says Mike.

We encourage you to get out and vote on October 6th. For more information on accessible voting, visit www.elections.on.ca ■

“ I’m just an ordinary person who is doing the right thing and making sure all disabled people can freely move around. ”

Cathy, Thumbs-Up!
accessibility program organizer

New horizons for MS care in the north *continued from page 1*

The paper, "New Horizons in MS Care", calls for, among other things, the development of an MS clinic in Sudbury to help improve access to care in northeastern Ontario, as well as the commitment to make MS and other neurological conditions e-Health and Telehealth priorities.

The paper was officially launched at Queen's Park on May 30 and was well received by Members of Provincial Parliament of all stripes, many of whom have agreed to champion the recommendations to "bridge the gap" in MS care. As the Honourable Michael Gravelle, minister of northern development, mines and forestry noted: "I have the opportunity to discuss these recommendations with agencies and colleagues in the northern health community with whom I have had long and productive relationships, and I intend to support the MS Society's proposals to the best of my ability."

To read the paper please visit mssociety.ca/ontario/NewHorizons ■

A small school **with a big heart**



From left to right: Rayna Maunula, Louise McGinn and Emily Parker

Since 1999, McKenzie Public School has participated in the MS Read-A-Thon, raising over \$14,000 since its first year. Located in Thunder Bay, the small school has an enrollment of 85 students from kindergarten to grade six.

Teacher and MS Read-A-Thon champion Louise McGinn says, "The teachers are very supportive of the program as it promotes reading and a great cause. The MS Read-A-Thon and the search for a cure has become close to the hearts of teachers, students and parents."

Every January, students return to school from the winter break excited to get started with their reading and fundraising, and the buzz grows in anticipation of the official start of the

“There are people in Ontario who are unable to call for action to address their needs. Despite my disability, I am able and can take their message to politicians.”

Joan, MS advocate

campaign. This year, Kerri Maunula and Brian Henderson visited the school to participate in the kick-off assembly and share their personal experiences with multiple sclerosis.

Inspired, the school and community join together to raise money and promote reading. This year, McKenzie School raised an outstanding \$1,773. The MS Society thanks the staff, students and parents for their continued support of the MS Read-A-Thon. McKenzie Public School may be small, but they have a big heart! ■



Project Giveback raises awareness of MS



Alexandra Martin, Project Giveback student at Crestwood School

For grade four student Alexandra Martin, raising awareness of MS is an important cause. Alexandra's mom was diagnosed with MS when she was young, and this inspired her to highlight the MS Society of Canada for Project Giveback, a passion-based program at Crestwood School designed to teach elementary students about charities and inspire community-minded citizens. The program was established by Ellen Schwartz, a teacher and founder of the Jacob's Ladder Foundation.

Alexandra focused her efforts on the MS Summer Camp program for children and teens with MS. "I like the idea of people with MS being outside and having fun," Alexandra said when explaining why the MS Summer Camp program was of interest to her.

Alexandra was responsible for developing a speech, a visual presentation and an activity to raise awareness of MS. Her mom also spoke to the grade four class about her experience with MS as part of the presentation. "I was really proud of my mom," Alexandra said. "It's hard going in front of a whole audience telling them what happened – what you've lived through. It's a good thing, though, because we understand it a little more."

"It's hard going in front of a whole audience telling them what happened – what you've lived through. It's a good thing, though, because we understand it a little more."

Alexandra Martin

For the MS Society of Canada, supporting children, teens and young adults continues to be a priority. ■

MS WALK
EVERY STEP MATTERS.

JOIN THE MS WALK COMMITTEE

Volunteer on the Organizing Committee and help plan the MS Walk in your community.

For details, please contact:
1-800-268-7582 x 3106
msvolunteers@mssociety.ca

mswalks.ca

MS Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

Support our sponsors:

Summer Enrichment Program: Ottawa Chapter



Summer Enrichment Program students. From left to right: Colleen O'Connor, Soo-Min Kim, Madeline Thomas, Renée Nelson, Jennifer Nguy

What began 25 years ago as Ottawa Chapter's Summer Enrichment Program has expanded to include rich opportunities for participants to build new friendships and foster old ones. Implemented by post-secondary students over the summer months, the Summer Enrichment Program began with three university students organizing activities for approximately 40 participants. Today it is one of the longest-running recreational programs offered by the Ottawa Chapter, now counting five students who assist clients and organize events for more than 100 participants.

The Summer Enrichment Program offers one-on-one visits between students and individuals living with MS. Daily activities include child care, flower gardening, cataloguing music, letter writing or grocery shopping. Students also work together as a team to organize weekly group outings, such as the Meet the Students Tea, the Strawberry Social, attending the Ottawa Jazz Festival and visiting local museums.

Colleen O'Connor, the Summer Enrichment Program leader, says, "The program is

“The Summer Enrichment Program... has provided me with an opportunity to learn about daily life with MS, and at the same time provides our clients with a chance to do things they may not normally do.”

Colleen O'Connor,
Summer Enrichment Program leader

meaningful to me in so many ways. It has provided me with an opportunity to learn about daily life with MS, and at the same time provides our clients with a chance to do things they may not normally do. When I see how much the clients enjoy themselves at our events, it reminds me how beneficial this program really is. I am so pleased to be part of the SEP team this summer.” ■

endMSgala
18th Annual Gala in Support of MS Research

SAVE THE DATE

Date: Thursday, October 20, 2011
Location: Four Seasons Hotel
21 Avenue Rd., Toronto
Time: 6:00pm

For information about tables and sponsorship opportunities, please contact heather.mccachern@msociety.ca

DUNDEE CORPORATION MS

Save **the Date**

Annual General Meeting of Members Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Ontario Division

April 1, 2012

The slate of nominees proposed by the nomination committee to be elected at the AGM will be published on the MS Society of Canada website in the Ontario Division section no later than six weeks prior to the AGM.

The AGM notice of meeting and proxy will be published in the Spring-Summer 2012 MS Ontario.



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