

Diagnostic Criteria -	3	In the News -	11
Massage Therapy -	7	Gifts with Purpose -	12
Self-Help Groups -	8-9	Women Against MS -	13
Chapter Resources -	10	Challenge Walk -	15

msconnection

Blue Ridge Chapter

Our Mission is to end the devastating effects of MS.

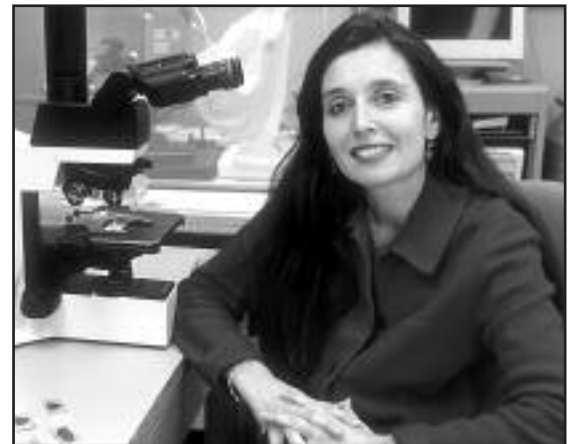
MS Lesion Project Lessons

People with MS have known all along that there are huge variations in MS. Among other things, some people respond very well to certain treatments, while others get little benefit. Are these variations due to basic biological differences in the disease?

Since 2000, the MS Lesion Project has coordinated an international team of researchers focused on this question. Scientists in the United States, Germany, and Austria are examining tissue from MS lesions - areas of brain where myelin has been stripped from nerve fibers - and comparing what they find with records of the person's actual symptoms and disabilities. The project is scheduled to be completed with \$1.2 million to be raised in the next four years by the Society's **Promise: 2010** campaign.

Preliminary findings underscore the promise: "There may indeed be several types of MS and these types may have different immune-related causes," wrote Dr. Claudia Lucchinetti of the Mayo Clinic, Minnesota, who is the lead investigator.

The group has identified four distinct lesion patterns in MS. The tissues studied in the project come from autopsy specimens and from brain biopsies, usually performed (continued on page 2)



Claudia Lucchinetti, MD, heads up the Society's MS Lesion Project.



MS Connection is the quarterly newsletter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Blue Ridge Chapter. For address changes or to be added to the mailing list, please contact us at 1-800-FIGHT MS; by e-mail at vab@nmss.org; or One Morton Drive, Suite 106, Charlottesville, VA 22903; 800-FIGHT MS (344-4867); (434) 971-8010; FAX (434) 979-4475.

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, often disabling disease that attacks the central nervous system. The progress, severity and symptoms of MS in any one person cannot be predicted. 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. If you or someone you know has MS, talk to your health care professional or contact the National MS Society 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 MS Society does not endorse products, services or manufacturers. Such names appear here solely because they are considered valuable information. The National MS Society assumes no liability for the use or contents of any product or service mentioned. Information provided by the Society is based upon professional advice, published experience and expert opinion. Information provided in response to questions does not constitute therapeutic recommendations or prescriptions. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society recommends that all questions and information be discussed with a personal physician.

(MS Lesion Project, from page 1)
when a brain tumor was suspected.

Data from the 280 tissue samples analyzed by the end of 2005 indicate that each falls into one of four patterns—and that no one person had lesions matching more than one pattern. However, the common types of MS (relapsing-remitting, primary-progressive, relapsing-progressive, and secondary-progressive) do not appear to correlate with these lesion patterns early in the disease. Dr. Lucchinetti stresses that longer follow up is needed to determine if the patterns help predict the disease course over time. Here is a sample of other findings of the MS Lesion Project:

- People with one lesion pattern that includes specific antibodies respond better to plasma exchange therapy than those with the other three patterns.
- One lesion pattern is associated with loss or damage to one particular myelin protein while other proteins remain intact.
- People with neuromyelitis optica (also called NMO or Devic's syndrome) can be clearly distinguished from those with MS by the presence of a specific antibody. NMO is often confused with MS.
- A novel mechanism called "tissue preconditioning" appears to be responsible for a pattern of tissue damage in Baló's concentric sclerosis, another rare, severe disease (continued on page 5)

How Doctors Know It's MS: The McDonald Diagnostic Criteria

The famous trickiness and variation of MS is part of the disease from the very beginning. There is no single examination or test that positively proves a person has MS. Instead physicians rely on a set of diagnostic criteria—a group of results. Taken together, they rule out any other possible explanation for MS-like symptoms and provide facts consistent with MS.

A new need for speed

Many people with MS tell a story of seeing doctor after doctor, and a frustrating period of confusion before their disease is finally named.

Today, the time between initial symptoms and a diagnosis may be a medical as well as a personal crisis. All the treatments available to help control relapsing forms of MS work best the earlier they are started.

A long delay between symptoms and diagnosis may represent lost opportunity as well as painful uncertainty.

The National MS Society has taken the lead in helping physicians arrive at a definitive diagnosis by organizing meetings where experts hammer out standards.

The International Panel on Diagnosis of MS, organized in 2001 by the Society with support from the MS International Federation (MSIF), brought

experts together to agree on what combinations of facts can only mean “this is MS.” The panel created the “McDonald Criteria,” named in honor of Dr. W. Ian McDonald, who chaired the 2001 panel.



New in 2005

The work did not stop then. In 2005, the 14-member panel was reconvened, chaired by Dr. Chris Polman. The group reviewed new research and sought input from leading MS practitioners worldwide. **The 2005 Revisions to the McDonald Criteria** was published in the December 2005 **Annals of Neurology**.

Most of the changes reflect recent data about MRI results. The changes mean that some people who will be asked to have two MRIs may know their results in about a month, rather than a much longer time. Most people may forgo a spinal tap, provided other findings clearly point to MS. And, as in the original criteria, some people with crystal clear signs and symptoms may need no MRI at all. The revisions frame the questions so that doctors can get clearer answers sooner.

One major aspect has not changed: objective, measurable evidence of MS has to be interpreted. No general practice neurologist should be offended if (continued on page 4)

(*Diagnostic Criteria, from page 3*) individuals or insurance providers ask for a second opinion by an MS expert.

Getting the Word Out Nationwide

New criteria won't speed diagnosis unless physicians know about them. The Society is affiliated with 150 MS clinical centers in the United States, and through referral programs is in contact with thousands of other professionals with an interest in MS. As soon as the revisions were available, the Professional Resource Center prepared a professionals' tip sheet, mounted it on our website (nationalmssociety.org/dx-tipsheet), and notified all chapters.

A laminated pocket card was published this January and offered to all chapters for distribution.

Finally, the Professional Resource Center provides one-on-one consultation to professionals via e-mail on a range of MS questions, including diagnosis.

THE MAIN TYPES OF EVIDENCE

- Medical history**—From medical records and questions the doctor asks about you and your family.
- Clinical exam**—Some are simple observations; for example, how easily you move or respond. Other parts of a clinical exam involve direct examination and on-the-spot tests.
- Laboratory results**—These may include information from MRI scans, spinal taps, blood work, “evoked potential” tests, and possibly more.

NURSE PRACTITIONER WANTED

The University of Virginia Health System Department of Neurology is seeking a nurse practitioner for the James Q. Miller MS Consultative Clinic. Must have a Master's Degree in Nursing and 3-5 years of experience. For more information, contact Cynthia Pritchard at 800-344-4867.

PROTECTING TEETH FROM MS

MS affects teeth? Yes, it can, indirectly. Numb hands or fatigue may mean less effective brushing and flossing. Medications may affect tooth health. Some cause dry mouth, for example. Periodic steroids for MS attacks can increase the risk of tooth decay. And MS can absorb so much room on a personal healthcare calendar that regular dental visits drop by the wayside.

Protect yourself from future problems. Smile and download a copy of **Dental Health: The Basic Facts** at nationalmssociety.org/dental.

No Internet? No problem. Call us and we'll mail you a copy.



(*MS Lesion Project, from page 2*)
similar to MS. *

- Tissue damage found in areas of the brain where lesions are not seen on conventional MRI may play a critical role in the development of disabilities.
- People with MS who were diagnosed by brain biopsy have clinical courses similar to people diagnosed through conventional means. This is important because it suggests that whatever is learned about MS from brain biopsies can be applied to more typical MS.

- And, one of the four lesion patterns has distinguishing aspects that show up on MRI.

This last finding has fueled the hope that it will be possible to identify all four patterns through non-invasive scanning. The project investigators are pushing hard for methods that will make it feasible to type a person's lesions before selecting therapy. Dr. Lucchinetti puts it simply: "This project may get us to the very core of finding better ways to treat MS."

* *The National MS Society's programs and services are open to anyone affected by these rarer conditions, as well as by "possible MS" or "clinically isolated syndrome" called CIS.*

COMING FACE-TO-FACE WITH MS: THE FOUNDING OF THE NATIONAL MS SOCIETY

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society turned sixty in March 2006. The organization was founded by Sylvia Lawry in March 1946. When her brother was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in the late 1930's, she refused to accept the medical wisdom of the day, "nothing can be done." In 1945 Sylvia took the unique step of running a classified ad in the *New York Times*, searching for someone who had been "cured" of multiple sclerosis. When instead she found many people as desperate as she was, Ms. Lawry began making plans for what would become one of the nation's largest voluntary health agencies - the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

She conducted the first fundraising activities and awarded the first three research grants in 1947. Ms. Lawry crusaded fearlessly against multiple sclerosis for over fifty years. She is pictured at right with the first Medical Advisory Board in 1946.



Just Been Diagnosed? Start With the Basics

MS isn't well understood yet, so there is plenty of misinformation about it. Here is some of what we do know:

- **MS is not fatal.**

Statistics show that most people with MS have a near normal life span. Most deaths associated with MS are due to complications in advanced, progressive stages of the disease. Early treatment should help to prevent those complications.

- **MS cannot be cured, but it can be managed.** In addition to "disease-modifying" drugs, there are a number of treatments for MS symptoms. Go to nationalmssociety.org/Brochures-SpecificIssues.asp for free brochures on symptom management, or call us.

- **The decision to tell anyone you have MS is yours.** Our fact sheet, *Disclosure: The Basic Facts*, discusses both personal and work situations. Download a copy at nationalmssociety.org/Brochures-Disclosing.asp, or call us.

- **Self-help groups and family counseling can help.** Self-help groups bring together people who share a common life experience, for support, education, and mutual aid. Contact us for referrals.

1-800-FIGHT MS (344-4867)

Knowledge Is Power

This at-home study program provides a basic education in MS, including symptom management, treatment options, disclosure, family issues, and employment. Sign up to receive the six weekly mailings (e-mail or snail) online at nationalmssociety.org/Knowledge, or call us.

If you need more

Other free publications are on our website at nationalmssociety.org/NewlyDiagnosed. Or call us to request a list.

We also recommend:

[The First Year—Multiple Sclerosis: An Essential Guide for the Newly Diagnosed](#), by Margaret Blackstone. Marlowe & Company, 2003, 232 pp., \$15.95.

[Multiple Sclerosis: A Guide for the Newly Diagnosed](#), 2nd Edition, by Nancy Holland, RN, EdD, T. Jock Murray, MD, and Stephen Reingold, PhD. Demos, 2002, 160 pp., \$21.95.

[Multiple Sclerosis: The Questions You Have—The Answers You Need](#), 3rd Edition, by Rosalind C. Kalb, PhD. Demos, 2004, 640 pp., \$39.95.

Books from Demos are discounted when you order from their website: demosmedpub.com.

(These three books are also available for free check out from the Chapter's Lending Library.)

The Medium Is the Massage

Massage therapy has been practiced for thousands of years, from ancient Greece and Egypt to India and China.

In the U.S. today, more than 150 kinds of massage therapy are used but most are variations of Swedish massage, which was invented in the 19th century.

What massage can do for you

Most of what we know about massage is anecdotal. In one small scientific study of 24 people with MS, massage appeared to improve self-esteem and body image.

Patricia Kennedy, RN, CNP, MSCN, a nurse practitioner at the Rocky Mountain MS Center in Colorado, told [MSConnection](#) that many of the people she sees report positive benefits.

“My patients use massage to relieve spasticity and pain,” Kennedy said. “Massage can also provide a chance to relax, helping to relieve anxiety and fear. The simple act of touch conveys comfort, caring, and acceptance,” she said.

A few cautions

Massage therapy is generally safe. However, consult a physician if you have:

- **Pain.** Get a recommendation for the best type of massage therapy for you.
- **Pressure sores.** While massage may be helpful in preventing pressure sores,

it should be avoided if pressure sores or reddened areas of inflammation are present on the skin.

- **Edema.** Swelling caused by a buildup of fluid can have many causes. Get a diagnosis before beginning massage.
- **Osteoporosis.** People with MS tend to have lower bone mass and have a greater risk for fractures. When osteoporosis is present, massage therapy should be given only with the advice of a physician.



Write it off

Forget your insurance—few plans cover massage, and never long-term. But you may be able to write it off on your taxes as a medical expense. Kennedy said that many people get prescriptions from their doctors, which they save with their tax records. Consult with a qualified tax specialist.

People who knead people

Ready for a massage, but not sure how to find a masseuse? The American Massage Therapy Association can supply names of approved therapists. Most states also have licensing programs. Call us for massage therapists on our referral lists.

- American Massage Therapy Association, 820 Davis Street, Suite 900, Evanston (continued on page 11)

GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR LOCAL SELF-HELP GROUP!

The Blue Ridge Chapter offers 20 active self-help groups which meet regularly. They are listed below in alphabetical order from Abingdon to Wytheville. The groups are open to anyone with MS and their caregiver or family member. Contact the leaders identified below for more information or call the Chapter.

- **Highlands MS Support Group** meets in in **Abingdon**. Contact Ruth at 276-496-5710 for time and location.
- **Bedford "Let's Talk"** meets on the 3rd Wednesday at noon at the Bedford Baptist Church. Contact Annette at 540-587-5356 for more information.
- **Bristol Self-Help Group** meets on the 4th Tuesday at noon at the First Christian Church. Contact Sylvia at 276-466-9189 for more information.
- **Charlottesville Day Self-Help Group** meets on the 4th Thursday at 11:30 a.m. at Martha Jefferson House. Contact Kitty at 434-293-3573.
- **Charlottesville MS Options** meets every other Tuesday at 5:15 p.m. at the Meadows Presbyterian Church. Contact Lisa at 434-296-5964.
- **Charlottesville Partners** meets every second Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. at different locations. Contact Ray at 434-980-4961 for more information.
- **Clifton Forge Self-Help Group** meets on the 3rd Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at the Clifton Forge Library. Contact Jeanette at 540-862-7590.
- **Clintwood Self-Help Group** meets each 3rd Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the Clintwood Public Library. Contact Kathy at 276-835-1953 for information.
- **Farmville Self-Help Group** meets on the 3rd Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the Southside Com. Hospital. Call Charles or Jennifer at 434-223-2360.
- **Grundy/Richlands Self-Help Group** meets on the 3rd Thursday. at 1:00 p.m. in the Food City Banquet Room. Contact Keeta at 276-935-5897.
- **Harrisonburg/Shenandoah Valley MS Support Group** meets on the 1st Tues at 6:00 p.m. at Bridgewater Home. Call Barbara at 540-828-6333.
- **Lynchburg PlainTalk Self-Help Group** meets on the 3rd Thursday at 7:00 p.m. Call Paul at 434-525-7528 for the location and more information.
- **Lynchburg Strictly and Only Support Group** meets on the 2nd Wed. at 12:30 p.m. at the United Way Building. Call Celestine at 434-845-3440.
- **Martinsville Self-Help Group** meets on the 4th Thursday at 5:00 p.m. at Calvary Christian Church. Call Judy at 276-638-6001 for more information.
- **New River Valley Self-Help Group** meets on the 1st Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in the Human Services Bldg. in Christiansburg. Call Jeff at 540-961-4760.
- **Rocky Mount Self-Help Group** meets on the 4th Sunday at 3:00 p.m. in the Franklin Restaurant. Call Kathy at 540-982-2463, ext. 1193.

(Self-Help Groups, continued)

- **Roanoke Self-Help Group** meets on the 4th Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the Friendship Manor Community Center. Call Ann at 540-774-8413.
- **Waynesboro Self-Help Group** meets on the 1st Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at AMC Wellness Center. Call Denise at 540-949-0422.
- **Winchester Self-Help Group** meets on the 1st Friday at 6:30 p.m. at Winchester Medical Ctr. Call Janet at 540-636-7415 or Bette at 540-869-2188.
- **Wytheville Self-Help Group** meets at St. Paul U. Methodist Church. Call Karen at 276-228-5539 or Tommy at 276-228-2949 for date and time.

Take Me Out to the Ballgame: MS Family Days

What could be more fun than taking the family out to a picnic and Minor League baseball game with friends? Blue Ridge Chapter members will have the opportunity to do just that at five locations this spring. Mark your calendars now and be watching for the brochure that will be mailed to you soon!



Lynchburg Hillcats vs. Winston-Salem Warthogs

Friday, May 12, 2006

Picnic: 6:00 Game: 7:05

Salem Avalanche vs. Wilmington Blue Rocks

Saturday, May 13, 2006

Picnic: 6:00 Game: 7:05



Bristol White Sox vs. Kingsport Mets

Wednesday, June 28, 2006

Picnic: 6:00 Game: 7:00

Pulaski Blue Jays vs. Burlington Indians

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Picnic: TBD Game: TBD



Martinsville Mustangs vs. Florence Red Wolves

Monday, July 10, 2006

Picnic: 6:00 Game: 7:05

For more information or to register in advance, call the Chapter Office at 1-800 FIGHT MS (344-4867) or e-mail us at vab@nmss.org.

Your Lending Library

The Blue Ridge Chapter maintains a lending library with up-to-date resources available for free checkout. Here are some of the newest additions:

- **Mayo Clinic on Chronic Pain: Practical Advice for Leading a More Active Life**, edited by Jeffrey Rome, M.D., the medical director of the Mayo Clinic, is an easy-to-understand guide to learning how to take charge of chronic pain and live a more active, productive and comfortable life.
- **The Art of Getting Well: A Five-Step Plan for Maximizing Health When you Have a Chronic Illness**, by David Spero, R.N., inspires and helps people who are overcoming illness and want to improve their quality of life. It explains how to change the things in life that contribute to illness and rob you of motivation in the face of a chronic condition.
- **When the Road Turns: Inspirational Stories By and About People with MS**, by Margot Russell, is a collection of stories written by and about 18 people from all walks of life who are living with multiple sclerosis. Each person achieved milestones and had rich, rewarding lives after they were told they had multiple sclerosis, proof that life doesn't end with an MS diagnosis.

The complete list of the books and videotapes contained in the Chapter's lending library can be seen on the

Chapter's website. To check out the list, go to the following link:

www.nationalmssociety.org/vab/top_nav/library.asp

Materials may be checked out for two weeks and are mailed with a postage paid return envelope enclosed. Call the Chapter at 1-800-FIGHT MS (344-4867) for more information about the lending library or to check out materials.

- **MS ID Cards are available!**
Call the Chapter office if you would like to receive a card listing common symptoms of MS that you can use to certify that you are a person who has multiple sclerosis.

Cooling Vest Program

Don't let summer's heat and humidity keep you on the sidelines this summer!

Blue Ridge Chapter has a program that can help you obtain a cooling vest at a discounted cost. Additional financial assistance is also available, if needed. Call the Chapter NOW if you want to order a cooling vest. Orders may take up to four weeks to be processed and shipped.

**Call 1-800- FIGHT MS
(1-800-344-4867)
for more information.**

MEDICARE RX ENROLLMENT DEADLINE: MAY 15TH

If you need help making a decision about prescription drug coverage under Medicare, the Society has a list of resources at:

www.nationalmssociety.org/medicare.

You will find:

- **Tips on Choosing a Medicare Rx Plan.**
- The webcast “**Medicare Drug Benefits: Understanding The Facts, Understanding Your Options.**”
- A link to Medicare’s website where you can compare plans (click on **Compare Medicare Prescription Drug Plans**).
- A link to your **State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)**, which offers one-on-one counseling and assistance.

Enroll by May 15 to avoid having a lifetime penalty added to your monthly premium. For help with problems, contact us at 1-800-FIGHT-MS (1-800-344-4867).

(*Massage Therapy, from page 7*)
IL 60201; phone: 855-905-2700;
website: www.amtamassage.org

- Touch Research Institutes,
Department of Pediatrics, University of
Miami School of Medicine, P. O. Box
016820, Miami, FL 33101; phone:
305-243-6781; website:
www.miami.edu/touch-research

FDA Advisory Panel Recommends Tysabri’s Return to the Market

An FDA advisory committee recommended that Tysabri (natalizumab, Biogen Idec and Elan Pharmaceuticals) be approved for return to market for the treatment of relapsing multiple sclerosis. While the FDA is not required to follow the recommendations of its advisory committees, it usually does. The agency is expected to make a final decision about whether to approve the drug for market by the end of March 2006.

An FDA advisory committee met March 7 - 8 to evaluate whether Tysabri can safely return to market following its withdrawal due to safety concerns in February 2005. The committee reviewed data about the drug's effectiveness and its side effects, the proposed risk management plan developed by the drug's sponsors and the FDA's assessment of the safety and efficacy of the drug and risk management issues. The committee also heard extensive public testimony from concerned citizens and patient groups.

A primary safety issue examined by the committee was the fact that three people who had been in clinical trials involving Tysabri developed a rare disease called PML (progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy), caused by a common virus called the JC virus. Two of them died, including one person with MS.

For more information and updates, check nationalmssociety.org/Tysabri.

GIFTS WITH A PURPOSE

Most people have a specific intention in mind when they include a charitable bequest to the National MS Society in their will. A bequest reflects a vote of confidence in the work the Society is doing and serves as a powerful illustration of an individual's life purpose.

Over a lifetime, this purpose can take many forms. Volunteering, participating in fund-raising events, serving on committees, encouraging others to give are all expressions of purpose-driven giving. When writing a will with a charitable bequest, an individual makes a long-term commitment to support that purpose into the future. Put simply, what you put in your will is what people will remember you by. It is your legacy.

An estate gift or bequest is shaped by your interests or by your vision of an outcome in the future. Bequests can be restricted to specific services, such as emergency loans, college scholarships, educational programs, or to research in specific areas. Or bequests can be unrestricted in support of our mission to end MS.

Bequests can come in all sizes—and they may be a specific amount or represent a percentage of the total estate. Residual bequests are set up to help the National MS Society after family and friends are provided for.

Estate planning experts like to use the “80/20 Rule”: 20 percent of what we do now affects 80 percent of what happens in the future. They suggest:

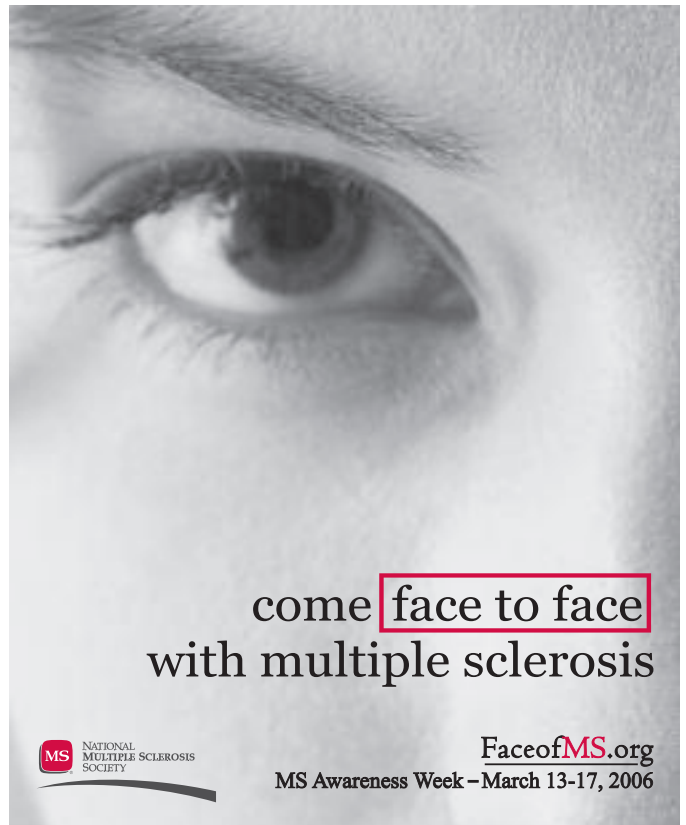
- Consider possibilities. Plan for life's uncertainties.
- Organize. Identify all your assets and liabilities.

- Inform your potential beneficiaries. They will be able to thank you.
- Use caution. Consult a qualified estate planning attorney.

National MS Society staff can give you all the information and materials you and your advisor need to develop a purpose-driven charitable bequest that reflects your values and fits your estate plan. Investing your assets to reflect what you consider most important can be deeply satisfying. In addition, careful planning may save your loved ones from complex probate procedures and taxes.

Ask for our brochure, “Creating a Legacy for Tomorrow.” Call the Gift Planning office at 1-800-923-7727, or visit our Web site at:

nationalmssociety.org, click on “Donate to the Society,” and explore the “Guide to Giving” section.



come **face to face**
with multiple sclerosis

MS NATIONAL
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
SOCIETY

FaceofMS.org
MS Awareness Week – March 13-17, 2006

Women Join Forces to Battle MS

Although Teri Garr and Wendy Booker are quite unique, they have much in common. Both Teri and Wendy have MS. Teri and Wendy both have a positive spirit and a passion to help others. They have become national spokeswomen for increasing awareness of multiple sclerosis and giving hope to those affected by the disease. And finally, both Teri and Wendy are the speakers for two **Women Against MS (WAMS) Luncheons** sponsored by the Blue Ridge Chapter. Teri spoke at the WAMS Luncheon in Roanoke on April 10, and Wendy will be the speaker for the WAMS Luncheon in Charlottesville on May 25. Funds raised by both of these events will go to support research to find the cause of and a cure for multiple sclerosis.

Teri Garr spoke at the **WAMS Luncheon**, which was held on April 10 at the Hotel Roanoke and was co-chaired by Sam and Pam Krisch. Teri is the 56-year-old star of numerous films, including *Oh, God!* and *Tootsie*. She has also recently published her autobiography, [Speed Bumps: Flooring It Through Hollywood](#).

Teri was brought to the event through an unrestricted grant from MS LifeLines, an educational support service sponsored by Serono and Pfizer. The event also received



underwriting from Building Specialists, Inc.

Wendy Booker will be the speaker at the **WAMS Luncheon** on May 25 at Farmington Country Club in Charlottesville. Sue Haden is the chair.



Wendy Booker will speak in Charlottesville on May 25. For more information, call the Chapter at 1-800-FIGHT MS (344-4867).

Wendy was diagnosed with relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis in 1998 and has taken this

diagnosis in stride - literally. Wendy set a goal for herself to complete the Boston marathon in 2000. Since then she has completed two more Boston marathons and one New York marathon. In 2002 Wendy set her sights a little higher - 20,320 feet higher, to be exact - as part of "Climb for a Cause," a climbing expedition to Denali, the highest point in North America.

Like Teri, Wendy has nationwide engagements speaking about living with MS. Wendy has found that not only is she able to motivate the audience, but they also inspire her.

Wendy is a member of Team COPAXONE, which is sponsored in part by Teva Neuroscience and celebrates people with MS who are pursuing their dreams. Come and meet Wendy on May 25th in Charlottesville!

Ready to Volunteer?

The National MS Society has joined **VolunteerMatch**, a national database that matches people who want to volunteer with volunteer openings at more than 35,000 nonprofit organizations across the country. The Society is now one of them.

Using the service is easy. Go to volunteermatch.org on the Web. You can select organizations by their type, whom they serve, the distance from your home, the training offered, and the positions currently open. More than 2 million people have used this service.

Some chapters previously listed volunteer opportunities with **VolunteerMatch**. As of February 1, 2006, the entire national network of Society chapters and divisions is participating. **VolunteerMatch** will not only help us recruit the volunteers we need, it will help anyone interested in volunteering to match their personal skills and requirements to a range of choices available in our area.

For more information about helping with special events or volunteering in the Chapter's main office in Charlottesville, call the Chapter at 1-800-FIGHT MS (344-4867).



Champions against MS™

CHAMPIONS BUDDY UP

Anything's more fun when you pair up with a buddy. That's the idea behind **Champions**

Against MS (previously called Partners in Hope), the program that connects people with MS to an MS Walk, MS Challenge Walk, or Bike Tour participant. All it takes is a letter, e-mail, or phone call to acknowledge your

Champion's involvement before the event. The **Champion with MS** also signs a red



bandana which is worn by the walker or rider during the event. This highlights the hope that together we'll eradicate MS.

Every year, thousands of people walk, ride, and fundraise for research and chapter programs and services. By joining **Champions Against MS** you "put a face on MS." The personal touch fosters MS awareness in your community and inspires us all to help wipe MS off the map.

To learn more, go to nationalmssociety.org/champions or call us at 1-800-FIGHT MS (344-4867).

ms
Challenge
Walk[®]



**The Chesapeake Bay
MS Challenge Walk
September 16 & 17, 2006**

**THE EVENT WILL CHALLENGE YOU.
THE EXPERIENCE WILL CHANGE YOU.**

2 Days. 50 K. Closer to a Cure.
Get ready for an experience unlike all others.

2 Days:

In less than 48 hours, you'll complete an incredible journey and make a huge difference for the 400,000 Americans living with MS. Think of your average weekend. Now think about the new experience that the challenge of walking for two days will offer. The task may sound daunting, but we are here to offer support in every way, including meals and overnight lodging.

50 K:

Step-by-step is often used to describe the way a person living with multiple sclerosis handles a task suddenly made difficult by the disease. And it is the way you will confront the challenge of walking 50 K (roughly 30 miles). Join over 1,000 people who will walk from Annapolis to Baltimore. We will support you from the moment you sign-on with training and nutrition guidelines and information. During the walk, the route will be fully monitored by support and gear vehicles and medical staff.

Closer to a Cure:

When it is all said and done, your journey will end by opening new possibilities for others. Somewhere, there is a person living with MS in need of durable medical equipment. Somewhere, there is new research awaiting funding. After you have finished your 2-day, 50-K journey, you will be proud to know that you have indeed put us closer to a cure.

**For more information, visit baychallengewalk.org
or call 1.800.FIGHT MS (800-344-4867)
or e-mail aimee.carter@vab.nmss.org**

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Martinsville Office - 276-638-8942

Lynchburg Office - 434-846-3853

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Blue Ridge Chapter

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