

February 2009

MS Quality of Life Project

Transitions- Housing

- Adapting Our Homes
- Navigating the AAAs of Housing
- When You Need More Help
- Living at a Skilled Nursing Facility

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Transitions - Housing

***By Donna Krasnow,
MSQLP Board Chair***

Home – it may be a house, an apartment, a rented room or a unit in an assisted living or skilled nursing facility. We may live alone or with a spouse or partner, family members, friends or people we barely know. Home is more than just the place where we store our belongings. It's the source of many of our memories and, when we are away from it, it's often where we want to be. And yet, MS may affect where we are able to live. If our disease progresses, can we make adaptations that let us stay in our homes? If we can no longer take care of ourselves, what options do we have? What resources are available to us? What plans should we make? This newsletter addresses these issues.

I thank the many people who have shared their stories with us. Several MSers describe effective adaptations they have made to their homes. Our new social worker, Dockie Lewis, describes options and resources that may apply to those in need of housing. Narit, our Outreach Coordinator, identifies local agencies and web sites that may offer helpful information. I have written a short article about the decision to hire a caregiver and finally, I thank Kurtis Lemke for his insights about life in

a skilled nursing facility. An underlying theme that unites these articles is the belief that we need to think about our future; plan ahead for changes that may come our way. It is better to be proactive than reactive.

Transitions – Adapting our homes so we can successfully live in them

Victoria Scaccia

I walk a little more precariously these days. Thankfully, I know my house so well that I know all the "landing points" – those pieces of furniture or cabinets that I can grab onto as I move from room to room. However, going down the four steps to the garage is getting a little dicey. There's a railing but it's on the wrong side. When we install a second railing I think I will feel more secure.

Marie Swank

The only adaptation we have made to our house is the ramp that goes from the back door to the yard. I use it to move into the backyard and to go around to the front. I know what needs to be done next. Our shower has a lip that I have to step over and it is getting more difficult to take that step.

Jana Davis

My husband, Leon, has made many small changes that have made my life easier. Each is inexpensive and each has improved my quality of life. He lowered the clothes bar in my closet so I can easily reach my things. He lowered the thermostat and the wall phone so I can use them. He adapted the pole next to the bed. I use it to position myself and for support when transferring in and out of a wheelchair. He clamped a lamp with a spotlight at the top of the pole and ran an electric cord down the length of it. He put the switch at my height and positioned the bulb so it shines down on my side of the bed. Finally, I wanted a trapeze over my head that I could use to position myself in bed but all the ones we found were expensive and ugly. He reinforced the ceiling above the bed, installed a bolt and hung chains and plastic tubing from the bolt. He painted the tubing to match the bedroom walls. He created an inexpensive and lovely trapeze that matches the room's decor.

I created two simple adaptations. I added a cord to one end of my laundry basket. When I balance it on my lap, I loop the cord around my neck and then I can move forward in my wheelchair without the basket falling off. I used my second adaptation when I was able to walk. I liked to cook but it took too much energy to move around the kitchen. I got a secretary's chair on wheels and raised the seat to its highest elevation. Once I sat on it, I could push myself around the kitchen to get what I needed. I was able to conserve my energy.

The changes we made to our bathroom were more expensive. I suspect that the bathroom is the room that creates the most challenges for MSers. We removed the bath/shower combination and tiled the walls almost up to the ceiling. We then installed a shower head. There is no lip so I can roll right into the shower area and the water only hits the tiled area. We also installed a taller toilet and put the sink in a shelf so I could roll up to it.

Ginny Rettinger

When we moved into our house the entry had a tall step into the living room. The rest of the downstairs was on one level but that step was really challenging for me. Ramps solved the problem. One ramp goes from the driveway to the laundry room. From there I can get into the kitchen and the rest of the downstairs. If I am at the front of the house, I can move along a deck that hugs the side of the house and enter the living room from there. I have successfully conquered the step by simply going around it.

In addition, I have a seat slide that helps me in the bathtub. I sit on the seat that straddles the tub, slide over the top of the tub, move my legs from outside the tub to inside and then wash myself while sitting on the seat. It makes the process safer and easier.

Michael and Marsha Doza

Michael - I had grab bars installed to help me when using the bath, shower or toilet. The bathroom sink remains a challenge because I can't roll up to it. My legs can't get underneath. I do what most people in wheelchairs do; I face sideways. Outside I installed a non-slip surface on the ramps and patio. This makes them easier to use.

Marsha – I have done several things to make Michael's life easier. I make sure that things he needs from the refrigerator are stored in the door. That makes it easier for him. I installed a phone by his chair so he can more easily talk with friends. I have paper and pens stored in several areas around the house, including the garage, so he can grab them when needed. When I had to leave for a short time to take care of my mother, I moved all the kitchen items he might need from higher cabinets to lower ones so he could easily reach them. But the one adaptation I think is most successful is the dry eraser board I installed low on a wall on which we write messages, list appointments and keep the calendar. It keeps us organized and aware of what is going on in our lives.

Take control

Remember who
YOU are

Attitude is the key

Never
underestimate
yourself!

So, your life is not
the same, adjust!

Important to keep
friends & family
close

Take responsibility

Imagine each day
as an opportunity
for growth

Overwhelmed
about your future?

Never give up hope

**By Victoria Scaccia,
Volunteer and
Outreach Assistant**

MaryLee Johnson

I could not get into or out of my house if my husband had not built ramps. They were absolutely essential. But the single adaptation I am most grateful for is the motorized ceiling lift that is attached to a track system in my bedroom and bathroom. When I am in a sling, the motor lifts me up and then I can be easily moved along the track. The track goes from my bed to an area where I can be lowered into my wheelchair. At the end of the day the motor lifts me (in the sling) up from the wheelchair and I can be moved over to and then lowered onto the bed. The track also goes into my bathroom. I can be lowered onto a bath chair in the shower or onto the toilet. This adaptation has made both my life and that of my caregiving husband easier. He no longer has to lift me. I was concerned about what the lifting was doing to his body. I also know I am safer – I can't fall. This adaptation has allowed me to stay in my home and use my own bathroom.

Terri Nash

My biggest challenge was my bathroom. The shower/bath combination was so small that I couldn't maneuver around it in my wheelchair. It couldn't be enlarged but I realized that the space could be used differently. We took out the bathtub and replaced it with a shower. The shower was not as wide as the bathtub so I had about 20 extra inches of space. I had shelves installed in that space and store on them the clothes I wear most frequently. I was now able to transfer onto a shower seat or transfer to the toilet. After I take a shower, I sit on top of the toilet seat and can reach forward to where my clothes are stored on the new shelves. I can dress right there. I

can even turn and lean over the sink to brush my teeth. Yes, it is a small space but when designed carefully, it can be used very successfully.

Marilyn Howell

My husband and I lived in Gilroy for 25 years. As my MS progressed we realized that the house was no longer working for us. It was too big. Our bedroom was on the second floor at the top of a long flight of stairs. The garden was big and the summers in Gilroy are hot. I found myself spending hot summer days sitting in front of a fan. Even ironing became a challenge. Although I lowered the ironing board, sat on a chair and directed a fan at me, it was still difficult. So, after much thought we moved to the Monterey Peninsula where the weather is cooler. We moved into a smaller house that is on one floor. Because it is in a retirement community the houses are accessible. Given the needs of my MS, we replaced the carpeted floors with hardwood - much easier on my scooter. We also added a small portable island in the kitchen so I can sit while I do food preparation. Life is easier in this smaller more accessible house.

Navigating the AAA's of Housing Issues

By Dockie Lewis, LCSW and Narit Gessler, MA

MSQLP continually receives requests for assistance with housing issues. The truth is IT'S COMPLICATED. Housing solutions require planning and forethought in terms of the possible progression of disability and financial constraints. When trying to determine if a living situation is right for you, there are three basic criteria to consider: accessibility, affordability, and availability.

Accessibility

It is important to determine what your current and future needs might be.

Some questions to ask yourself include: Is there a ramp to the front door? Can my mobility equipment fit through each doorjamb? Do I need a sink that I can roll up to or a roll in shower? Are the appliances within reach? Is there air conditioning? Can I reach the electrical outlets? Is appropriate parking available for my needs?

Availability

When looking for a place to live it is important to inquire about and view accessible units. If unavailable at the time, request to be put on a waiting list. While the wait time is frequently longer for an accessible unit, it is often worth the wait.

Affordability

For those that qualify for low-income housing, there are several options available. County housing authorities have both project based and tenant based assistance. These programs are based on the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines. Your local housing authority will determine your eligibility for housing assistance based on your income level and number of dependents. If you need a caregiver to live with you, he/she must be included in your application. Once determined as eligible, you may decide between project based assistance or tenant based assistance also known as Section 8.

Each housing authority maintains numerous properties within their county. These project based, government subsidized units are available for 30% of your income. Many of these housing complexes, however, typically have long waiting lists.

Section 8 is a tenant based program, whereby a voucher is given for housing to be used on participating private properties. Renters using a Section 8 voucher also pay 30% of their income. Since there are a finite number of Section 8 vouchers available in each county, it is important to check with your local housing authority to determine when they are accepting applications for this type of assistance.

So what is the main difference between these two types of assistance provided through the housing authority? The answer is that a Section 8 voucher goes with you whenever you move, if the owner agrees to participate,

whereas assistance for project based housing is provided at each property.

Additionally, there are some private programs that provide affordable housing. These programs are separate from the Housing Authority and can usually be found through your local city housing representative.

Beyond Independent Living

If you need a higher level of care, options include assisted living facilities, residential care facilities (small, private group homes), and skilled nursing facilities.

Most assisted living facilities are private pay. While some individual insurance plans may cover assisted living, Medi-Cal and Medicare do not.

The Alliance on Aging in Monterey County and Senior Network Services in Santa Cruz County can provide you with a list of assisted living, residential care and skilled nursing facilities. All of these may have wait lists.

Licensed residential care facilities vary widely. They all provide assistance with basic activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, meals, housekeeping. They may be small homes with 3 or 4 residents, or larger ones with 6-10 residents. Prices range from accepting monthly SSI checks to \$5,000-\$6,000/month.

It is very important, if at all possible, that clients and their families visit these different facilities before committing to residency. A good fit in terms of services, personnel, and physical layouts need to be considered for a successful transition.

Finding a Caregiver

Place an ad in your local newspaper or on Craigslist.com (it's free). Be sure to include specific qualifications and hours needed.

Call local caregiving agencies – they may be more expensive, but they are also reliable.

In Home Support Services (IHSS) is available to eligible low-income families and will help to pay for and/or provide a caregiver.

When You Need More Help

By Donna Krasnow

What options do you have when you can no

longer take care of yourself and want to stay in your home? If you have the money or qualify for assistance, one option is to hire a caregiver. When my husband and I faced this problem, Gary was 48, our 2 children were college-aged and no longer lived at home, I was a full-time high school teacher. Gary had been diagnosed with MS when he was 30. By the time he was 48 he could barely move his hands, arms or legs. He could no longer operate his motorized wheelchair or feed himself. Thankfully, we had a motorized lift (like the one MaryLee Johnson described in the first article) that I used to move him between his bed and wheelchair. I don't know what I would have done without it because I could not lift him myself. He used a catheter so I no longer had to struggle to get him into the bathroom. But by the time he was 48, I knew we needed more help. Even though the high school where I worked was incredibly supportive and gave me a schedule that allowed me to be home by 1 pm most afternoons, Gary no longer felt safe alone. I couldn't stop working to take care of him full time – we needed my income to survive. We decided to hire a caregiver Monday – Friday, from 7 – 1.

Challenges we faced and solutions we developed:

1. I had no idea where to find a competent caregiver

I told everyone I knew we were looking for a caregiver. About 3 weeks after I put the word out, Gary's Physical Therapist called with a recommendation. We interviewed the woman she recommended and hired her. She was with us for the last 5 years of Gary's life.

2. No one wanted to come at 7:15 am (when I left for school).

We had the phone company install a phone button (this service is free to anyone who is disabled) that I pinned to Gary's pillow when I left at 7:15. If he turned his head and pushed the button, he was connected to the operator and could contact me, 911 or a neighbor if he needed help. This gave him a sense of security while he waited for the caregiver to arrive at 8 am.

3. No one was willing to work a teacher's schedule - 180 days a year. They wanted work every week of the year - including my school holidays and summer vacations,

I had to agree to hire the caregiver for 52 weeks a year. This made the expense much greater than we originally anticipated but I found that the extra free time it gave me was important for keeping my

sanity. I used these hours to do errands, visit friends, or take long walks with the dog

4. The process of legally hiring a household employee is daunting – so many forms and regulations required by the State.

I contacted the State and started working my way through the forms. Within a few months the process had become easy. In reality many caregivers want to be paid under the table. I needed the tax deduction, however, and would not consider this. Also, it is against the law. For additional information Margarite Alvarez wrote a 3 part series about issues related to caregiving that appeared in the February, May and November 2008 issues of our newsletter. See our website to review these articles.

Both my life and that of my husband improved after Francia came into our lives. I now went to work with the knowledge that Gary was safe. When I came home Gary had been bathed and fed. The Physical Therapist taught Francia how to do simple leg and arm exercises with Gary so that he was physically more comfortable. His room was tidy, the kitchen was neat, and even his laundry was done. I didn't have to rush home to feed him or find out what problems needed resolution. Instead I was able to sit and talk with Gary and compare notes about our days. Gary had someone who became a companion and friend. I had someone who made my life less stressful. Because of a wonderful caregiver, Gary was able to remain at home.

Living with MS at a Skilled Nursing Facility

By Kurtis Lemke (interviewed by Donna Krasnow)

I interviewed Kurtis at the Santa Cruz Skilled Nursing Center where he has lived for the last 9 years. He was 41 when he moved into the facility and is 50 today. He was diagnosed with MS when he was 30. The day I interviewed him, his parents and one sister were visiting. He has two sisters and one brother. Incredibly, both sisters have also been diagnosed with MS but Kurtis has the most advanced case of the three and is the only one living in a facility.

What led to the decision to move to a skilled nursing facility?

I made the decision. Nine years ago my wife asked me to leave our home in Clovis. She said she could take care of our 9 year-old son and our new daughter but could no longer take care of me. I initially moved in with my parents but soon realized that my presence added a burden to their lives that I could not live with. For example, I fell so often that the Clovis Fire Department had to come to the house 1 - 2 times a week to help me get up. I soon began my research of facilities and moved here 6 months after moving in with my parents.

What did you look for when doing your research?

Living in the Fresno area had been hard. It got so hot during the day I could really only go out in the evenings. I wanted better weather. I also wanted a community where there were lots of things to do. In addition, the average age of a facility's residents was important. It seems to me that the average age of a nursing home resident is close to 90. I was 41 and didn't want to be the only person my age. I got on the Internet and spoke with friends. The community of Santa Cruz met my needs. It is an active community with a local community college, has accessible transportation and the average age at this facility is around 50. I came out and visited the facility. I liked the administrator and the sample room they showed me.

Once you moved in, how did the reality of the facility match your expectations?

The first day was awful. The room they gave me was much worse than the one I had been shown. It was small, cramped and my roommate had a more advanced case of MS. This scared my son who knew I had the same disease. The food was terrible and the administrator I liked left a week after I arrived. I really missed my family.

How would you describe conditions 9 years later? Have things changed?

I have a better room. It's a single and has more room than the portion of the double I shared. The food has gotten better. It's not great, but it is somewhat better. I enjoy the Santa Cruz community because there is a lot to do. I take Adaptive PE at Cabrillo College and enjoy the friends I have made there. I speak up when I am

not happy about something.

How do you "speak up"?

I have been the Resident President since soon after moving in. Residents meet once per month to discuss common concerns. I demanded that administrators meet with us a few days after each meeting so we can address identified concerns. This has had some effect. I say, "some" because many issues remain unresolved. For example, three current issues have been on our agenda for months – or even years. We want a small store on site where we can buy basic needs at reduced costs (I have \$35 spending money each month). We want the facility to honor their commitment to provide a van that can take us places. We want a better system for moving garbage. The garbage can wheels are so loud that it's hard to concentrate when they are being moved. None of these has been addressed.

Do you feel that the administration listens?

There have been more than 9 chief administrators in the 9 years I have been here. It's a position with a revolving door. Some have been great; some have not. Much depends on the quality of top leadership. Also, things happen that direct where money is spent. For example, last year the roof leaked so money was spent to correct that rather than address our needs. I can understand the decision but it happens too often. Our needs should also be addressed.

What advice would you give to people who are moving into a skilled nursing facility?

1. Do your research – find the place that best meets your needs.
2. Investigate all your options. Can you possibly stay at your home if you get help from social agencies?
3. Don't antagonize caregivers – they literally have your care in their hands. Work with them. Get to know them, their names, and their interests. It makes the relationship a friendly one. You will get better care.
4. Be a squeaky wheel – speak up when things aren't working for you. However, be an effective squeaky wheel. If you are not wise in how you speak up, you can be ignored.

Looking back, what do you wish you had done differently?

1. I wish I lived closer to my family in Clovis. I miss them so much.
2. I wish I had explored more options. Could I have stayed home longer?

What helps you survive each day?

My belief in God. I have always called myself a Christian but dealing with MS has strengthened my relationship with God. I have lost so much in my life – living with my children, my 16-acre property in Templeton, CA, my wife, most of my friends who couldn't deal with my MS, but God has always been there. He has never left me. I also believe a man's character may best be judged by what he does behind closed doors. I have my own room and my own computer. I could spend my time looking at porn online but I know God doesn't want that of me. I use my time in better ways. I am also grateful for my parents, children and siblings. They, too, have never left me.

****Final note:** I was privileged to meet Kurtis' parents and sister. They were clearly proud of Kurtis and how he has managed his life but they don't like that he is living in a facility. The only time tears came to Mrs. Lemke's eyes was when we were discussing other options for care. She wished they had known more about social services that might have helped Kurtis stay at home. This is their regret and they hope others don't make the same mistake.

MS Support Groups

Anyone dealing with MS on their life journey is welcome to attend, whether as one with MS, a family member, caregiver or friend.
MSQLP sponsored groups:

Oldemeyer Center: 986 Hilby Ave. Seaside
Second Saturday of each month
11:00 am to 1:00 pm

MS Caregiver Support Group

Seaside Second Saturday of each month
(Also at Oldemeyer Center, meets in separate room from MSers' support group)
from 11 am to 1 pm

Lorna Wheatley Memorial Support Group at Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital

Downing Resource Center

Third Friday of each Month, 11:00 am to 1:00

Santa Cruz Skilled Nursing Center

2990 Soquel Avenue, Santa Cruz

Second Thursday of each month

1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Times and locations are subject to change, please call the MSQLP Office at 333-9091 for current information.

National MS Society sponsored groups:

Monterey

Community Hospital (CHOMP)

Last Wednesday of each month

7:00 to 8:30 pm

Call Susan Jones at 659-1354

Santa Cruz

United Way, 1220 41st Ave. Capitola

3rd Saturday of each month

10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Call Ada Shannon at 440-1211

Workshop for the Newly Diagnosed

This workshop is scheduled for the third Saturday of each month. **Registration is required**, call 831-333-9091 for details.

Water Aerobics

Weekly classes at the Monterey Sports Center, Wednesdays from 11am to 12 Noon. Free to MSers and their caregivers. There is a trainer in the pool for group instruction. Get Wet!

Equipment Clinic

Equipment Clinic is **March 23**. Call Don at (408) 559-5800, ex 114 to set up an appointment or just drop by the MSQLP Office. Don Jones, ATS, from American Medical & Equipment Supply in San Jose is offering a **free Equipment Clinic at our office**. If your wheelchair repairs are minor, he may be able to fix it right on the spot. Don is qualified to assist both Medicare and Medi-Cal insurance holders. Next Clinic will be June 22, 2009.

Terri's Tinsel Town Talk

By Terri Nash

It's Oscar Time. Instead of the usual paws awarded for films I am reviewing these movies as if I were voting for the Oscars.

Slumdog Millionaire – I loved the way the questions on the game show, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* were used to explain the main character's life. Like a typical fairy tale it had great villains, heroes, a love interest, and a rags-to-riches theme. The photography is interesting – much was done with hand-held cameras. One walks away with wonder about the lengths some people have to go to survive.

Revolutionary Road – this one left me flat. Didn't hate it, didn't love it. It was an emotional roller coaster that left me wanting more from the actual story. I thought Kate Winslet was better in *The Reader*.

The Reader – It was slow in the beginning but it built as it went on to an emotional, sympathetic and thought-provoking ending.

The Wrestler – A very graphic movie with some hard-to-stomach scenes. I'm not a wrestling fan but went to see it because of the reviews about Mickey Rourke's comeback performance. Everybody is good in it and Mickey's performance is exceptional. So, I'm glad I saw it, but it might not be for everybody.

Milk – Loved this movie. Wonderful story about an event I remember. It hit close to home. Sean Penn is outstanding. The movie's message is more than about tolerance of gays, it is about equal rights for all. If this movie had come out before this last election I believe the outcome of Proposition 8 would have been the reverse

Defiance – It's the best movie I have seen about the Holocaust since *Schindler's List*. It's about a little-known story of two brothers helping a great number of Jewish people survive the Holocaust in Poland. I enjoy seeing and learning something I know nothing about and I had not known about this chapter in history.

Doubt – This was an interesting movie that leaves you wondering about the truth of the

accusation. As usual, Meryl Streep was wonderful.

Grand Torino – I was greatly disappointed that this film was ignored for Oscar consideration. Its theme of tolerance vs intolerance hits close to home here on the Central Coast of California. So many of us live in small communities in close proximity to people of different ethnicities, beliefs and outlooks. Items about intolerance are on the news every day. This was one of the times when it was a little frustrating to see a movie alone because I really wanted to talk about it when the movie ended. I don't want to give anything away but how Clint's character handled the inevitable is worthy of discussion.

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button – From the very beginning we know this can't be a true story, but given this, the "story" is quite intriguing. Think about the statement "if I knew then what I knew now" and flip it and you have the story of Benjamin Button. How many people are young with the wisdom of age? It was fascinating to see how they made it work. Brad Pitt went out of character and did a great job. I think it is his best acting achievement yet.

Last Chance Harvey – It's hard to rate this because it appeared at the same time as so many heavy hitters. Dustin Hoffman and Emma Thompson turn in fine performances and the story is believable. It was okay. It was entertaining. It was just up against so many other really great movies in a really great movie year.

Of the movies I reviewed, here is how I would award the Oscars:

Best Actor – Sean Penn in Milk

Best Actress – Kate Winslett in The Reader

Best Supporting Actor – Heath Ledger in Batman the Dark Knight

Best Supporting Actress – Faune A. Chambers in Benjamin Button

Best Adapted Screenplay – The Curious Case of Benjamin Button

Best Original Screenplay - Grand Torino

Best Photography – Slumdog Millionaire

Best Movie – Grand Torino

We have volunteer gardeners

Do you have a garden task that needs to be done?

We can handle small projects, not ongoing maintenance.

Call the office for details.

Calendar

February

- 20 Support Group, SVMH,
- 25 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 25 Support Group NMSS, CHOMP
- 21 Newly Diagnosed Wrkshp, Reservation Required

March

March is National MS Education and Awareness Month

- 4 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 8 **Board Meeting**
- 11 Water Aerobics, Monterey

Development

We would also like to thank our donors. Since our last newsletter we have received donations from:

Indira Aslan
Richard and Lynda Cornell
Patricia DePree
Myron Etienne, Jr.
GAP, Inc.
Ron and Margaret Gaasch
Jim and Sandra Gettins
Goodsearch
Bernice Hearn
Richard Hess
Robert and Linda Holub
Barbara (Roo) Hornady
Marilyn and Richard Howell
The Harden Foundation
Lynn Herbert, Optimum Balance
Edith and Leonard Hoskins

- 12 Support Group, SC Skilled
- 13 Support Group, Oldemeyer
- 13 Caregiver Support Group, Oldemeyer
- 18 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 20 Support Group, SVMH, Salinas
- 21 Newly Diagnosed Wrkshp, Reservation Required
- 23 Equipment Clinic
- 25 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 25 Support Group NMSS, CHOMP

April

- 1 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 4 **Support Group, Oldemeyer** **** (Bayonet Room)**
- 4 **Caregiver Support Group, Oldemeyer** **** (Seahorse Room)**
- 8 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 9 Support Group, SC Skilled Nursing Center
- 15 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 17 Support Group, SVMH, Salinas
- 18 Newly Diagnosed Workshop, Reservation Required

18 2009 MSQLP Educational Speakers Event:

Allen C. Bowling, MD

Complementary and Alternative Medicine, Hyatt, Monterey

Reservation Required

- 22 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 29 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 29 Support Group NMSS, CHOMP

May

- 6 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 9 Support Group, Oldemeyer
- 9 Caregiver Support Group, Oldemeyer
- 13 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 14 Support Group, SC Skilled
- 15 Support Group, SVMH, Salinas
- 16 Newly Diagnosed Wrkshp, Reservation Required
- 20 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 27 Water Aerobics, Monterey
- 27 Support Group NMSS, CHOMP

September

- 19 **Third Annual Walk-n-Roll**
Save the Date

Please Join us at an

Open Board of Directors Meeting

Help us plan a financial strategy that addresses the realities of our changing economy.

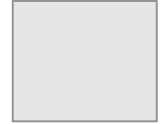
**March 8, 2009
2 to 4 pm
MSQLP Office**

**519B Hartnell St.
Monterey**

All ideas are welcome!

The Kaplan Family
In Memory of Lisabeth Kaplan
Janice Maroot
MS Foundation
Ted Nash
National MS Society
M & J Oliveria
Leona Palmer
William Phillips
Dr. David Spilker
Dr. Ronald and Mrs. Linda Stoney
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***Return Service
Requested***

MSQLP

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We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.msqlip.org

Other Housing Resources

Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL) – Provides information on a wide range of available services including, how to look for accessible, affordable and available housing and on how to remove architectural barriers. (831) 757-2968
Senior Network Services – Housing directory for Santa Cruz County (831) 462-6788

Alliance on Aging – Renter assistance/ home-share program (800) 510-2020
Housing Authority - Rental assistance/affordable housing. Monterey (831) 775-5000
Santa Cruz & San Benito- 831-454-9455

Housing Advocacy Council – Helps Monterey County residents to obtain and maintain affordable housing and prevent homelessness. Programs benefit families and individuals who are low and very low income. (831) 424-9186 Monterey

After Words

By Donna Krasnow

If there is anything we have learned in the research of this issue it is the importance of planning ahead. This is especially true if you qualify for housing assistance. There is so little available right now, especially if you need accessible housing. Talk with your family and investigate options. What changes can you make so you can successfully live at home? What additional support do you need? Where might you find this support? Do you have solutions that might help others? Let us know so we can spread the word.