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MSSOCIETY.CA

Message from Yves

Hope amidst a storm of daily news about our difficult economic times may seem misplaced. Yet, there are many things that give me hope for the future.

Every day, I have the occasion to say thank you to volunteers and donors, and, now more than ever, I offer added thanks to the thousands of people who are steadfast supporters of our work.

I am also emboldened by progress in the research arena. There have been a series of recent announcements including one which shows a direct link between vitamin D and the MS susceptibility 'gene' and another which confirms that an oral therapy reduces MS relapses.

I am also excited about a growing number of volunteers who are taking part in efforts from coast to coast to make governments more responsive to the reality of living with MS. Building on this growing wave of support, the Society and its volunteers have taken the message for better income security for people with MS to the House of Commons.

This issue of MS Canada is focused on hope, leadership and a new era for MS. In it you will learn about Julie Petrin, our cover story, who was diagnosed with MS in her teens and later became a MS Scholarship Program award recipient in 2008. You will meet Tom Eisenhauer, a dedicated

participant and fundraiser of the RONA MS Bike Tour. In 2008, Tom joined dozens of cyclist to help form the largest family-and-friends team in the country. He individually raised over \$36,000 in pledges and helped his team set a national record raising more than \$180,000. You will discover the MS Society's latest publication, *Multiple Sclerosis Research: The Effort to End MS*, which reveals Canada's leading role in MS research. You will also read about the recently retired and renowned Dr. T.J. (Jock) Murray. After 45 years in research and treatment, the Atlantic Division celebrated his retirement by announcing a scholarship fund. Created in Dr. Murray's honour, the scholarship will help to attract and retain the next generation of MS researchers.

At the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, we understand that hope combined with action can accomplish great things. Our strength comes from our long standing tradition of collaboration and commitment to the mission.

Thank you for being part of the movement to end MS! ■



Yves Savoie
President and chief executive officer
President, Ontario Division



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highlights in the National
annual report 2007-2008.

mssociety.ca



Dr. T.J. (Jock) Murray Scholarship Fund: **Securing the next generation of MS researchers**



Dr. Jock Murray enjoys his retirement celebration with wife, Janet.

Dr. Jock Murray has been providing compassionate support to people with MS and their families for over 45 years. His many contributions to the research and treatment of multiple sclerosis have helped bring the cure within reach.

The MS Society of Canada, Atlantic Division, recently honoured Dr. Murray's amazing career and lifetime achievements with a gala celebration. Throughout the evening, special guests spoke about the importance of continuing his work.

"Dr. Murray has played a significant role in bringing an end to this disease," says Louis J. Maroun, a member of the endMS Campaign Cabinet. "Now, it is our responsibility to see it through."

Part of that responsibility is investing in the next generation of skilled young scientists. As the leaders in MS research retire and a limited number of new researchers take their place, progress toward the end to MS is at risk. To address this urgent need, the Atlantic Division established the \$100,000 *Dr. T.J. (Jock) Murray Scholarship Fund* in support of the endMS Research and Training Network. This award will help attract and connect MS research talents in health research institutions across Canada.

The scholarship will be available for undergraduate, MD, PhD and post-doctoral students dedicated to MS research. It will ensure bright, young researchers receive the funding they need to continue the work that

Dr. Murray has begun. It will also secure an immediate, dedicated investment to advance Canada's leadership position in MS research so that one day, very soon, we will *end* MS.

To learn more about this scholarship, contact Joanna Hamilton by phone 902-468-8230 or e-mail Joanna.hamilton@mssociety.ca. For information about the endMS campaign, visit **endMS.ca**. Thank you for being part of this extraordinary movement. We will end MS! ■

A poster for the endMS awareness campaign. The top half shows a biplane flying in a cloudy sky with the text "We will never fly." The bottom half shows a woman in a red shirt and jeans standing next to a red wheelchair, with her arms raised in a gesture of triumph or hope. The text on the poster reads: "Be part of something monumental. Funded largely by the MS Society, Canadian researchers have brought the cure for MS within reach. Let's take this last step together." Below this is the "endMS" logo and "May is MS Awareness Month". At the bottom, there is a phone number "1-800-361-2985" and the website "mssociety.ca", along with the MS Society of Canada logo.

Where the rubber meets the road



Tom Eisenhauer

When it comes to supporting the MS Society of Canada, Tom Eisenhauer doesn't just spin his wheels. Instead, the amateur cyclist has set a new bar for fundraising, recruiting the largest friends-and-family team ever to ride in the RONA MS Bike Tour, Windsor to Wolfville (Nova Scotia) and raising record-setting funds for MS research and support services.

Tom, a managing partner in a Toronto-based private-equity firm, witnessed the devastating impact of primary-progressive MS on his brother-in-law, Larry Creaser of Chester, N.S. So in 2007, Tom joined the CC Riders, short for Creaser's Crew. More than 30 people joined the team to ride in the two-day event, more than doubling the typical team registration. He recalls, "We felt very helpless. The bike tours grew out of that frustration. We were trying to do something to help."

The team's success moved Tom so much that he pledged to ride from Toronto to Nova Scotia if the team could set yet another record the following year. Soon he found himself plotting the route that would take dozens of cyclists 1600 kilometres eastbound to N.S. in June 2008. And that was just a warm up for the Windsor to Wolfville event that same year.

Tom says that for him, as for his fellow fundraisers, participation has brought "an

unexpected sense of personal accomplishment and well-being. It's a lot of work, but it's fun." He's most impressed by how many people have "gotten involved for the right reasons – who see the tours as a way not only to raise money for MS but also lead a healthy lifestyle, do something good for someone else, and challenge themselves to do something they've never done before."

By completing the unique inter-provincial challenge from Toronto to Nova Scotia, the team was able to raise an additional \$100,000. As for Tom, he surpassed the most money raised by an individual for the tour with an astounding \$36,125.80. Meanwhile, the CC Riders, captained by cousin Alan Creaser, has set a national record for most pledges raised by a team (\$180,938). With the support of the MS Society's Atlantic Division, Tom's initiative was smoothly executed by way of logistics details and coordination of tax receipts.

Join the movement. Be part of the RONA MS Bike Tour this year.

www.ms biketours.com ■

Make your step the one that ends multiple sclerosis.

Register today at mswalks.ca.

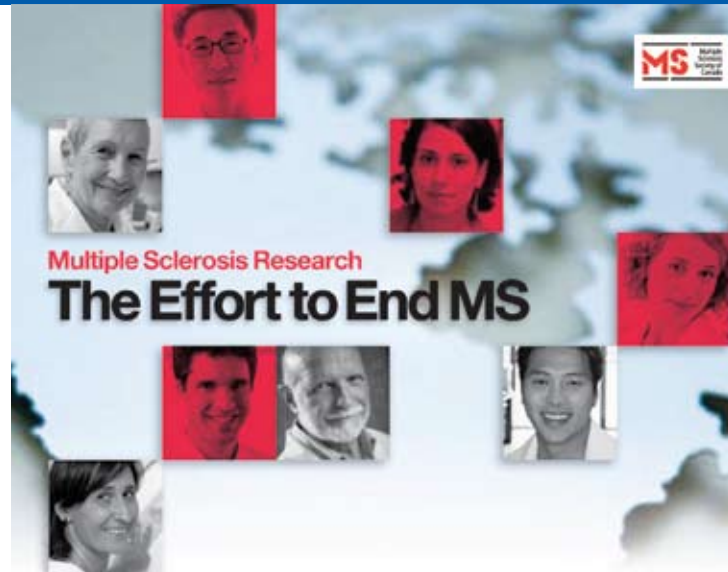
Join over 30,000 walkers and volunteers across Ontario in the movement to end MS.

MS WALK
EVERY STEP MATTERS.

MS Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

Our story: the quest to end MS

The MS Society of Canada is telling the story about its ongoing quest to end MS. *Multiple Sclerosis Research: The Effort to End MS* tells our research story highlighting key themes that focus on the people and places that make up the research effort across Canada. It offers important insights and explanations about the research that seeks to unravel the complex puzzle that is multiple sclerosis. As a narrative, it provides a fascinating backdrop to the research summaries that are published each year. This publication is now available on our website mssociety.ca/en/research/researchprojects.htm. ■



Wise words from our scholarship program winner



Receiving a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis as a teen, Julie Petrin of Kazabazua, Quebec, shares her perspective about keeping her mind over matter. An excerpt of her story taken from her application to the

MS Scholarship Program supported by Billy Talent and Friends is an example of her wisdom despite the challenges of living with MS.

“I have learned to live every day to the fullest and to live for the moment, not for tomorrow.”

“MS has impacted the way I think about life, the world, and myself. Due to my diagnosis, I have come to love life a lot more. I try not to waste a moment of my time and find every moment is worth living and is precious. I tend to go for what I want without fear of being rejected now. My character has grown immensely and I feel that I am a much stronger person now. It has changed me for the better.

I have decided to focus my studies on neurology. Once I heard that I might have MS, I started researching its functioning in the body because I

wanted to understand what was happening in mine. I am now very interested in the functioning of the brain and its neurological basis and am hoping to advance research in neurology in future years.

MS has made me a stronger, more adventurous, and fun loving person.”

Julie is currently enrolled in the Neuroscience program at Bishops University. She hopes to be among the next generation of researchers and clinicians who intend to end multiple sclerosis in their lifetime. For her passion of life and undefeated attitude toward MS, Julie and 80 young Canadians like her, received the MS Scholarship Program award in 2008.

Funds to support the MS Scholarship Program depend on the fundraising efforts and generosity of others. As one example, this year, Sandra Dionisi organized Cut to the Drummer, a gala and art auction with all proceeds benefiting the scholarship program.

To learn about the MS Scholarship Program supported by Billy Talent and Friends, and to read the stories of award recipients like Julie Petrin, visit our website www.mssociety.ca/scholarship. ■



You asked, we answered.

Q: Recent research has shown that Vitamin D in high doses may help those with MS. It was recommended that 4000 IUs be taken daily. Should the whole dosage be taken at once in the morning, or spaced out during the day?

A: There are studies showing that many people with MS have low levels of vitamin D. There is also a possible association with low levels of sunlight (and therefore vitamin D) with the development of MS in populations. Support for this includes the increased incidence of MS the further from the equator (the North-south gradient). There is no clinical or scientific evidence that supplementing with vitamin D helps MS. However, because vitamin D is involved in aspects of the immune system, and because in Canada our UV exposure is low, it makes sense to get these levels up. The Health Canada guidelines of 800 units per day are low and will likely be revised. However, there is no recommended dose. The University of Toronto recently reported their results on using doses of vitamin D supplementation at levels above 4000 units/day and found no real toxicity, at least in the short

term. The University of Calgary had previously found that on average it takes about 2000 units to get most people with MS out of their D deficiency. Thus, most clinicians working in the area of MS are recommending 2000 units per day. Probably 4000 units is as high as one should go unless levels are to be checked. It can be taken as a full once per day dose, or can be divided. Many people will experience nausea at doses above 2000, and if this is the case, dividing the dose is suggested. But before you make any decision please discuss this with your family doctor.

~ Dr. Virginia Devonshire, director of the University of British Columbia MS Clinic

MS Answers is an MS Society of Canada website that provides timely, credible, and relevant information on a variety of MS topics. Information is provided by a range of North American experts who respond to inquiries from individuals affected by MS. Read other responses from the experts or pose your own question.

www.msanswers.ca ■

Thousands signed the petition for income security. Thank you!

More than 3,000 MS Society members and friends joined the petition campaign for better income programs for people affected by multiple sclerosis. Canadians from Vernon, BC to Trois-Rivières, QC and from Burlington, ON to Moncton, NB signed the petition to let the federal government know it should make changes to current programs that will significantly benefit people affected by MS.

This spring, we will present this petition to the House of Commons urging improvements to income security programs for people living with

MS as well as other episodic disabilities and chronic diseases.

You can support someone affected by MS through other advocacy initiatives. Sign up to receive news, updates, and opportunities for action by e-mail by sending your name, mailing and e-mail addresses to advocacy@mssociety.ca or mail the information to Advocacy Campaigns, MS Society of Canada, 175 Bloor St. E., Suite 700, Toronto ON M4W 3R8. You must have an e-mail address to receive information about the advocacy initiatives. ■

Tax deductible life insurance premiums



A financial advisor for over 30 years, Greg Bowen models his philosophy on life after the example of the Dead Sea.

“Do you know why the Dead Sea is dead?” asks Greg. “All that salt doesn’t have any place to go. Water flows into the Dead Sea but nothing flows out. It takes but it doesn’t give, that’s why it’s dead.” Decidedly, Greg chose to give. He explains that while he does not have a direct connection to MS, “it’s important to give back in order to support my community.”

By purchasing a life insurance policy and transferring the ownership to the MS Society, the Society benefits and, come tax time, so does Greg. As Greg pays the premiums each year, he receives a tax receipt for the full value of each premium. “This kind of giving generally appeals to people who already make an ongoing contribution to a charity,” he says. For most people, a donation of a life insurance allows

them to make a much larger gift than they would otherwise be able to consider. Greg purchased a \$50,000 policy and transferred the ownership to the Central Alberta Chapter.

“This is not just for wealthy individuals,” says Greg. “It’s for ordinary people like you and me. My premiums on the policy are about \$98 a month and are 100% tax deductible. The MS Society benefits and I get a break at tax time. Everyone wins.”

Greg was first acquainted with the MS Society through the RONA MS Bike Tour twelve years ago. “I rode with a friend in the MS Bike Tour in Red Deer and I’ve been riding in it ever since.” He was the top fundraiser at the event in 2005 and 2006. To learn how you can create your own legacy with only a small annual or monthly payment, contact your local MS Society office at 1-800-268-7582 and ask to speak with a legacy giving expert. ■

What you need to consider when filing your taxes

With the economy continuing to be uncertain, it is even more important when filing taxes for 2008 to take advantage of credits and refunds that may specifically pertain to those living with a disability.

- Consider whether you are eligible for the Working Income Tax Benefit (WITB). In addition, people who qualify for the disability amount may claim an additional WITB disability supplement. You have to be eligible for the Disability Tax Credit to claim the supplement.
- Use the information for people with disabilities on the CRA website at cra-arc.gc.ca; scroll down to People with Disabilities listed on the left-hand side of the home page.
- Consider setting up a Registered Disability Savings Plan for yourself or family member who qualifies.
- See the tax tips article on the MS Society website www.mssociety.ca/en/information/taxtips.htm. ■

Don't miss our events **this spring!**

- March – June** Applications are being accepted for the Summer Adventure Camp for children and teens with MS
- April – June** MS Walk, contact your local chapter or division office for dates in your community
- April 17** Application deadline: MS Scholarship Program supported by Billy Talent & Friends
- April 24** Application deadline: Camp de vacances SP (Val-Morin, Quebec)
- April 19-25** National Volunteer Week

May is MS Awareness Month!

- May 7 – 9** MS Carnation Campaign – plan to buy carnations in time for Mother's Day!
- May 20** MS Research Teleconference with guest speaker Dr. Peter Rieckmann
- May 27** World MS Day
- June** RONA MS Bike Tour, contact your local chapter or division office for dates in your community ■

Free sessions for caregivers

Throughout 2009, free education sessions for caregivers of persons living with multiple sclerosis are being offered. These sessions are supported through MS Society of Canada's continued partnership with the Care-Ring Voice Network based in Quebec, which provides family caregivers with access to timely, credible and

relevant information about a range of topics. To learn where and when the sessions will be held, visit careringvoice.com or call an MS Society of Canada representative at 1-866-922-6065 extension 3004 or e-mail nicole.mellin@mssociety.ca. ■



To share your comment or story, please mail to the attention of Angeline Mau or e-mail to angeline.mau@mssociety.ca. To update your mailing address or subscription preferences, please contact your division office. Division contact information can be found at: www.mssociety.ca or you can call 1-800-268-7582 or e-mail: info@mssociety.ca

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