

Dec/Jan 11/12

The bi-monthly newsletter from the MS Society of Auckland & the North Shore Inc

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# around & about



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**BIKE MS IS HERE –  
JOIN IN THE ACTION AND  
RIDE OVER THE HARBOUR BRIDGE**

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## EDITORIAL

As I write this the air is bristling with the excitement of this weekend's **Telstra Clear Challenge**. The sheer volume of work and energy put into the event by the promoters, Callum and Graeme and their team, and by the Society's **BIKE MS** team led by Neil Woodhams has been amazing. This is the first time an event of this nature has been attempted and clearly it is the biggest fundraising event that the Society has been involved with! If you have been involved in any way then a heartfelt thank you from me! Also if you have donated, supported, volunteered or sponsored the event, similarly a big thank you from me.



**Amanda Billing** has really made a significant effort to support the Society in all sorts of ways in the last few months, and we salute her efforts particularly during a busy time for her – you will see that she is the ‘face’ of our last direct mail campaign of the year, and has also put together a team for the cycle event. Thanks Amanda!

Our recent events – **Spring Lunch** at the botanical gardens and the two **Nutrition Seminars** run by Sandra Perry were all very well attended and we hope to continue with both of these initiatives in 2012.

I was personally delighted to receive such a good response to the recent **Members Survey** (see page 14). After a year of change and some new working practices being introduced, it was heartening to see that this did not have a disruptive impact on the vast majority of our membership.

*Finally on behalf of the staff team and our Committee, I'd like to wish you all a very peaceful Christmas and a joyful New Year.*

Cheers  
Gary



## CHRISTMAS CLOSING

As usual we will be taking a break over the Christmas period and the office will be **closed from Midday on Friday 23rd December and re-opening again on Wednesday 4th January 2012.**

No Field Workers will be available during this time.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP

**As you all know, MS Auckland Region is constantly looking for new avenues to obtain funding so we may continue to improve upon our services.**

We are looking to align ourselves with a product or a service, where we might be afforded a small percentage of the sale or service cost that would then go to MS Auckland Region. An example may be a food product where 10c of the cost is donated to the Society, or a service, say a tyre change, where \$5 of the cost is donated to the Society. In return we would acknowledge our partnership at all events, in our communications, website, and facebook page. Our gratitude for this support would be well publicised.

This is where you come in. Do you know of somebody who may be interested in supporting the MS Auckland Region in this way? If so, we would love to hear from you. It would be fantastic if we could find a business to team up with.

Please call Gary or Janine on **(09) 845 5921** if you think you may be able to help. Any suggestions will be gratefully received thanks.

## NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

### – LOUISE REED



I am a person with MS. I was diagnosed on 1 October 2004 after an optic neuritis episode. Unlike most people diagnosed with MS, my diagnosis came about within 2 weeks of my first episode. I have had one other episode and am now on copaxone. I have been relapse free for 3 years now.

I am a family lawyer at Family Law Results in Papakura & Auckland City and a tutor at Kings College in the girls' boarding house. I am also a flute player and have played in musical amateur theatre (although recently it has only been school productions at Kings!). I am a member of the Zonta Club of Auckland. Zonta is an international organisation which seeks to advocate and promote the status of women worldwide.

I am looking forward to being part of the committee and helping out where I can. It will be good to work with people who are aware of the issues concerning people with MS.

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## BIKE FOR MS IT'S SO CLOSE

The Telstra Clear challenge on the 11th of December is only days away now and excitement is mounting, the number of fundraisers is increasing and the total amount of money raised for the Society is growing steadily. At the time of going to print we have over 3,000 cyclists registered, more than 28% of them actively fundraising and a stunning total of over \$65,000 raised so far!

In this issue, the last before the big day, we bring you a round up of the latest events and inspirational characters involved in this exciting event.

### Peddlin' President - Training Progress Report

I thought that it was about time I gave you a progress report on my preparation for the Telstra Clear Challenge. With the Rugby World Cup now behind us I've stepped up my training in earnest as I'm determined to get up and over that bridge and put in a decent show for my team.

You all know that supporting people with MS is a long-held passion of mine. There is no escaping the fact that Multiple Sclerosis is part of my family's life. I feel so strongly that this event will help the Society help those that need the support and services that the Society has provided since 1964. It is a way of providing funding to much needed services through our efforts as opposed to simply holding out our hands.

I've told you previously that it is almost 50 years since I have seriously ridden a bike. And now I have stepped up my training and I am regularly clocking up decent distances. I have to be honest and tell you that there are a few aching muscles, but the cause is worth a little pain.

I've been delighted to be joined on the ride by Chris Lynch, who is the Principle of Lynch Phibbs, the Society's Auditor. Not only does this firm give the Society a pro bono audit each year but Chris has just committed his time, effort and energy into standing (well riding!) alongside me. That means a lot to me!

I've been joined by a family friend Peter Churchouse, who at the time of writing was at the top of the fundraising table having raised a staggering \$5,600 personally! I'm left speechless at the effort that so many people are putting



Neil Woodhams

into their fundraising efforts on behalf of the society and people with MS.

And so now with only a few days before we creak into action, I would ask you to think about what you could do to stand alongside me for this wonderful event. It's not too late to come and have a day out with me, raise some money for your effort and make my effort all the more worthwhile!

Thank you for supporting me!

**Neil Woodhams – President, MS Auckland Region**

### Facts and figures

- So far over 3,000 cyclists have registered to ride up and over the harbour bridge in this inaugural Telstra Clear Challenge!
- This event is the long-held dream of one of our members **Callum McNair** who, together with his business partner **Graeme Seatter**, have established the event in Auckland and nominated your society as the beneficiary.
- To date over **\$65,000** has been raised for the official charity BIKE MS which is run by the MS Auckland Region Trust.
- **Four of our Committee members** have established Teams and fundraising campaigns – Neil Woodhams, David Compton, Fran Watts and Peter Woods.
- Bike MS Cyclists are coming from as far afield as the **MS Chicago Chapter** to 'ride the bridge'!!
- **Shortland Street, led by Amanda Billing** who plays Dr Sarah Potts, have registered a team of fifteen to ride the bridge and are fundraising for our cause.
- There are an **amazing array of sponsors** who have willingly given their time, energy, money and other gifts to promote the event and maximise its potential. Some of them are listed below: More details will follow in our first edition of the new year.



Amanda Billing



**Continued on page 4**

# FUNDRAISING AND VOLUNTEER NEWS

## My Champion

The Telstra Clear Challenge is only days away now and it is getting increasingly exciting. I would love to have ridden my bike up and over the Harbour Bridge and up the Busway – such a unique thing to be able to do and for a cause so dear to my heart, but I was advised not to take that chance. And so I came up with the next best thing – I asked my son Matt to be my 'champion' and ride for me. He didn't hesitate and said 'YES' immediately. I'm so proud that he would take my place so willingly and do something so meaningful for his Mum.



Fran and Matt Watts

Actually I've been really honoured and humbled by all of my team. I'll be there on the day cheering Matt and all of my friends as they set out on this historic event. It's going to be a great day and I'm really looking forward to it.

If you haven't already chipped in with a donation then please think about doing so – every little bit helps and I'm grateful for all donations no matter what size. Being involved is what counts. Thank you so much for your support!

*Fran Watts, Committee Member, MS Auckland Region*

## Roger Jones wins the 1st Fundraising prize draw!

Roger Jones was surprised to receive a call to tell him that he had just won a brand new iPad. Roger, a senior manager with Auckland Transport, was entered into the draw as a result of his setting up a Fundraising Page on the [www.bikems.org.nz](http://www.bikems.org.nz) website, and then asking friends and family to sponsor him. Each \$25 he raised gave him one entry into the draw. But this piece of good news wasn't the end of it – he then discovered that actress Amanda Billings (Dr Sarah Potts on Shortland Street) was going to be handing over the prize to him. Roger is a dedicated cyclist and has committed to riding the full 110km ride. Go Roger! And thank you for your fundraising efforts for such a good cause.



Amanda Billing with prize winner Roger Jones

Roger has kindly donated the prize to go to someone in the MS Community.

## Elle Ullum & Chad Smith fly in from the USA

Elle, Director, Bike MS & Special Events, Illinois MS Society and Chad, Chairman of the Board of the Greater Illinois Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, will be riding over the Harbour Bridge alongside the many thousands of other Kiwi riders.

Elle, who hails from Chicago, is a keen cyclist herself and this will be her first visit to New Zealand. Elle has worked alongside Phil Keoghan (of The Amazing Race) over the last five years to highlight the BIKE MS events across the U.S.



Ken Dickson (Telstra Clear), Chad Smith, Neil Woodhams, Elle Ullum.

## Mission Possible Club

Raise at least \$1 for each of the 700 people living with MS in the Greater Auckland area and you'll achieve the highest current level of recognition within MS Auckland Region's family of events – "A Leader In The Fight Against MS!"

**Donations** – If you can't ride but want to support the event here's the two most popular ways:

To Support someone that you know who is riding go to [www.bikems.org.nz](http://www.bikems.org.nz), search for their name and make a donation online directly to them.

Make a donation directly to MS Auckland Region, without getting involved in the event, go to [www.bikems.org.nz](http://www.bikems.org.nz), click on Direct Donation on the Menu Bar at the top of the page and make an online donation that way.



## COLLECTORS NEEDED

We urgently need volunteer collectors to help at Smales Farm and Kumeu Showgrounds for the Telstra Clear Challenge, on Sunday 11th December 2011 to help raise money for people with MS.

Please contact Shelley on (09) 845 5921 or email [shelley@msakl.org.nz](mailto:shelley@msakl.org.nz) if you can help.

# FIELD WORKERS UPDATE

## FROM DIANE - NORTH SHORE

Hasn't this year flown by? We've recovered from the Rugby World Cup, the Elections and now Christmas and the New Year are very close.

By the end of the year people are tired, stressed and just hanging out for a holiday. This applies particularly to PwMS who are also coping with the warmer weather and the fatigue and discomfort that often brings.

So it is time to check out your information on dealing with stress and beating the heat. Pace yourself, make it simple, share tasks and present buying and plan your activities for earlier in the morning or the evening when it is cooler. Contact your Field Worker if you would like more information on managing stress and the heat.

I have tried to catch up with everyone at some stage this year, but if you haven't heard from me please give me a ring on **(09) 845 5921** Wednesday to Friday as I'd love to hear from you.

I will be on annual leave for 2 weeks from the 7th December and return to work on the 20th December. The other Field Workers are available for contact in my absence.

I hope that you have a wonderful Christmas and New Year with family and friends and start 2012 feeling refreshed.



## FROM DIANNE - SOUTH AUCKLAND

I can't believe that this year is coming to a close. It seems to have flown! I guess that as one year ends and the other commences it is a time for reflection of the year gone and a time to look forward.

With that in mind, I am looking at forming a **new Water Therapy Group in the East**, possibly at the Lloyd Elsmore Pools (Pakuranga) some time in the New Year. Please think about this over the holiday period and let me know of your interest.

This can be a time to have some fun while exercising in the water. We have a volunteer and a physiotherapist all lined up and rearing to go! But we need numbers of course, to make this work. So please contact me and let me know if you're interested on **(09) 845 5921**

I have also had several couples ask me about other young couples with children to connect with. This got me to thinking about forming a group for young **Mums and Dads with children** perhaps to meet on a regular basis so that you can support each other. Even at the park! Once again, I need to know if there is interest out there so please contact me and we can go from there.

I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a safe and well New Year. I want to thank you all for allowing me to be part of your lives and to thank you for welcoming me into your homes.



## FROM GEORGA - WEST AUCKLAND

I just want to remind everyone about the wonderful programme called **Attitude** that graces our TV screens each Sunday.

**Attitude** is on TV 1 from 8.30am-9am and is a local documentary series about people living with disabilities. I find it informative, inspiring, uplifting and at times very moving. It features people living with a variety of challenges, but they are getting on and doing the best that they can with their abilities.

Attitude has a website which is [www.attitudepictures.com](http://www.attitudepictures.com). As it is on early in the morning recording it is great option, and if you've missed an episode you can view it at TVNZ ondemand, [www.tvnz.co.nz/attitude](http://www.tvnz.co.nz/attitude). So do check it out.



## FROM GLEN - CENTRAL AUCKLAND

Information for anyone considering applying for financial assistance to purchase a vehicle, scooter, or to do vehicle modifications for mobility transport can be found at [www.disabilityfunding.co.nz/vehicle-and-driving](http://www.disabilityfunding.co.nz/vehicle-and-driving) and also [grantsonline@dia.govt.nz](mailto:grantsonline@dia.govt.nz). A person with a disability who passes the criteria can apply to Ministry of Health or otherwise the Lottery Grants funding... see page 10 for more information.

At present I am still trying to personally contact some of my clients who I have not met yet, so maybe that will happen in 2012 when everything slows down after the holiday season? I will be on leave until mid January.

I want to wish you all a joyful Christmas time with cool breezes!!



## SPRING LUNCH

**Spring!** A lovely time, full of promise and rebirth.

So we at the MS Society decided to celebrate this and on the 29th October we had a "Spring Lunch" and what better place to celebrate this than at the Tropical Courtyard at the Botanic Gardens. What a beautiful setting! The courtyard was ablaze with colour with hanging planters full of spring flowers and tropical plants. Of course, this all added to the atmosphere and gaiety of the occasion! And the weather was lovely. A real spring day!

Approximately 63 members and their families and friends arrived to re-acquaint themselves with old friends and to meet new ones. In fact more people arrived than we expected!

It was great to see people socialising with each other and getting to know our Committee Chairman and other members. We ran two raffles during lunch with the first prize a signed copy of Graeme Sinclair's new book "*Life on Wheels*" and a second prize of the Kiwi Quiz game. We raised approximately \$127.00 with the raffles. Thanks to all who purchased a ticket.

Thanks to the caterers who supplied the lovely food. Especially the pudding! The menu catered for most peoples tastes and there was plenty of it! And thanks to the staff who looked after us so well too.

A good day was had by all. Let's do it again sometime.



## WAITAKERE AND NORTH SHORE CAR PARKING BARRIERS

As you may know, both North Shore and Waitakere Hospitals are charging for parking. The new parking system means that the barrier arms and the ticket machines are no longer staffed. Concerns have been raised that some people with impairments have been disabled by the unstaffed barrier arms and the DHB has looked at ways to make sure that access to the hospital is as inclusive as the new system allows.

There is a call button on the barrier arm. When pressed goes through to the Traffic Office who can offer support. If you are Deaf or have a hearing impairment, please state you are Deaf and where you are and someone will come to your vehicle to assist you. If you feel concerned that you may not be able to operate the barrier arm by pushing the button, please phone Traffic Services on **(09) 442 7999**. If you tell them when you are coming to either hospital, a member of Traffic Services will open the barrier arm for you when you arrive.

### Key points

- Parking or Security staff (after hours) at North Shore or Waitakere Hospital are available to assist any people with disabilities who are unable to operate the barrier arm ticket machine or who are not accompanied by someone who can support them.
- People with a disability, who are concerned they may not be able to operate the barrier arm, can phone ahead for parking assistance **(09) 442 7999** and they will be met at the barrier arm and assisted to obtain a ticket. They are also advised of assistance available to assist them to use the pay machine prior to exiting the site.

*Source: Samantha Dalwood, Disability Strategy Coordinator, Waitemata District Health Board*

## THE RIGHT VOLUNTEER FOR YOU

**Do you need a dog walker, someone to do errands, or just to chat with in quiet times?**

We have Volunteers that would like to come and help out in any of those areas!

Please contact your fieldworker or Shelley at the office on **(09) 845 5921** and she will arrange for a volunteer to come out to you.

## FROM THE MS NURSING TEAM

### Introducing Lynette

There is change a-foot in the MS Nursing Office at Auckland City Hospital (ACH). Lynette Newby has been appointed into the previously unfilled part time MS Nurse position.

We will be job sharing the role, working 5 days each per fortnight. Lynette has a huge amount of nursing experience mainly in intensive care. Most recently she has been working as the ACH critical care research nurse.

Lynette has travelled extensively and has worked in Australia, the US, Middle East and Europe. She is spending a month training with me, then in December a full time service will resume and there will be someone in the office for 5 days a week Monday to Friday 8am-4pm.

### Christmas Hours

The **MS Nursing Office will be closed from Friday the 23rd Dec until Tuesday the 3rd of Jan** for the Christmas break. If you are experiencing worrying symptoms or have urgent concerns about your MS over this time, please contact your GP who can speak directly to the on-call neurologist for advice.

### New eMail Address

To help streamline the service and the advice we provide a new email address has been created. This email address [msnurse@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:msnurse@adhb.govt.nz) will be checked and emails responded to on a daily basis by Lynette or myself depending on who is working on a given day. My old email address will still work but there may be a delayed response.

### New Medications

As you may be aware two new MS medications; Gilenya and Fampridine have been recently approved for use in NZ by Medsafe.



Lynette and Fiona

**Gilenya (Fingolimod)** is a daily oral tablet used for relapsing remitting MS and is manufactured by Novartis. Doctors are now able to prescribe Fingolimod in NZ however at this stage we are not aware if Novartis has approached PHARMAC about subsidising this daily oral treatment. The cost for a months supply at this stage is around \$3500 which is beyond the financial reach of many. The issue of PHARMAC funding is one I urge you to take up with your local MP. Results from the trials found that Gilenya reduced relapse rates by between 54-60%, and may also reduce disability progression.

Gilenya works in your body by trapping T cells, an immune cell thought to be responsible for much of the damage caused in relapsing remitting MS, from the bloodstream into your lymph nodes. This prevents the T-cells from getting into the central nervous system (your brain and spine) and causing damage to the myelin sheath.

**Famridine (Famprya)** is a potassium channel blocker that has shown to have a modest effect on walking in relapsing remitting, secondary progressive and primary progressive MS. In recent clinical trials one third to half of people who tried this medication noted a 25% improvement in their walking speed. This was measured objectively by a timed 25 foot walk pre treatment then 2 weeks after treatment was started. If the drug works for you it will be apparent within 2 weeks.

This is a symptomatic treatment NOT a disease modifying drug and does not reduce relapse rate or alter the course of MS. Because of this it is unlikely to be subsidised by PHARMAC. The cost of this drug each month is estimated to be around \$600-700. If you are interested in trying this medication please contact us. We anticipate a clinic, to assess your suitability for Fampridine and time your walking with a follow-up appointment a fortnight later, will be starting at ACH in January/February 2012.

For more detailed information regarding side effects which I've not had room to mention, method of action and clinical trial results for these medications go to [www.mssociety.co.uk](http://www.mssociety.co.uk) or [www.mstrust.co.uk](http://www.mstrust.co.uk) or contact us to discuss further.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and New Year.

**Fiona and Lynette – MS Nurses Auckland City Hospital**

You can contact Fiona and Lynette at Auckland Hospital on (09) 307 4949 extension 25885 or email [msnurse@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:msnurse@adhb.govt.nz)

## EASYRIDERS

**Older people and those with mobility needs can choose from a range of friendly vehicles... with more to come!**

Anyone with mobility issues (or those in caring situations) knows there are times when a standard car just doesn't cut it. When the going gets tough, a disability and mobility friendly vehicle is what you need. The makers of these vehicles, usually vans or minivans, have done all the thinking for you. The cars are low to the ground, yet have extraordinary roof height to accommodate someone sitting in their wheelchair. They can come with automatic closing doors and wheelchair hoists, plus other features to make moving about so much easier.

**Pride and joy** – Lloyd and Marie Anderson, who live in Gore, began looking around three years ago for their first mobility vehicle after Marie began to use a wheelchair every day. Their Internet search started in Japan where all the big car companies must by law make mobility vehicles for people with disabilities. The couple were told to get in touch with Rod Milner, from Auckland's **Rod Milner Motors**. Based in Greenlane, the car dealer has built up a major side business importing disability enabled cars from Japan since the mid 1990s. The Andersons have bought two vehicles from Rod in the last few years, both Toyotas: first, a Toyota Voxy people mover and, the latest, a 2006 Toyota Alphard minivan which Marie just loves.

Marie has a powered wheelchair (her pride and joy) and simply drives it into the back of the van, buckles herself in, and away she and Lloyd go. The Andersons take regular trips to Te Anau, and are planning jaunts further afield. *"It's got 12,000 k's on it and will take us up and down New Zealand: anywhere we want to go. It's allowed me to go out and have a life. Everybody always says it's so easy to drive."* she says. The rear of the vehicle lowers itself for transfers; the back ramp drops down to ground level and folds out so Marie can easily manoeuvre herself in and out. *"The Alphard is bigger and more upmarket than the Voxy."* she says. It is ideal for her motorised wheelchair which weighs 162 kilos "with my weight on top of that", says Marie.

**Personal experience** – Rod Milner got into the mobility car business after his wife died of cancer. *"It came out of a need"* he says. When he tried to find a vehicle to transport his wife to appointments, he couldn't find what he wanted. *"At that stage we had no type of suitable vehicle to move her around. She was totally incapacitated, she could not go anywhere."* Since then, he says, *"it's been our mission to be New Zealand's biggest supplier of vehicles for the disabled."*

**Affordability** – When couples like the Andersons first come to him, Rod assesses their needs, then recommends options. After experimenting with a few mobility models over the years, he now stocks mainly Toyotas (FunCargo, Porte, Noah, Estima) and Nissans (serena, Caravan, Cube) plus Mercedes-Benz vans. Models go up to 2008 but most are of 2003 or 2004 vintage. Rod is well aware of the financial pressures on households with health and disability needs, his prices start from \$10,000 and go up to \$40,000 plus.

**Bells and whistles** – A Toyota FunCargo station wagon is ideal for a husband and wife team, says Rod, allowing them individual freedom. Rod recently helped a customer who has cerebral palsy to modify a Toyota FunCargo, installing a ramp and other features. *"He needed to be able to independently transfer in and out of the vehicle, so we set up automatic door closing, ramp closing, and self-locking for safety belts. Everything was totally automated."*

*"Finding the right vehicle can be life-changing for people with mobility needs"* he says. A woman who purchased a Mercedes-Benz van told Rod it allowed her to look out of the window while travelling for the first time in many years. In the van she had previously used, her head was permanently bent forward.

**Safer transport** – Peter and Nola Lane recently collected their 2003 Toyota Voxy from Rod Milner Motors and have high hopes of what their new wheels will allow them to do. Until now they have used Peter's business car, a Hyundai Sonata sedan, but Nola, who has Motor Neurone disease, is now in a power wheelchair, so they needed a dedicated mobility vehicle. As Peter puts it: *"It was a de-risking thing. Nola's transfers from the house to the car were getting unreliable and dangerous. The end result was that I was picking her up off the pavement."*

The Voxy has a power ramp and drop suspension. Before their first outing, it took half an hour to hook the webbing system of safety belts onto the wheelchair, but Peter says he will find this easier with frequent use. *"The Toyota Voxy was built for the top end of the Japanese market, so these modified wagons have the mod cons, from a DVD player to air conditioning"* says Peter, a communications systems consultant.



**Easy conversion** – Other brands which work well as disability vehicles are the larger Mercedes-Benz Vito, Chrysler's Grand Voyager, and the Mazda Demo Disability. The Toyota Previa is another popular vehicle. It is bigger and has sliding rear doors as an extra feature. The Chrysler Grand Voyager minivan is a luxurious option recommended by the mobility vehicle modifiers.

Jim Hope, sales consultant at **Precision Automobiles** on the North shore, says while Toyota Previas work well, especially if the passenger seat can be converted for wheelchair passengers, the Grand Voyager is a comfortable alternative. It is low to the ground, has automatic closing doors, and generous roof space. A tall person will still have six inches of height above them while driving. The Grand Voyager is easily converted from minivan into a van because all seats fold into the floor. The bad news is that second hand Grand Voyagers are scarce, because owners don't want to let go of them, and a new vehicle costs \$79,990. A three year old model will still be around \$60,000, says Jim.

**Top notch design** – Finally, you cannot ignore good German engineering when it comes to a well-built mobility van. Rod Milner has several Mercedes-Benz Vito vans in his range. Vehicle compliance engineer John Friedel says the European made Mercedes has a different chassis from Japanese vehicles. It is built lower, making it very strong. Keeping the centre of gravity low it's less likely to tip and cheaper to put hoists into European vehicles than Japanese models, he says.

Despite his loyalty towards Mercedes-Benz, John does recommend the Toyota FunCargo as good for a single person with one wheelchair. *"It is excellent, very well designed, and has a lowering suspension which comes down to bi-fold ramps. Toyota has put so much thought into it; it's top notch,"* he adds. John also recommends the Toyota Porte Disability. The wife of an elderly relation who bought one of the vehicles especially enjoyed the swivel electric passenger seat, which became a wheelchair that her husband could push during outings.

**New features and trends** – **Toyota NZ's** general manager, Spencer Morris, says his company has specialised in mobility vehicles since 2008. The GM, whose mother was a wheelchair user from the age of 40, has a personal passion for disability transport. *"We don't sell huge numbers of these vehicles, but we want to cater for the growing market,"* he says. *"There are more people with disability needs because of the ageing population, and life expectancy is increasing."* The biggest part of the market is self-drive, says Spencer. Toyota's Signature Class, its used vehicle range which is sold with a three year warranty, sells a number of mobility vehicles at prices ranging from \$20,000 to \$60,000.

The mobility vehicles, can come with wheelchair lifts, ramps, a driver mobility seat, an integrated electric wheelchair, or a mobility chair. One of the most popular modifications is to adapt the passenger chair so it swivels outwards. Toyota's most popular disability vehicles are the Porte 1.3 litre Disability 5 door hatch, the Disability Estima 2.4 litre 5 door wagon, and the Disability Alphard 2.4 litre 5 door wagon. For those (perhaps self-drivers) who are fearful of driving around town in a van-sized vehicle, Spencer says the most compact Toyota, apart from the FunCargo, is the Ractis, a 1.5 litre 5 door hatch, based on the Toyota Yaris. It can be equipped with a wheelchair ramp in the back.

More innovations for disabled passengers and drivers are on the horizon, while currently a Toyota Porte vehicle allows the driver's seat to glide across to the passenger side of the vehicle, so the driver can exit from that side.

**By Gill South**

## MOBILITY - CHOOSING A VEHICLE

Choosing your new vehicle should be done with great care. *"The biggest pitfall is buying a car without first trying out any disability equipment in the vehicle. That's putting the cart before the horse,"* says Nicki Sumicz, owner of vehicle modifier **Mobility for Independence**. She suggests creating a wish list or checklist of desired features before you go out to buy.

- Who will be driving the car?
- Will the person in the wheelchair be in the passenger seat or will they want to sit in the back of the van?
- How many other passenger seats will you need?
- What equipment would you carry in the vehicle?
- If you are going on holiday, will you need extra equipment?
- If you are going to be the driver, do you want to do it from a wheelchair?
- Do you want to put the wheelchair in manually, or will you need a hoist to lift the chair in?
- You should also carefully assess warranties on the installed equipment.
- Are English language instruction manuals provided with the vehicle?
- And remember, you want a vehicle with low door sills, wide doors, and an option for a lift or portable ramp.
- If using a wheelchair, a big consideration is that any vehicle you like should have sliding side doors, says Nicki. *"If it opens outwards like an ordinary car door, it will be very difficult for people to get in and out."*

## MOBILITY - FUNDING OPTIONS

According to the Ministry of Health, where access to alternative transport is not a viable option, the person with a disability may be able to receive a once only funding contribution of up to \$12,165 including GST toward the purchase of a special vehicle (not a standard vehicle). Funding will be considered if it will help the person get to and from their full-time employment, travel to and from tertiary and vocational training, or undertake their role as the main carer of dependent children.

Funding for vehicle modifications is considered separately from the purchase of a suitable vehicle, up to a maximum of \$12,165 including GST. Funding for vehicle modifications is considered if it will help the person get to and from full-time employment, travel to and from tertiary or vocational training, or to undertake their role as the main carer of dependent children. Funding toward modifications is also available for children as passengers to meet their 'whole of life' needs.

In both the case of a vehicle purchase and modification, the person must either be the intended driver of the vehicle, or they can be the passenger who needs the modifications in order to get to work or study. The person must be unable to drive because of their disability, but have someone who is always available to drive them.

In the case of vehicle modifications, if the person's needs change, they may apply for further modification funding after six years, on a case by case basis.

Learn more about how funding for vehicle purchases and modifications works in New Zealand by visiting [www.disabilityfunding.co.nz/vehicle-and-driving](http://www.disabilityfunding.co.nz/vehicle-and-driving), or seek advice from your GP or needs assessor.

### Lottery Grants

Those not eligible for vehicle purchase or modifications funding through the Ministry of Health can look into Lottery Grants funding. To inquire, email [grantsonline@dia.govt.nz](mailto:grantsonline@dia.govt.nz) or phone **0800 824 824**.

Grants of \$12,000 plus GST are available for people with a disability to buy a car. If a van is necessary, a grant amount up to \$15,000 plus GST applies.

Grants of \$10,000 plus GST can be added if the vehicle needs a hoist for a wheelchair. Half of those who apply for these grants are successful.

### ACC

For advice about vehicle modifications and transport funding, ACC claimants should talk to their case manager about an assessment (with input from an occupational therapist). Funding may be considered if ACC deems that a vehicle will assist with the claimant's rehabilitation. The amount of funding approved would depend on the person's assessed needs and situation.

## LOTTO GRANT FREEDOM

Louise from Mt Eden was thrilled to receive a Lotto Grant to enable her to purchase a mobility vehicle, a Toyota Voxy. Rod Milner was amazing she says, he brought different options to her home for her to choose from. He was also very knowledgeable about all the needs and requirements of people with disabilities. She has enjoyed getting out and about again, as before she was becoming quite socially isolated due to the cost of taxis to transport her to visit family, get to appointments or just to do personal shopping. Right now she is excitedly planning overnight trips as the vehicle has space for her hoist and other equipment. She also wishes to get back into some language tuition which she used to do when she was mobile.



## LOTTO GRANT SUCCESS

Jenny recently applied for Lotto Grants funding to help her purchase a mobility vehicle to help her get around.

With the help of a supporting letter provided by her MS Fieldworker Jenny was lucky enough to receive a Lotto Grant towards buying a Mercedes Benz V230.

The new vehicle enables her to get out and about with her husband, to visit the grandchildren in Muriwai, her sister over the North Shore and sometimes even up north to visit friends.



## **NORTH SHORE YMCA** STAFF HELP MARTI ATTAIN NEW GOALS

What an Incredible moment it was when my daughter Lauren high-fived me on Milford Beach at the end of the 'Shore to Shore 5km Fun Run' in March 2011! I really enjoyed having her there by my side, and seeing the absolute pride she held for her mum in that moment. She had witnessed the improvement in my fitness and strength in just two months since I'd joined North Shore YMCA, so she had asked me to accompany her. Lauren had completed this run with her dad in the previous year but now it was my turn. For some people, a 5km fun run might not seem like a big deal but it is a huge achievement when you have MS.

When you are a mum, you want to be as whole and healthy as you can be, and remain strong for your family. MS revealed itself, after my children were born, which is not what I would ever have dreamed up in my plans for raising a family. In August 1998, I was diagnosed after a potentially devastating episode (or so it seemed at the time). My whole left side, from my left cheek all the way down to the toes in my left foot, were partially paralyzed; it was a huge shock to me and all of my family. It is the strength that you draw from your character, which helps you to survive almost anything life throws at you. The support and love of my family has also been vital in helping to get through the early year after diagnosis.

Flash forward to a hot sunny day in January of this year. My husband and I happened by North Shore YMCA and noticed that the renovations were nearly complete, so we thought we'd go in to have a look. We were pleasantly surprised at what we found. Not only was there a relaxed down-to-earth atmosphere as soon as you entered the front doors ( amongst all the fantastic renovations and improvements) but since joining, I have come to know the wonderful team of people who are employed there, from the ladies running the crèche to the staff on reception. Everyone seems very respectful and caring towards each other and also to all of the YMCA members.

The engaging and friendly Strini assigned Dan to me as my new trainer, a very intelligent, personable and positive young man. His answers to my questions have consistently been very informative and helpful. Dan really listens to his clients and he takes the time to patiently guide you through a practical demonstration of your new programme of exercises, before you attempt it yourself. Dan once said to me that "Knowledge is power" and with my MS in mind, his approach

was to start with what we knew I was capable of and progress the movements over time.

As I became stronger and my balance improved my confidence greatly increased. This confidence welcomed some new challenges and paved the way for further improvements, as well as setting the goal of completing the 5km fun run. Dan also collaborates with David Cooper, the on-site physiotherapist. David gives his input and approval to Dan for each of new programmes, before Dan shows it to me.

David has always encouraged and supported me with his very positive attitude. In the first 8-12 weeks of my programme exercises, I had a regular weekly physiotherapy treatment appointment with him. There were days that I couldn't face going into the gym until after I had treatment from David, due to the pain I was experiencing in my quadriceps muscles in my left leg. He gave me the confidence to continue and endure at the YMCA in those first few weeks. When necessary, he has also come up to the gym with me, to observe and ensure that I am executing certain exercises correctly.

It has been a welcome learning curve for me as a new member at YMCA but I really enjoy coming here. There is quite a social buzzing atmosphere with talking and occasional laughter, no doubt something to do with releasing those natural endorphins through exercise. I know there are some people who say the gym is boring; I disagree as I'd rather be at this gym than be stuck at home giving in to the fatigue of Remitting/Relapsing MS and the long term effects of inaction. I do not deny MS can be unpredictable, but at least I can take control of my overall health, whilst I am in a good remission phase.

I do not see any reason why any person, in remission phase or otherwise of MS, should exclude themselves from enjoying the countless benefits of being a member of the gym at the YMCA.

**By Marti O'Connell, Member, North Shore**



*Marti O'Connell*

## CAMPERVAN HOLIDAY

We have recently returned from a five week campervan trip covering mainly Scotland but also England and Wales. I have MS and my wife Katrina and I thought our experiences may be of some benefit to others contemplating similar adventures.

Obviously sound preparation is a must for any activity which involves special needs. Katrina spent considerable time on the internet seeking the information we required for our trip and with the help of many people did a splendid job of the arrangements. She checked airlines for suitable flights and best prices, arranging for us to be met with a wheelchair at each stopover. She contacted campervan companies for a campervan with a garage in the rear for a mobility scooter, a company that would hire us a mobility scooter we could take on tour with us (most will only hire for use in their local area), whether campsites had disability facilities etc. [www.dgpharmacy.co.uk/hire](http://www.dgpharmacy.co.uk/hire)

She found the MS UK web site ([www.mssociety.org.uk](http://www.mssociety.org.uk)) and e-mailed the contact person for the MS branch closest to our point of arrival. This was how we first met Tim. Katrina told him of our plans and asked for his help in finding a mobility scooter to hire, which he did. We were very fortunate in that not only did we get to meet this delightful chap in person but also had the privilege of dining with him, his very talented wife Gill, his delightful mother Jean and their very good friends Mike and Joan. An evening we will remember with a great deal of fondness.

Katrina plotted our proposed course (not a timetable) taking in the places and people we wished to visit and marked them on the map we got from the AA ([www.aa.co.nz](http://www.aa.co.nz)) along with some campsites near those destinations. Obviously it is important for those of us unfamiliar with the UK to have a detailed map and the one we took was great.

The camper, which was 7 metres long, was brought to us at Manchester airport which was the closest airport to where we needed to pick up the mobility scooter. We were unable to find a camper with automatic transmission (I can no longer drive manuals) so Katrina had to resurrect her manual driving skills which she did with great enthusiasm. She delighted in learning and using the code of the truckies (or lorry drivers as I believe they're called over there) which consists of light flashing and other signals to assist in safe overtaking and I must admit she did a splendid job. We averaged 1000km per week and it seemed to us that drivers there were much more mature and courteous than at home. I was the highly unskilled navigator and even less skilled cameraman.

We got lost a few times but that only presented more filming opportunities.

We traveled to Worcester to get the mobility scooter but ended up having it delivered to us at our campsite as their business site, in true English fashion, did not have parking for anything other than a small van and certainly not a 7 metre campervan. Parking is a real problem in the cities for large vehicles.

The delivery chap was very good with helping us to choose between the two mobility scooters he brought to us. We liked the larger, more robust looking one (I weigh around 98kg) but found that it was too big for us to get in the van easily. We had to hire a ramp to go with the scooter as the van's garage was designed for a motorbike or two-wheeled scooter and came with a ramp suitable only for two wheeled vehicles. The smaller scooter turned out to be the best choice because when we 'walked' around streets in villages many of the footpaths were very narrow and the bigger scooter would have had to be driven on the road. Also many of the shop doors in villages are narrow and would not have accommodated a larger scooter but fortunately limited walking is still an option for me.

One down side to using our campervan for recharging the scooter, was that the voltage change in the camper wiring meant that we never got the scooter fully recharged (the campsite operator may allow the scooter to be charged overnight in the locked laundry). This caused one outing to be cut short and Katrina had to push me in the scooter back to the camper. I did get off and help over the grass but she did a splendid job and I'm surprised the Scottish rugby coach didn't hear about her effort. Probably travelling quite a distance over uneven grassy ground with a few hills that day severely drained the battery.

A campervan holiday is certainly a very pleasant way of getting around but I thought we should list what we hope will be helpful hints.

1. Most important of all, at least one person needs to be a very willing, patient, uncomplaining, multitalented, physically capable person with an 'of course we can do it' attitude and an excellent sense of humour.
2. Take advantage at the earliest opportunity to become temporary members of the Camping and Caravanning Club. There are various clubs but we found this one to have better facilities. This entitles you to reduced rates at their campsites and a free night about every 10th night. Well worth the very modest membership fee.
3. Old age pensioners (55 in the UK) are entitled to special rates in all sorts of places so make sure you ask if reduced rates are available if you qualify.

4. Disabled people are well catered for in many places. We received special treatment and attention wherever we went. At Edinburgh Castle, I paid a reduced rate while Katrina got in free as my carer. At Ely Cathedral, disabled people get in free. There are many advantages to be enjoyed by disabled and/or OAP's.
5. Many tourist attractions in Scotland are part of the National Trust for Scotland (NTS). Temporary membership is again well worth the very reasonable fee as it gives members considerably reduced rates to see the many attractions which are part of the NTS. Membership also covers sites in England. Not sure about Wales but probably. We would advise gaining membership at your first NTS site or English equivalent or visit [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk) which will give you details of their sites and how to join.
6. As mentioned earlier, parking is a challenge for campervans. We left our van in the car park of the local supermarkets (after doing some shopping there) while we went off to enjoy their village etc. It seemed to be a common practice for campers and accepted by the supermarkets. Supermarkets are well suited for mobility scooters and wheelchairs and have excellent staff.
7. When hiring a campervan, check the list of contents, particularly kitchen utensils. You may need to add a few items. We had no microwave or toaster (just an oven with a grill) and make sure they demonstrate how things work including the TV. They may just hand you the instruction book and assume all will be well.
8. A small collapsible clothes drying rack would be an advantage as camp site clothes driers cost about one pound +/- for 20mins which would dry only summer weight clothes. Washing machines cost about 2 pounds per cycle.
9. We were intrigued to find a considerable variation in fuel prices. As much as 5p difference between BP stations in the same town. When filling a campervan the saving is worth having.

The camaraderie that exists between campers is a pleasure to be part of and was a very important part of our truly wonderful experience. We met many really neat people, some with disabilities, who shared their camping experiences and past histories with us. They made us welcome and were interested to hear our story too. We feel privileged to have been there and hope the above may be of interest to other members.

By David & Katrina Lind

## DONATION FORM

I would like to subscribe to the MS Society of Auckland & the North Shore Inc (\$40 per annum)

I would like to donate:  \$25  \$50  \$100  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Payment method:  Cheque  Visa  Mastercard  
(please make cheques payable to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Auckland & the North Shore Inc)

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title (*circle one*): Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_



Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

For details about leaving bequests or further information on how you can help MS Auckland Region, please contact the office on (09) 845 5921

## PHONE 0900 YES 2 MS

Call 0900 93 726 to make an automatic \$20 donation.

*Please ensure you have the account holder's permission.*

## FUNDRAISING GOT AN IDEA?

Do you have a great idea for fundraising? Know anyone who may be able to help out? Perhaps donating or subsidising an event or prize or just their time.

Contact the office or email [gary@msakl.org.nz](mailto:gary@msakl.org.nz)

## EFFICACY OF D2 VS D3

Prescription vitamin D (D2) less effective than over-the-counter vitamin D (D3) according to a meta-analysis.

Many people write me and ask, "My doctor prescribed Drisdol, is that OK?" Drisdol is D2 and the form of vitamin D that doctors write prescriptions for. The body doesn't produce vitamin D2 in response to sun exposure. It is made by irradiating fungus and plant matter. When you take it, a number of metabolic forms of D2 are found in the body, and some studies show D3 (produced by the skin) is more potent, meaning it is more effective at raising blood levels than D2, while some show they are equal. However, there are few studies comparing the efficacy of D2 vs. D3. Or in other words, which form has better health outcomes, better mortality rates?

Recently, a review and meta-analysis address this question. The meta-analysis study was led by Professor Dr. Goran Bjelakovic<sup>1</sup>. He analyzed 50 randomized controlled trials (RCTs) with a total of 94,000 participants that used some form of vitamin D and reported mortality rates as either primary or secondary outcomes. Within these RCTs, 32 of the studies used D3 (74,000 subjects) and 12 of them used D2 (18,000 subjects). He found there was a 6% relative risk reduction when supplementing with vitamin D3, as opposed to a 2% relative risk increase when supplementing with vitamin D2.

Amazingly, this study somehow slipped under the radar and neither the press nor I picked up this study in July. Luckily, Professor Dr. Harvey Murff of Vanderbilt University reviewed this study yesterday in the Annals of Internal Medicine recently, allowing the general public to examine the study once again<sup>2</sup>.

You would think a paper that took a look at tens of thousands of subjects and analyzed the efficacy of prescription vitamin D (D2) and over-the-counter vitamin D (D3) would warrant a news story or two. To my knowledge, these papers are the first to paint such a clear picture about the efficacy between D3 and D2. While there may be explanations for D3's superiority other than improved efficacy, for the time being, these papers send doctors a message: use D3, not D2.

Source: Written by John J. Cannell, M.D. November 16, 2011

<sup>1</sup> Bjelakovic G, Gluud LL, Nikolova D, Whitfield K, Wetterslev J, Simonetti RG, Bjelakovic M, Gluud C. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev.* 2011 Jul 6;(7):CD007470.

<sup>2</sup> Murff HJ. Review: Cholecalciferol (vitamin D3) reduces mortality in adults; other forms of vitamin D do not. *Ann Intern Med.* 2011; 155:JC5-04.

## MEMBERSHIP SURVEY NEWS

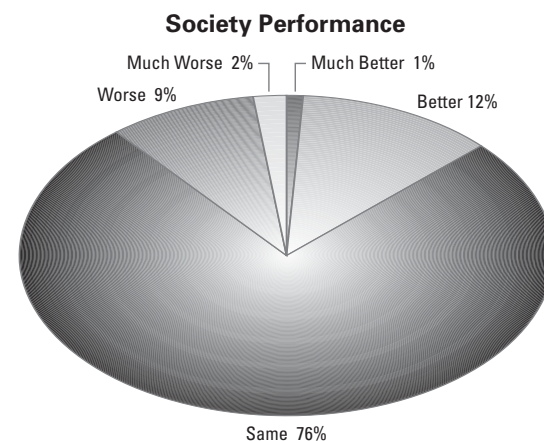
We have been absolutely delighted by the fantastic response to our recent survey of people with MS and their carers in the Auckland region.

We received 229 completed surveys which is a return rate of 31% on the 729 sent out, and have been busy summarizing all of the data into a final report for the Committee. In our first 2012 issue I will provide you with some of the information provided by you.

In the meantime there are some things that I can already tell you:

### Society performance

76% of respondents felt the Society performed at the same level as it has previously. More people felt our performance was better than worse.



### Resources

The majority felt that what the Society provided was useful to very useful. Although seminars/workshops and water walking were polarised, the larger majority found them useful. Noticeably communications (newsletters, pamphlets) and support groups were rated by a large proportion as useful to very useful. Very few did not find these resources useful. The Field Worker Service rated highly as very useful.

## RETREAT 2012

You will have received a flyer a few weeks ago advertising the dates of the next Retreat with Prof. George Jelinek. This next retreat is being held from 30th January 2012 through to Friday 3rd February. As usual places are filling up at a steady pace and at the time of going to print are over 50% full. The retreat is open to all people with MS and their partners and carers and we welcome people from other regions. If you would like further details or to make a booking please contact [gary@msakl.org.nz](mailto:gary@msakl.org.nz) or on (09) 845 5921.

## BOOK REVIEW

### LIFE ON WHEELS

By Graeme Sinclair

Graeme Sinclair producer, writer and star of the ever popular *Gone Fishin'* writes candidly about his life and career. While many of his younger fans have only ever known him in a wheelchair, for the first 40 years of his eventful life he had the full use of his legs.

Struck down with MS unexpectedly in his forties, instead of allowing his misfortune to dominate his life, he carried on as normal, only now on wheels. This presented some interesting challenges, filming and travelling to make the TV show.

A hero to his younger viewers through his *Kid's Gone Fishin'* and the *NZ Police Blue Light* programme, he puts down his ability to relate to kids to the fact he is at their height and they can look him in the eye.

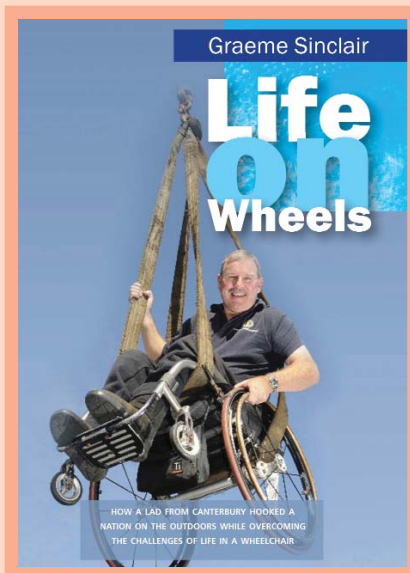
Talking about his upbringing and his own children will strike a chord with any parent. His love of the New Zealand outdoors and it's ability to heal the spirit and his willingness to talk about the tough times, as well as the good, will reveal facets of this multi-talented man to his audience that they can never have imagined.

Review by [www.wheelers.co.nz](http://www.wheelers.co.nz)

### SPECIAL MEMBER DEAL

We have a very special offer for all members – we currently have a stock of Graeme Sinclair's excellent new book *Life On Wheels* which was recently released. These have been personally signed by Graeme and are for sale at **\$32.99 plus postage of \$3**. An Ideal Christmas gift available right away.

Contact Shelley on (09) 845 5921 or [shelley@msakl.org.nz](mailto:shelley@msakl.org.nz)



## RECIPE CORNER

### CHEESEY RED PEPPER LASAGNE

#### Ingredients

- 1 box rice lasagna noodles
- 2 jars of organic spaghetti sauce
- A handful of dried shitake mushrooms
- 1 to 2 pounds (500g to 1kg) of organic beef or chopped chicken breast
- 1 large onion
- 1 or 2 red bell peppers to taste
- 2 or more teaspoons of garlic powder or 3-4 garlic cloves minced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Non-dairy cheese



#### Method

1. Boil noodles according to package directions.
2. Cook meat, onions and peppers in skillet until done.
3. Soak shitake mushrooms in hot water about 15minutes and cut up.
4. In the bottom of casserole dish put a Tablespoon or two of spaghetti sauce.
5. Then layer on 1/3 of the noodles, followed by 1/3 of the sauce, then 1/2 of the meat mixture and 1/3 of the non-dairy cheese.
6. Repeat step 6
7. Put on last 1/3 of noodles, sauce and cheese making sure to cover all noodles.
8. Put in oven at 180 degrees for 30 to 40 minutes.

### NON-DAIRY CHEESE

This can be made a few days before, refrigerated and cut into cubes or poured on warm from the blender.

#### Ingredients

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1/2 cup water             | 3 Tablespoons gelatin                     |
| 1/2 cup boiling water     | 1 cup raw cashews, or unsalted cashews    |
| 1 teaspoon onion powder   | 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder                |
| 2 Tablespoons lemon juice | 1/2 of a large red pepper, chopped finely |
| 3/4 teaspoon salt         |   |

#### Method

Put gelatin in the half cup water and let dissolve. In food processor or blender whiz together the remaining ingredients. Pour boiling water in the gelatin mixture and stir until there are no lumps. Add this to the food processor and whiz until mixture is creamy.

*The above recipes have been taken from [www.msac.co.uk](http://www.msac.co.uk)*

## YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES

We would like to keep all members updated with upcoming events and information which we feel would be relevant to you. Please email [editor@msakl.org.nz](mailto:editor@msakl.org.nz) and we will update your contact details.

# MS GROUPS

For more information on these groups contact the MS Auckland Region Office on (09) 845 5921 or email [info@msaki.org.nz](mailto:info@msaki.org.nz)

## RODNEY

### HIBISCUS COAST BUDDIES

3rd Tuesday of each month, 10.30am

At the Pohutukawa Room in the Whangaparaoa Library. All welcome.

### UNDER 45s GROUP

Six weekly at each others homes.

If you have MS and are under 45 you are welcome to attend.

Contact the office for more information.

## NORTH SHORE

### AUT PHYSIOTHERAPY MS CLASS

Held at AUT, Akoranga Campus, Northcote.

Contact the clinic for details (09) 921 9161.

### MAIRANGI BAY WATER WALKING

Wednesdays 10.30am to 11.30am

At the Millennium Institute of Sport.

Contact the office for more information.

### MAYFIELD COFFEE GROUP

1st Thursday of each month, 10.30am

Held at the Mayfield Centre, Glenfield.

Contact the office for more information.

### NORTH SHORE CAFÉ GROUP

1st Saturday of each month, 12.30pm

McCafé, Akoranga Drive, Northcote.

Contact Christine Ball on (09) 444 6945.

## CENTRAL

### AQUA EXERCISE GROUP

Thursdays 10.30am to 11.30am

Held at Epsom Girls' Grammar School Aquatic Centre.

Contact the office for more information.

### GREENLANE CAFÉ GROUP

2nd Saturday of each month, 11.00am

Zinc Café, 205 Great South Road, Greenlane (by Autel Kitchen Appliances Showroom).

Contact the office for more information.

### PT CHEVALIER SUPPORT GROUP

2nd Wednesday of every 2nd month,

from 10.30am to 12.30pm

Contact Judith Linton, Ph (09) 846 4783.

### WAIHEKE GROUP

Meets several Sundays per year.

Contact the office for more information.

## WEST

### KUMEU CAFÉ GROUP

1st Wednesday of each month, 10.30am,

Held at various cafés in Kumeu and the surrounding areas.

Contact the office for more information.

### PT CHEVALIER SUPPORT GROUP

2nd Wednesday of every 2nd month,

from 10.30am to 12.30pm

Contact Judith Linton, Ph (09) 846 4783.

## WEST AUCKLAND WATER WALKING

Fridays 11.00am to 12.00pm

Held at West Wave Aquatic Centre, Henderson.

Contact the office for more information.

## SOUTH

### BEACHLANDS AQUA EXERCISE

Contact Margaret Strachan (09) 536 6663.

### BEACHLANDS SUPPORT GROUP

Meets Six weekly at different venues.

Contact Linda Reid on (09) 536 6215.

### BOTANY CAFÉ GROUP

3rd Thursday of each month

Held at Whitcoulls Coffee Lounge, Botany Downs Town Centre.

Contact Elaine Jones (09) 533 4160.

### MANUKAU CAFÉ GROUP

Last Tuesday of each month, 10.30am

Held at the Botanic Gardens Café, Miko.

Contact the office for more information.

### PAPATOETOE WATER WALKING GROUP

Wednesdays 11.00am to 12.00pm

Held at the Papatoetoe Pool, Sutton Cres.

Contact Gordon Baker, Ph (09) 275 5729.

### PUKEKOHE CAFÉ GROUP

1st Thursday of each month at 11.30am

Contact Sarah Toft, Ph (09) 232 2796.

Our thanks goes to the following organisations for their support.



MS Groups are a great way for members to get together for friendship and support, whether it is simply for a chat or for some light exercise, make it your goal to go along to a group. All people with MS are welcome to attend any of the above groups in any area.

If you have an idea for a group or would like to start one contact the office on (09) 845 5921.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the MS Society or the editors.