Great weather, amazing participation, fantastic finish festivals...what more could we ask for? To reach our goal of $1.5 million. We are well on our way to reaching that goal, but we need everyone’s help.

Over 6,000 people participated at the MS Walks in Bakersfield, Lancaster, Redlands, Palm Springs, Big Bear, Upland, and Greater Los Angeles. The Big Bear site was brand new and walkers there raised over $45,000 their first year. Special kudos to Dave Emig and his team of volunteers and walkers for making the Big Bear site such a success! Walkers in our Chapter area may now choose from 7 locations.

All participants enjoyed great MS Walk routes through neighborhoods and local attractions, and finished with entertaining festivals filled with yummy food, fun activities and great prizes. We owe a special thank you to our sponsors who are invaluable in helping us to generate such big crowds and to raise money for the fight against MS.

The spirit was contagious throughout all the sites. Over 625 teams from around Southern California showed their enthusiasm, many with their own Team shirts and home-made signs. Some famous faces even gathered at the Greater LA site to show their support for people with MS, including Orlando Jones, Jeff Garlin, Henriette Mantel, Gary Graham, Jean Martinez and Tony McEwing from FOX 11, Rain Pryor, and Teri Garr.

If you were at the Greater LA site you had the choice of lunch from Louise’s Trattoria or Bruce’s Gourmet Catering; in Bakersfield the lucky participants enjoyed Santa Barbara Pizza and Chicken, and many other locations had a big BBQ to add to the excitement. What is in store for next year? You need to come by to find out. Don’t miss out on the MS Walk 2006!

see MS Walk page 12

A very special Dinner slated to honor a very special couple. Turn to page 14 for details.
Studies show that early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can reduce future disease activity and improve quality of life for many people with multiple sclerosis. National MS Society medical advisors recommend that people with MS talk with their health care professional about using one of these medications and about strategies and effective treatments to manage symptoms. If you or someone you know has MS, please contact the Society today at www.nationalmssociety.org or 1.800.FIGHT.MS to learn about ways to help manage multiple sclerosis and about current research that may one day reveal a cure.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS) does not endorse products, services or manufacturers. Such names appear here solely because they are considered valuable information. The NMSS assumes no liability for the use of contents of any product or service mentioned. Information provided by the NMSS is based upon professional advice, published, experience and expert opinion. Information provided in response to questions does not constitute therapeutic recommendations or prescriptions. The NMSS recommends that all questions and information be discussed with a personal physician.

The NMSS is dedicated to ending the devastating effects of MS.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

In addition to a wide array of information and referral resources, the Chapter offers special financial assistance for services that help the family care for those living with MS.

Adult Day Health Care Subsidy:
Share of cost for individuals looking to participate in Adult Day Health Care programs. Call for referrals.

Iva Shaljian Home Assistance Support:
Eight consecutive days, four hours a day after a hospital stay or an exacerbation. A licensed home care agency must be used.

Durable Medical Equipment:
Share of cost for durable medical equipment (wheelchairs, hand rails, etc.), if insurance does not cover full payment. Limit: up to $400 per fiscal year.

Sherak Emergency Fund:
Funding for unexpected one-time situations for basic life needs, such as groceries, rent and utilities. Limit: up to $300.

Physical/Occupational Therapy:
In-home evaluations and five to six follow-up visits for individuals who cannot leave home and whose insurance will not cover this service.

Grisanti Respite Fund:
Provided through a licensed home care agency for the family member who is a full-time care partner and needs time off. Provided up to six days per year, up to 12 hours per day on a share-of-cost basis.

Supporting the Family:
A unique program to help take care of special out-of-the-ordinary family needs (i.e. school pictures, sports uniforms, etc.). Limit: up to $300 per fiscal year.

Checks are made out and sent directly to the vendor. For more information about any of these financial assistance programs, contact Pam Hirshberg at 1.800.FIGHT.MS.
This spring, noted MS researcher and clinician John Richert, MD joined the National MS Society team as the Vice President of the newly created Research and Medical Programs Department. One of his first steps was to define the department’s mission: to lead biomedical and health policy research and training in MS; to enhance the quality and accessibility of MS healthcare; and to inform our constituents about the progress and promise of MS research and clinical care.

Dr. Richert comes to us from Georgetown University Medical Center where he was Professor and Chair of Microbiology and Immunology, Professor of Neurology, and Director of the Georgetown MS Research Center.

As we welcome Dr. Richert, we also bid a fond farewell to Stephen Reingold, PhD. Steve headed the Research Programs Department for the last 15 years. His tenure began in 1983, shortly after the first MRIs were used to diagnosis MS. Since then, we have seen tremendous progress in MS research and the era of new treatments. In recognition of his guidance in advancing MS research, the most meritorious research grant reviewed each year by the Society’s scientific advisors will be now be designated the “Stephen C. Reingold Research Award.”

Reflecting on his time with the Society, Dr. Reingold said, “It has been an incredible privilege for me to carry the responsibility of facilitating this [research] program worldwide, and I take extraordinary pride in all that we have been able to accomplish together.” Dr. Richert looks forward to even more breakthroughs, stating, “New biomedical tools and techniques, plus new knowledge in many intersecting fields mean we can really tackle MS in new ways. We’ll need to raise a great deal more money to keep exciting work on track. The next few years are crucial.”

On May 4th, I was fortunate to hear Dr. Richert deliver this message in Washington, DC:

To end the devastating effects of MS, we face many challenges:
• Increased biomedical research is necessary to find the cause, more effective treatments, and a cure;
• Clinical initiatives, including education and resources for healthcare professionals, clinical affiliations, and development of guidelines and standards, are necessary to ensure optimal healthcare for people with MS;
• Health policy research, along with initiatives in the areas of insurance, long-term care, and outreach to underserved populations, must ensure that persons with MS have access to available therapies and other necessary care; and
• Disseminating information about progress offers hope to persons with MS and inspires participation and donations that help fuel our mission.

You can hear Dr. Richert too; I’m happy to announce that he will review the present and future of MS research and clinical care at our Annual Meeting, Sunday, October 23rd at the Radisson Hotel at the LA airport. See you there!

Leon LeBuffe, PhD, Chapter President
As summer approaches, many people become busy with vacations, camp, varying work schedules and many new activities, crammed into the season. It is easy to let the days and weeks float by, without stopping to “smell the roses” and making special time to spend with family and friends. It can be frustrating and disheartening when the first day of school arrives in the fall, and a family is left to wonder, “Where did the summer go?”

Because MS presents both physical and emotional challenges throughout the year, both for the person with the disease and for the family members, the concept of family bonding time can be overlooked. Spending quality time together without the distractions of a ringing telephone or a loud TV can provide the opportunity to strengthen familial ties. This is important for individuals of all ages, and can be a treasured experience for everyone involved. It is critical for both parents and children to have regular periods of time that are devoted to reconnecting with each other, and getting back to the basics of talking, laughing and playing together.

Making specific plans for family time is necessary in today’s busy world. Scheduling time on a regular basis can build a strong foundation, underpinning each family member when tackling the challenges of MS—together! Whether it is a quiet moment, or a new and fun activity, everyone in the family can “escape” from the daily routine and revive their special connections with each other.

The Chapter provides frequent opportunities for families to accomplish this. Every fall, many families escape the daily grind and spend some quiet time together in the serene hills of Malibu. Family Weekend Retreat allows families to come together to make friends, learn from each other, and most importantly, have fun! Past participants have shared amazing experiences and appreciation for having the opportunity to connect with their family.

Every year, the Chapter also provides multiple Family Day events. Earlier this summer, families “beat the heat” and spent a day in the water at Raging Waters or Knott’s Soak City. Both Family Days brought families together, where they learned about communication and heat management, while children of all ages participated in a special session teaching them about MS. The Chapter also hosted Dia de Familias for the Spanish-speaking community, conducted in Spanish at Shoreline Village in Long Beach. Families learned about MS, including symptoms and treatments, and family coping.

Sometimes families just need to focus on fun and not MS. Many of the Chapter’s EPIC social programs are designed with the whole family in mind. Each year the Chapter’s “Celebrating Independence” July 4th Spectacular at the Hollywood Bowl is a sell-out event. For any questions regarding upcoming family events or information for the family, please call Julia Hakim at 1.800.FIGHT.MS.
Retiring from Work, Not Life

At age 45, Frances Hall attended her retirement party, which was entitled “Holding on to Hope.” Friends, colleagues, family members and former students honored her for her 20-plus years in education and community service. Frances retired reluctantly due to the extreme fatigue and other MS symptoms that had become increasingly challenging since her diagnosis four years before.

The parting thought on her retirement program was this quote from W.B. Freeman: “Life is not what happens to a man or woman. It is what a man or woman does with what happens to him or her.” Frances believes this wholeheartedly. Even before the celebration, she was already preparing to do something meaningful in the next phase of her life. She applied to become a member of the Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA.

Frances first heard about the Center, before it even opened from a woman named Beverly, with whom she took a Chapter-sponsored yoga class. A few years passed, and a young lady Frances sang with at church mentioned the Center. This friend participated in the “Living Well” class for people newly diagnosed and found it very beneficial. She, like Beverly, encouraged Frances to find out what the Center could offer her.

Now, a year after her retirement and following a year of weekly visits to the Center, Frances is amazed at all that she has learned about herself and appreciative of the new friends she has made. Art therapy has offered new opportunities to share emotions with others and to find comfort in listening to their stories too. She also enjoys working out with Lauren Coleman (the Center’s physical activity specialist), and the cognition piece of the program really gets her thinking.

Frances sometimes faces challenges as a single woman who lives alone. She says that one of the best things about the Center is that staff and other members work together to help find solutions to individual obstacles. Frances explains, “Elise Herlihy (the Center nurse) helped me a lot recently. I was having trouble with falling, and getting my walker up and down the stairs in my home.” Elise suggested that Frances keep a second walker upstairs at all times, rather than using the same one on both levels. This has been a great solution that helps keep Frances safe.

Frances’ new friends are thrilled that she pursued the Center’s day program. Beverly said “We have a ball when we go over to her house. She’s a down-home person from the heart; a genuine, beautiful person.” Her friend Francine added, “Being invited to her home was like sisters meeting.”

Frances may have closed the chapter on teaching, but she keeps the book open on education.

If you are ready to take control of your MS, call now to learn more about what this unique program may offer you. Enrollment is ongoing for the Center’s one-day-a-week day program. Please call Stephanie Fisher at 310.267.4071 for information.
Research Highlights

Smoking and MS Progression
Society-funded researchers at Harvard University reported in March that smoking is associated with a moderate increase in the risk of developing MS. In a study of 201 people with MS and 1913 people without MS, they also found an association between smoking and risk of MS progression in 20 people whose MS progressed during the study's follow-up period.

This study confirms previous findings of an association between smoking and an increased risk for MS, and is also the first to show that smoking may be a risk factor for disease progression. Further study is necessary to confirm this association in larger numbers of people and to explain the possible underlying mechanisms that could be responsible for a link between smoking and the development, or progression, of MS.

Marijuana For MS Pain
In April, Health Canada, the drug regulatory agency for Canada, approved the use of the cannabis-derived drug Sativex® to treat MS-related pain. The approval was based on a small, four-week clinical trial conducted in the U.K. in 66 people with MS, the results of which have not yet been published in a peer-reviewed medical journal.

Sativex contains marijuana extracts and is administered as a spray into the mouth. This drug is not approved in the U.S. Based on studies conducted to date, the National MS Society's Medical Advisory Board believes there is currently insufficient data to recommend marijuana or its derivatives as a treatment for MS.

Long-term use of smoked marijuana may be associated with significant, serious side effects.

Tysabri Update
The cover story on the last issue of this newsletter announced the approval of Tysabri® (natalizumab) as a new treatment for MS. Unfortunately, in February the drug’s manufacturers voluntarily suspended Tysabri from the market, due to safety concerns.

At that time, two patients were diagnosed with progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML), a rare and frequently fatal disease that occurs in patients whose immune systems have been suppressed. Both patients had been treated with Tysabri in combination with Avonex for more than two years, and one of the individuals died. At the end of March a third case of PML was identified in a patient, who died in 2003, and had participated in a trial of Tysabri for Crohn’s disease.

The companies continue to review the data on 3,000 patients who were involved in Tysabri treatment studies for MS, Crohn’s disease, and rheumatoid arthritis. The fate of Tysabri for MS is still unknown. The drug may or may not be returned to the market. This news is certainly a disappointment, but there are many other approaches being taken to treat MS, including the five FDA-approved disease-modifying drugs. To learn more about MS treatments or for the most current information on Tysabri, please visit www.nationalmssociety.org or call 1.800.FIGHT.MS.
The easy passage of Proposition 71 in California mandated a new, strong emphasis on stem cell research in our state. Prop 71 creates the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), which will provide for $3 billion of funding for stem cell research over ten years. Toward this aim, a 29-member Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC) has been formed which will oversee CIRM and whose most important job will be to decide which research grants will receive the $300 million of funding each year. We are pleased that one of the members of the ICOC is David Serrano Sewell, who has MS. In this position he will advocate for people with MS and ALS. It is believed by many that stem cell research will hold the key for breakthroughs in treatments and a possible cure for MS.

What are stem cells?

Stem cells are immature cells that have the capacity to become one or more types of cells. Embryonic stem cells are formed several days (5–7 days) after fertilization. Once a sperm fertilizes an egg, the single-celled zygote is formed. This zygote undergoes division to form two cells, then four cells, then eight, then 16 and so on. At one point, this ball of about 100 cells becomes hollow and is called a blastocyst. The interior of the blastocyst contains a bunch of cells called the inner cell mass. These cells have the potential to become virtually all cells types found in the human body (i.e., they are pluripotent). These cells of the inner cell mass are the embryonic stem (ES) cells. The ES cells can be grown in culture, and under the proper conditions, may be coaxed to differentiate into all the specific mature cells and tissue types found in the body. Discarded embryos following in vitro fertilization provide a source of ES cells.

Stem cells are also found in humans after birth. These adult stem cells are also immature cells that are required to maintain the tissues of the body. They reside in mature tissues and have the potential to differentiate into one or more mature cell types (i.e., many are multipotent). These types of stem cells are in use today. A bone marrow transplant provides the recipient with stem and precursor cells that will mature into blood cells, and have been responsible for saving the lives of patients with leukemia, aplastic anemia, and lymphoma, just to name a few.

Both adult and embryonic stem cells are being studied to provide treatments and a cure for MS. There is work underway to provide a cure for MS by replacing the immune system with adult bone marrow stem cells. There is also research being done to discover new MS treatments with adult neural stem cells to repair the demyelinated axons of nerve cells. ES cells are believed to have the most potential due to their pluripotent nature, but need more study to harness this potential. We wait anxiously to hear of new developments and advances made by this exciting field of MS research.
Neurologists and neuroscientists from around the world gathered to share their research findings at the American Academy of Neurology’s 57th Annual Meeting in April. Following are selected highlights from nearly 200 presentations relating to MS.

**Spotlight on Pediatric MS**
An estimated 10,000 persons under the age of 18 have definite MS and another 15,000 have symptoms suggestive of the disease.

Two studies attempted to assess the safety of drug therapy by reviewing the medical and laboratory records of children with MS under the age of 18. Dr. Silvia Tenembaum from Argentina reviewed records of 43 children who had received one or more injections of Betaseron® (interferon beta-1b) and were treated for an average of 30 months. Dr. Daniela Pohl reviewed records of 51 children who had been treated with Rebif® (interferon beta-1a) for an average of 1.8 years. In both studies, most side effects were similar to those described for adults. Larger, controlled clinical trials of longer duration will be necessary to establish the safety and effectiveness of these treatments for children.

Dr. William S. MacAllister at the National Pediatric MS Center at the State University of New York at Stony Brook found that early identification of cognitive problems is crucial in pediatric MS. They found that cognitive problems were “predicted” by increases in disease activity. The group encourages physicians who treat children with MS to monitor cognitive function over time, so that interventions can be provided to minimize the effects on children’s school life.

Dr. Brenda Banwell of Toronto described the clinical features and outcomes of 36 children, aged 2.2 to 17.8, who experienced an episode of optic neuritis. They found that visual recovery was excellent, occurring in 89%. To date, 33% have been diagnosed with MS. MS was more likely to occur in children who developed optic neuritis symptoms in both eyes, and whose MRI scans showed disease activity in the brain.

**Imaging Tools for Tracking MS**
Researchers have been searching for ways to predict disability or brain atrophy (shrinkage) by observing MS lesions that show up in MRI scans. A small study by Dr. Nancy Richert at the NIH looked back on the outcomes of 19 individuals with continued on middle of page 9
Collaboration for a Cure

This spring the National MS Society established three new research centers to speed the search for the cause and cure of MS, by teaming up investigators from diverse fields focusing on promising avenues of research. The new Collaborative MS Research Center Awards add $2.5 million to the Society’s long-term research commitments to more than 300 research projects totaling over $50 million.

All three of the new Centers are based locally in California, at UCSF, Stanford and UCLA. At UCLA, Rhonda Voskuhl, MD leads a team that will use cutting-edge techniques to characterize the nerve fiber damage that occurs in MS. They believe that by developing a better understanding of how nerve cells are damaged in this disease, they will find ways to protect brain tissues and preserve function in people with MS.

Dr. Voskuhl’s co-investigators are Arthur Toga, PhD, Michael Safroniew, MD, PhD, Leif Havton, MD, PhD, Nancy Sicotte, MD and Barbara Giesser, MD. This interdisciplinary team possesses expertise in basic neuroscience, basic neuroimaging, immunology and clinical MS.

To learn more about UCLA’s collaborative research effort, or to read about the nine other Centers across the country that receive this exclusive Society funding, please visit www.nationalmssociety.org/Research-CenterAwards.asp.

continued from page 8

MS who had monthly MRI scans taken for an extended period of time. The investigators reported that the types of lesion that were most predictive of future atrophy were so-called enhancing lesions. The more enhancing lesions a person had over the years, the more their brains showed signs of atrophy. They also found that available disease-modifying agents that could reduce the accumulation of enhancing lesions slowed the rate of brain atrophy.

Early Drug Studies

In a small, controlled clinical trial funded in part by the National MS Society, Dr. Dennis Bourdette (Oregon Health & Science University) administered ginkgo biloba to individuals with MS who experienced cognitive impairment for 12 weeks. A battery of neuropsychological tests was conducted before and after the study to determine any changes in cognitive function. The investigators suggest that further study of ginkgo biloba for improving attention in MS is warranted.

To read more about the American Academy of Neurology reports, please call 1.800.FIGHT.MS for a copy or visit www.nationalmssociety.org/research.asp.
A Golden Success

Over 360 members of The Golden Circle demonstrated their commitment to the Cause, Care and Cure of multiple sclerosis by raising over $690,000 during 2004.

What is The Golden Circle?
The Golden Circle was established in 1993 as the Chapter’s annual gift recognition society. Since that time, individuals, foundations and corporations have contributed millions of dollars to The Golden Circle to fund local programs and services, as well as MS research for treatments and ultimately a cure. This good fortune has allowed the Southern California Chapter to increase its work for the growing population of people who require our support and to fund innovative research at a more rapid pace. Annual gifts to the campaign have increased by almost 300% from $250,000 in 1999 to nearly $700,000 in 2004.

What makes The Golden Circle special?
• In 2004, The Golden Circle spent less than 1% on direct expenses—99 cents out of every dollar directly funded programs and services or research.
• The Golden Circle is the only campaign where a donor can restrict his or her gift. If a donor restricts a gift in any way—to research, to The Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA or to local programs—100% of the gift is allocated to support the intended effort. During 2004, research and The Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA shared the largest portion of gift designations with $218,637 and $163,558 respectively.

Geoffrey Gee, Erika Godfrey, Derrick Doba
Julie Kaufer & Sue Meltzer
Faith Pearlman & Dan Geller
Laurayne Lieberman & Helen Bolsky

Mary Winic & Pam Miller
Gail & Haim Pekelis
Judy & Roy Glickman
Maria & Howard Lapides
Julie Kaufer, Sheri Safan, Karen Stoller
Please help ensure, and even amplify, our success. The 2005 Golden Circle campaign is off to a great start! If you are interested in supporting The Golden Circle or would like more information, please call Kate McIntosh at (310) 479-4456 x124.

**Celebrating Our Success**

Members of The 2004 Golden Circle celebrated the triumphant close of the campaign at the 6th annual Golden Circle Donor Recognition Event on March 29, 2005. Guests gathered for a cocktail reception at Track 16 Gallery at Bergamot Station Art Center in Santa Monica. The sweet lyrical sounds of famed cellist **Cameron Stone** delighted the crowd, as members mixed and mingled in the gallery. Guests enjoyed the fantastic cuisine of Bruce’s Gourmet Catering, Inc. The Golden Circle committee wishes to extend its gratitude to trustee **Bruce Heckel** for underwriting the entire cost of food for the evening’s celebration!

Sue Meltzer, Co-Chair, publicly thanked two special guests who were in attendance: **Ellen Weisman Morehead** from The Frederick R. Weisman Philanthropic Foundation and **Haim Pekelis** on behalf of UBS. The campaign was incredibly fortunate to receive a major gift from each during the 2004 campaign. Nearly half of the guests in attendance were also highlighted for their membership in The Golden Circle for 5 or more years.

The Southern California Chapter gratefully acknowledges the incredible dedication of Chapter Trustees and Co-Chairs **Julie Kaufer** and **Sue Meltzer**, as well as fellow committee members **Helen Bolsky**, **Derrick Doba**, **David Gooding**, **Michael Lichner**, **Paul Mahoney**, **Pam Miller** and **Fern Seizer** for their remarkable fund-raising efforts for 2004 campaign.
Were you unable to attend this year’s MS Walk? Did you have an MS Walk team? Why not? YAMS, MS Achievers, Northrop Grumman, and Team Engelman each raised over $25,000 in 2004, qualifying as a Silver Team—granting them their own tent in 2005, which they decorated festively. Some of these teams have already raised over $50,000 for MS Walk 2005 qualifying as a Gold Team. Congratulations to them and to all who participated!
Moving Mountains
by Barbra Sherak Neinstein

If you know anything about my parents, Madeleine and Tom Sherak, you know that they think BIG. They don’t do anything halfway, and when they put their minds to something, you can be sure that they will accomplish it.

When my younger sister Melissa was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1988 at the age of 15 our parents were faced with a number of very daunting questions. What do we do now? Where do we go from here? Can we face this? After much soul searching and finally coming to terms with their daughter’s disease, they decided to do what they do best. They took action, and they were going to make a difference. A difference in Melissa’s life and a difference in the lives of all of those afflicted with MS. And they weren’t just planning on making a minor difference; they were really going to get involved.

So, in 1993, my parents became extremely active in the National MS Society, they became members of the Board of Trustees of the Southern California Chapter, and my dad took over as Chair of the Dinner of Champions for the Southern California Chapter. Our parents have always believed that when you need help, you ask for it, and when you can, you then give back. The Dinner of Champions was, and continues to be, their way of giving back. Over the past 12 years, with our parents’ determination, more than $26.6 million has been raised by the Southern California Chapter’s Dinners of Champions.

Our mom and dad have moved mountains to ensure the success of the Dinner of Champions and to guarantee adequate funds for research and programs to assist those living each day with MS. They moved those mountains with the help of a community that they have been a part of for 35 years…the entertainment community. Our parents asked their community to help them in their fight to end multiple sclerosis, and that community joined them without ever thinking twice. The entertainment community has embraced our family and they have made the fight against MS their own. They have rallied around my parents, not only to support them, but also to help those they don’t even know.

The Dinner of Champions is an important part of all of the Sheraks’ lives. We know that the money we raise will benefit those living with MS and will, without question, lead to a cure. My mom and dad have gathered me, Melissa and William, their friends and their community together to truly make a difference in the only way they know how…as one united front.
SAVE THE DATE!
31st Annual
Dinner of Champions®
“Concert at the Kodak”
Friday, September 16, 2005 at 6:00 pm
The Kodak Theatre at Hollywood and Highland

HONORING
Madeleine and Tom Sherak
and
Richard Cohen
DOROTHY CORWIN SPIRIT OF LIFE AWARD
HONORARY DINNER CHAIRMAN
Joe Roth
REVOLUTION STUDIOS
DINNER CHAIRMAN
Roland Mesa
THE CIMARRON GROUP, CHAPTER TRUSTEE
DINNER CO-CHAIRS
Geoff Ammer
SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT
Jeff Blake
SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT
Bob Harper
FOX FILMED ENTERTAINMENT, CHAPTER TRUSTEE
Leon LeBuffe
CHAPTER PRESIDENT
Richard Myerson
FOX FILMED ENTERTAINMENT
Dave Perren
CHAPTER CHAIRMAN
Tony Sella
FOX FILMED ENTERTAINMENT

Mike Dunn
FOX FILMED ENTERTAINMENT
Simpson Leonard
CHAPTER TRUSTEE
Arthur & Britta Schramm
CHAPTER TRUSTEES
Bruce Snyder
FOX FILMED ENTERTAINMENT

Reserve your tickets early. For information please call 310.479.4456.

Visit our Web site at: www.nationalmssociety.org/cal
**A Renewed Spirit**

Carolyn Russell was angry. In March 2004, her MS was beginning to progress and she was having difficulty walking. She was angry with her body and wanted to do something to prove to herself that this disease would not get the best of her.

Carolyn attended an Explore the Challenge meeting in Riverside. There she learned about the MS Challenge Walk, a 3-day, 50-mile journey from Carlsbad to San Diego. Carolyn was quickly sold on the idea. She realized that training for this walk would be a great way to exercise and that her efforts could help speed research for a cure.

When asked to describe the experience she had at the 2004 MS Challenge Walk, Carolyn repeated, “heaven on earth.” She said there was no better way to explain this incredible weekend. Carolyn felt an instant bond with everyone at the event—participants, volunteers, staff and cheerleading families—because they were all there for the same reason—to help people with MS. She continued, “It changed my whole way of looking at life. It was the first time I didn’t feel alone.”

The feeling was mutual. At the end of each MS Challenge Walk, participants choose a fellow walker who inspired them most. Carolyn was voted the “Most Inspirational Walker” for her dedication and tenacity in completing the route using a walker.

Though she had been diagnosed with MS in 1991, the MS Challenge Walk was Carolyn’s first introduction to the Society. The experience endeared the Chapter to her and opened her eyes to all the Society has to offer her and others touched by MS. Since last fall, Carolyn has participated in the Chapter’s new CogniFit program, to strengthen her memory and critical thinking skills, and is now enrolling in the Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA. She also trained for the 2005 MS Challenge Walk by participating in the MS Walk on April 9th in Redlands and again on April 17th at the Greater LA site.

Caren Landrum was so impressed by Carolyn’s determination last year that she invited her to join her “Good Carma” team. Carolyn is certainly not alone or angry anymore. The MS Challenge Walk renewed her sense of spirit.

For more information or to register for the MS Challenge Walk, please call Ragan Reviere at 310.479.4456 or visit www.msevents.com.

The walk will challenge you.
The experience will change you.

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**Drive Out MS!**

*12th Annual MS Golf Classic*

*Monday, October 10, 2005*

*Robinson Ranch Golf Club*

*Santa Clarita*

Bring your family, friends or co-workers for a fun day of golf, challenging contests, delicious meals, and auctions—all for a great cause. Call Jon May at 661.945.9111 for additional information or to reserve your spot.
It’s time for...The MS Treasure Hunt

July 18–22, 2005

Clean out your closets, dig through your basement, clear out your garage, sift through your attic and bring your valuable treasures to any of our five Chapter office locations. With the help of eBay Giving Works we will turn your treasures into the priceless hope that is needed by so many families touched by MS. If you would like more information about the MS Treasure Hunt or about how you can sell items on eBay to benefit the National MS Society, please contact Elicia Lopez at 310.479.4456 ext. 111 or elicia.lopez@cal.nmss.org.

Please Note: Due to storage and shipping limitations, size, weight and value restrictions do apply. Donated items need to fit inside a 2’ x 2’ box, weigh no more than 15 lbs., and have an approximate value of at least $50.

Bands Abound

The National MS Society has sold over 2 million Bands of Hope since they were introduced at the start of the year. If those 2 million individuals talk to just 10 other people about the meaning of their red wristband, some 20 million people will know more about the devastating effects of MS than did one year ago.

Do you have your Band of Hope yet? Get a set of MS Bands of Hope and distribute them to your family, friends or neighbors. Order a set for everyone in your department at work or even the whole office.

You may get a pack of a dozen wristbands for $12 or in multiples of 25 for $25 each. Call 1.800.FIGHT.MS or 310.479.4456 or visit www.msevents.com to place your order today.

Brand New—Ribbon of Hope car magnets are now available. Call the Chapter for a pack of five for $25.

Sylvia Moss, a local Santa Monica artist, was diagnosed with MS in 2003. Since that time, Sylvia has worked closely with the Southern California Chapter to raise money to help find a cure for multiple sclerosis. Sylvia has donated many of her beautiful paintings for various MS event auctions, and her work was featured earlier this year in Inside MS.

A Stuart Gallery (www.a-stuart-gallery.com) at 17946 Ventura Blvd. in Encino will showcase Sylvia’s work June 25–July 16. A portion of the proceeds will directly benefit the National MS Society, Southern California Chapter. For more information or to see more of Sylvia’s work, contact Sylvia via her website at www.sylviamoss.com.

Visit our Web site at: www.nationalmssociety.org/cal
The story behind the lives of many Armenian-Americans is peppered with turmoil, tumult and tragedy. Iva Shaljian, a remarkable donor and a dedicated friend of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, was no exception. In 1996 she was planning for her “sunset” years. As she put it: “I want to turn uncertainties into possibilities.” It took a few years to fully understand what Iva meant.

Iva’s early life in California was devoted to helping her father run a small store. It was hard work with long hours, but it created a nest egg for her father and ultimately for her. Upon her father’s passing, she took her inheritance and bought a motel in Burbank, a town that is now home to much of the entertainment industry. As the city expanded, her property gained value. Iva sold her motel, and her net worth grew quite dramatically. Her assets grew further as she continued to expand her holdings and diversify her investments. All through this process her personal standard of living remained unchanged. She was careful with every expense and lived a life in which a major indulgence was to buy some extra rose bushes for her garden.

Iva Shaljian also loved her brother, George, and was with him every day of his 35-year struggle with multiple sclerosis. To make George’s last years more comfortable, Iva bought him a house and cared for his every need. After his death, Iva memorialized his life with a few generous gifts in his name. She also made the Society’s Southern California Chapter a beneficiary in her will. The Chapter, aware of the bequest, had no idea how generous it was until Iva died. She kept most details of her life private, even from friends and neighbors, and confided in only a few individuals.

Iva’s modesty became the Society’s good fortune. Her careful planning and her commitment to helping people with MS, like her brother, provided the Society with over $1,300,000 in a combination of gift annuities and a bequest. These thoughtful gifts have made a major impact on the Society’s ability to serve those with MS and their families. Iva Shaljian will be remembered for years to come, and her legacy of giving has become a treasure of possibilities for future generations.

For more information about gift annuities or making a gift in your will, please call A. David Scholder, Senior Director for Estate and Gift Planning at 310.479.4456, ext. 109.
Taking Satisfaction With You

The old saying, “You can’t take it with you,” is only partially true. In fact, you can take something with you—the satisfaction of knowing that you made arrangements for your estate to do the greatest possible good.

For most people, this includes thoughtful provisions for their spouse and children. It may also include charitable bequests to organizations like the National MS Society.

Every year we receive probate notices from the estates of those who made arrangements to benefit the Society. Some bequests are for general-use purposes, while other gifts are designated for a specific purpose, such as MS research or the Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA. With every bequest, the probate notices represent a donor who turned life’s uncertainties into the satisfying possibility of a worthwhile gift.

The National MS Society encourages every friend and supporter to make time to prepare a will and, like Iva Shaljian and many others, consider including a bequest to the Society. In addition to furthering our ongoing mission of finding a cure for MS, a bequest provides lasting satisfaction and establishes a legacy of giving.

Our free Ebrochure “Questions and Answers about Wills,” is designed to help you think through the process of obtaining or updating your will. You can request a copy on the National MS Society Web site at www.nationalmssociety.org. Click on “Get Involved,” then “Guide to Giving” and select the Ebrochure(s) you would like to receive via e-mail. You can also request our “Creating a Legacy Through Your Will” brochure by returning the response form below.

A. David Scholder, Senior Director for Estate and Gift Planning

Yes, please send a Will Information Kit to:

Name ____________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________

City____________________________________ State________ Zip_____

Phone ____________________________ Email ____________________________

☐ I have already included the National MS Society in my will.

☐ I am considering including the National MS Society in my will.

Mail response form to: A. David Scholder, National MS Society, Southern California Chapter, 2440 S. Sepulveda Blvd., #115, Los Angeles, CA 90064. Or call 310.479.4456, ext. 109 to set up a confidential meeting to assist with your gift planning.
Working Wonders

Do you work?
Do you have a connection to MS?
Do you want to make a difference?

Become a WORKING WONDER by acting as an MS ambassador at your place of work. Your commitment can be as simple as letting us know if your company has a matching gift program or as big as starting a corporate MS Walk team.*

Some ways you can WORK WONDERS:
✓ Build awareness of MS and the Society within your place of business
✓ Encourage a barrier-free work environment
✓ Let us know if your company...
  • holds health fairs or educational “lunch and learn” programs
  • has a matching gift program
  • makes grants to nonprofit groups
  • sponsors events
✓ Contribute to the National MS Society through your company’s employee giving campaign
✓ Encourage your co-workers and friends to give, too
✓ Start an MS Walk or MS Challenge Walk corporate team
✓ Purchase tickets for the Chapter’s exclusive Dinner of Champions

To become a WORKING WONDER, to schedule an appointment or to get more information about this exciting campaign of the National MS Society’s Southern California Chapter, contact Sheryl Miller at 310.479.4456 or sheryl.miller@cal.nmss.org.

*Please be assured that the Chapter maintains strict confidentiality for those who have not disclosed their MS and/or for those who wish to remain anonymous.

Debbie Speckmeyer’s friend, Robin Eagan, was diagnosed with MS 16 years ago. Debbie immediately jumped in to lend a hand in the fight against MS. She and six of her co-workers from Northrop Grumman (NG) participated in the MS Walk in Long Beach. Year after year, more NG employees joined Debbie’s MS Walk team. As the team’s size increased, Debbie approached her company about sponsoring the team. NG agreed because they wanted to support their employees. This year Northrop Grumman employees and their families spanned their efforts across the country, walking in Los Angeles, Hot Springs, Arkansas and New York. This tremendous team effort all began with just one woman’s dedication to a friend.

In 2004, a Toyota employee who has a family member with multiple sclerosis suggested that the company include the National MS Society on the list of approved charities to benefit from donor-designated gifts through its annual Toyota Cares charitable giving campaign. Following a thorough “due diligence” organizational review, Toyota selected the Society as one of the designated charities for its campaign. As a result, the Chapter received nearly $50,000 in contributions and also increased awareness of MS within the Toyota workforce.
Special Occasion Planner

Have you ever forgotten a birthday, anniversary or holiday? Have you had to send a belated card because you were so busy that you missed the big day? It doesn’t need to happen anymore! The National MS Society is happy to offer you the service of our Special Occasion Planner. All you have to do is provide us with the names, dates, and mailing addresses and we will mail the cards for you! Let your loved ones know that you care about them and have made a gift to the National MS Society in their name. Please call Elicia Lopez at 310.479.4456 ext. 111 if you would like to request a Special Occasion Planner or to make a gift over the phone in honor or memory of a loved one.

Grateful to Our Grantors

The Chapter extends its sincere appreciation to the Weingart Foundation for its two-year grant of $75,000. This gift will support the new Partners in Care Program, providing care management services to individuals with MS.

We also thank The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation for its renewed one-year grant of $50,000 in support of The Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA.

Thank you to an Anonymous donor for its renewed grant of $25,000 that will support the continued efforts of the Chapter under the Latino Outreach Project.

The Chapter greatly values the support of the AEGON Transamerica Foundation and its renewed gift of $25,000 toward The Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA. Many thanks to Chapter trustee David Goldstein for advocating on our behalf to make the grant possible.

Our sincere thanks to UBS Financial Services, Inc. for its $7,500 grant to underwrite the Chapter’s annual Celebrating Independence 4th of July Program at the Hollywood Bowl, and to Chapter Trustee Randy Grossblatt for his influence in making this grant a reality.

Thank you to the Change A Life Foundation for its grant of $5,700. This award has provided the remaining funds needed for renovations at The Marilyn Hilton MS Achievement Center at UCLA to create an additional accessible restroom for MS participants.

Thanks to The Home Instead Senior Care Foundation, which has awarded a $5,000 grant to support MS-specific programming in adult day health care and skilled nursing facility settings.

Thanks to the generous employees of Sempra Energy for a $2,500 grant in support of the Chapter’s Family Retreat Weekend through their Energy for Others program.

Visit our Web site at: www.nationalmssociety.org/cal
Medicare’s New Rx Coverage

For the first time, Medicare is offering coverage for prescription drugs. Here are ten things you need to know:


2. **Enrollment is optional.** But if you have no coverage for your medicines and do not sign up during the enrollment period, you will have to pay higher premiums if you enroll later on.

   If you already have drug coverage through a retiree plan, your spouse’s work, or other program, you may keep that if you wish. However, make sure that your drug coverage is as good as Medicare’s standard coverage. In October you can call Medicare (1.800.633.4227) to see if the plan you have measures up to Medicare’s.

   If you get your medicine through MediCal, you will be signed up in this new program routinely.

3. **You will have a choice of plans.** Medicare will give you a choice of at least two plans, offered by private companies, approved by Medicare. Some will have a package that adds the new drug benefit to health care now covered by Medicare. There will also be plans that just offer a drug benefit.

4. **There is a monthly premium for this program.** The exact cost depends on the plan you choose. The average premium for 2006 will be approximately $35 per month, per person, but the exact amount has not yet been set. Low-income seniors and people with disabilities will not pay this cost.

5. **Every approved plan must have benefits that are the same or better than the standard set by Medicare, shown below:**
   a. You pay the first $250 in drug costs each year.
   b. After you pay the first $250, the plan will pay about 75% of the covered prescription costs. (i.e. your co-payment is about 25%)
   c. This goes on until you have spent $2250 on your prescriptions. (This total does not include your monthly premium.)
   d. You pay all drug costs between $2250 and $5100. (At this point, you may be able to get discount prices through your plan.)
   e. After you have paid $5100, the plan must then pay 95% of covered prescription costs. You pay the remaining 5%.
   f. This process starts over each year.

6. **Low-income persons on Medicare are protected by extra benefits.** They will pay no (or reduced) premiums and co-payments. They have no gaps or breaks in coverage.

7. **You can get help to pay for your medicine now.** The Medicare Discount Drug Cards will continue through 2005, and are for persons on Medicare regardless of their income. It can be used to buy prescription drugs at reduced prices. Low-income seniors and people with disabilities can get up to a $600 credit from Medicare on their card.

8. **You do not have to make any decisions right away.** Medicare will send you more information about the prescription drug program.

9. **Coverage for medicine is not the only new Medicare benefit.** Medicare now covers new services that will help to

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**Advocates Travel to Sacramento**

The National MS Society’s, Southern California Chapter Government Relations Committee (GRC) members attended the annual CalNeuro Alliance Conference in Sacramento in April. All seven California chapters were represented, as well as many other neurological groups. In all there were over 150 advocating on behalf of Californians who are living with neurological diseases.

Legislators offered us explanations on the public policy issues for which they were advocating. State Assembly member Patty Berg outlined her bill giving family caregivers a $500 per year tax credit. Senator Deborah Ortiz focused on possible voluntary drug prescription legislation for all Californians. Senator Sheila Kuehl is introducing a Universal Health Care bill this legislative session. These pieces of legislation are all in initial stages, and must first go to various legislative or regulatory committees, then to the State Assembly and Senate, and finally, if passed by both houses, to the governor’s desk for signature.

The GRC also spent time visiting with individual members of the legislature to express our position on the need for more comprehensive health care coverage, on long-term care issues and on prescription drug coverage in California. Two GRC members met with an assistant secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to relay the need for community-based long-term care for the younger disabled population.

The GRC works throughout the year on public policy issues that affect people with MS and those with disabilities. The committee will keep all individuals with MS, their family and friends informed on legislation both state and federal that affect the lives of the people we serve. If you have any questions or if you would like to assist in our advocacy efforts, please call Pam Hirshberg at 1.800.FIGHT.MS.

(Continued from page 22)

10. To learn more about any part of the Medicare prescription drug program, call Medicare at 1.800.633.4227.
**MS Leaders of Hope**

Many people with MS and their caregivers have responded to the disease in creative ways that uniquely inspire others. They address the daily challenges of MS with ingenuity and an indomitable spirit.

MS Leaders of Hope is an Internet-based program, designed to recognize people with MS and caregivers who have brought great value to the lives of people with MS through their innovations. One winner will be chosen in each of the following categories: mobility, relationship, time management, workplace/employment, memory, youth, and caregiving. Enter your idea for a chance to win $1,000 and a trip for you and your guest to the Society’s National Conference in Atlanta in November.

Visit [www.msleadersofhope.com](http://www.msleadersofhope.com) to learn more about the program or enter your ideas.