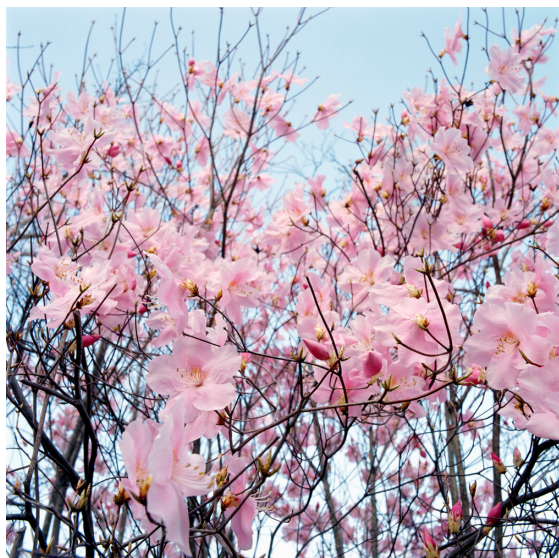


East Coast Area News



Welcome to the Winter/ Spring edition of your regional newsletter. In this issue you will find details on our new terms of both yoga and physiotherapy . There is also a piece on an Information Day in March, so be sure to take a look. We wish everyone a healthy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

New CE for MS Ireland

The Board of MS Ireland is pleased to announce that Ava Battles has been appointed as the new Chief Executive. Ava commenced her employment with the Society on 17th October 2011. We would like to welcome Ava to the Society, and wish her every success in her new role.

Yoga for Spring

Our popular yoga courses are back for a new term this February. There are two venues to choose from; Mount Merrion Community Centre with Audrey Williams on Thursday evenings and St. Anne's Resource Centre in Shankill with Jean McDonald on Friday mornings. If you are interested in attending either (or both) of these courses, please contact the office on 01-2871704 or eca@ms-society.ie and we will send you an application form. Please note that places are offered on a first come, first served basis. Closing date is Monday January 23rd. The cost for the course in either venue is €40. As always, if you have difficulty with finance, please contact us and we will try and help you.

Mount Merrion 9th February to 29th March
Thursday Evenings 7:30 to 9pm

Shankill 3rd February to 23rd March
Friday mornings 11:30 to 1pm

Physiotherapy

We are running some physiotherapy groups commencing in February & March based on the positive results of the Getting the Balance Right research carried out by MS Ireland. You **do not** have to have participated in the research or a previous group to take part now. If you are interested in either of the programmes outlined below, please contact the Regional Office on 01-2871704 or email eca@ms-society.ie and we will send an application form to you. Closing date for receiving applications is Friday 3rd February.

- ◆ **Bushy Park, Rathgar. 15th February to April 4th (Wed 6pm –7:30pm)**
- ◆ **Open Door, Bray. 27th March to 22nd May (Tues 6pm-7:30pm)**

There is a participant cost of €45 for an 8 week programme which can be paid by cheque or postal order and must be returned with your form to secure your place. There will also be a limited number of one to one physiotherapy sessions available. These will run as a six week course and the cost of this is €30. Places will be allocated to people who are unable to participate in a group or class due to their level of disability. These sessions are limited, so priority will be given to those who have not availed of it before or those who have not had this in the recent past. For further information on any of the above groups call the Regional Office on 01 2871704 or eca@ms-society.ie If we are not in the office please leave your name and daytime contact number so we can get back to you.

Disclaimer:The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of MS Ireland. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided, the editor is not responsible for any error or inaccuracy that may occur.

Celebrating Our Victorian Heritage



A Victorian Field Day was held on Sunday, 11th September at Knocklinn Farm, Enniskerry, with a large proportion of the profits going to MS Ireland.

The highlights of the day included the Powerscourt Ploughing Society's Annual Match, Steam Threshing, a Vintage Car and Tractor display as well as Sheaf Pitching, a Tug of War and a Dog Show. There were tonnes of prizes handed out throughout the day including a signed Jedward CD and a prize for Best Dressed Couple! There were countless stalls from local business selling fresh produce, handmade children's toys and soft furnishings among many others. Thank you to all those involved!

Pictured receiving a cheque for €4,000 from Natascha Fischell and Mervyn Heatley are Ava Battles (CE MS Ireland), Persis Quinn and Mark Mitchell (MS Ireland East Wicklow Voluntary Branch) David Allen, Geraldine Dunne, Margaret Maguire and Niamh Sweeney (MS Ireland staff)

Thank you MS READaTHON Ambassadors

Thank you very much to all our MS READaTHON Ambassadors for all your help with the new School Visit Programme. Thank you for giving up your time to visit local schools to talk about your own stories of living with MS and to encourage them to sign up.

We were delighted with the enthusiasm from all our ambassadors. It went really well with half of the schools on the list to be visited signed up. The feedback has been nothing but positive. Your support not only helps to keep the work of The MS Society of Ireland afloat but also brings an awareness of multiple sclerosis to future generations.

MS Person of the Year 2011



MS Ireland is delighted to announce that MS Person of the year 2011 Mark Mitchell, pictured here with his wife Ros, scooped one of ten national volunteering awards in a glittering ceremony attended by The President of Ireland, Micheal D Higgins. Mark is the current Chairman of the East Wicklow Branch and was nominated in the Campaigning and Awareness Raising Category. One of three shortlisted, Mark was presented the honour by the Rose of Tralee Tara Talbot and newscaster Claire Byrne.

Rare Gene Links Vitamin D and Multiple Sclerosis

A rare genetic variant which causes reduced levels of vitamin D appears to be directly linked to multiple sclerosis, says an Oxford University study.

UK and Canadian scientists identified the mutated gene in 35 parents of a child with MS and, in each case, the child inherited it. Researchers say this adds weight to suggestions of a link between vitamin D deficiency and MS. The study is in *Annals of Neurology*. Multiple sclerosis is an inflammatory disease of the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord). Although the cause of MS is not yet conclusively known, both genetic and environmental factors and their interactions are known to be important. Oxford University researchers, along with Canadian colleagues at the University of Ottawa, University of British Columbia and McGill University, set out to look for rare genetic changes that could explain strong clustering of MS cases in some families in an existing Canadian study. The team compared the DNA changes they found against existing databases, and identified a change in the gene CYP27B1 as being important. They sequenced all the gene-coding regions in the genomes of 43 individuals selected from families with four or more members with MS. When people inherit two copies of this gene they develop a genetic form of rickets - a disease caused by vitamin D deficiency. Just one copy of the mutated CYP27B1 gene affects a key enzyme which leads people with it to have lower levels of vitamin D. Overwhelming odds. The researchers then looked for the rare gene variant in over 3,000 families of unaffected parents with a child with MS. They found 35 parents who carried one copy of this variant along with one normal copy. In every one of these 35 cases, the child with MS had inherited the mutated version of the gene. The likelihood of this gene's transmission being unconnected to the MS is billions to one against, say the researchers. Prof George Ebers, lead study author at Oxford University, says the odds are overwhelming. "All 35 children inheriting the variant is like flipping a coin 35 times and getting 35 heads, entailing odds of 32 billion to one against." He added: "This type of finding has not been seen in any complex disease. The uniform transmission of a variant to offspring with MS is without precedent but there will have been interaction with other factors." Prof Ebers believes that this new evidence adds to previous observational studies which have suggested that sunshine levels around the globe - the body needs sunshine to generate vitamin D - are linked to MS.

He maintained that there was now enough evidence to carry out large-scale studies of vitamin D supplements for preventing multiple sclerosis. "It would be important particularly in countries like Scotland and the rest of the UK where sunshine levels are low for large parts of the year. Scotland has the greatest incidence of multiple sclerosis of any country in the world.

Recipe for including Vitamin D in your Diet

Roasted Salmon Fillets with Pesto Topping

Ingredients

Serves 2

2 X 5-6 oz (150-175 g) salmon fillets 2 level tablespoons fresh pesto Juice ½ lemon
2 level tablespoons fresh breadcrumbs Salt and freshly milled black pepper

You will also need a baking tray measuring 10 x 14 inches (25.5 x 35 cm), covered in foil and lightly oiled.

Method

Pre-heat the oven to gas mark 8, 450°F (230°C).

Trim the fillets if needed, and remove any stray bones.

Place the fish on the prepared baking tray and give each one a good squeeze of lemon juice and a seasoning of salt and pepper.

Stir the pesto and measure 2 tablespoons into a small bowl, mix one-third of the breadcrumbs with it to form a paste and spread this over both fish fillets. Scatter the remaining breadcrumbs over the pesto. Place the baking tray on the middle shelf of the oven and cook for 10 minutes, by which time the top should be golden brown and crispy and the salmon just cooked and moist. Serve with steamed new potatoes

MS Shop Bray

It is with great sadness that we announce the closure of the MS Shop on Bray's Main Street

MS Ireland wishes to sincerely thank you all for your donations and your on-going support of the shop over the years, and to thank Deirdre, Niamh and all our volunteers for their hard work and commitment over the years. We wish them all well for the future.

Doors closed for the last time on December 23rd.

Exhibition

An exhibition called 'Put a Spring in Your Step' will be held on Wednesday 1st February in the Shoreline Leisure Centre, Greystones. The aim is to highlight the local groups, services, clubs and activities that Greystones, Kilcoole and Delgany have to offer. The exhibition will run from 11am to 5pm and tea/coffee will be provided. If you would like to attend, please email Leah on leah@volunteerwicklow.ie or phone her on 01-2040885.

Programme of Events

Yoga

- ◆ Mount Merrion 9th February to 29th March
Thursday Evenings 7:30 to 9pm
- ◆ Shankill 3rd February to 23rd March
Friday mornings 11:30 to 1pm

Physiotherapy Programme

- ◆ Bushy Park, Rathgar. 15th February to April 4th (Wed 6pm -7:30pm)
- ◆ Open Door, Bray. 27th March to 22nd May (Tues 6pm-7:30pm)

Informal Coffee & Chat for PwMS & Carers / Family

- ◆ February 22nd Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire 11am
- ◆ March 14th The Food Court Level 3 Dundrum Shopping Centre 11am
- ◆ April 18th Avoca Handweavers Kilmacanogue 11am
- ◆ May 16th O'Briens Arklow Shopping Centre 11am

Carers' Coffee & Chat

- ◆ Thursday March 29th Avoca Handweavers Kilmacanogue 11am

Information Day for People with MS & Friends / Family

Saturday 10th March 2012 10am to 4pm
Carlton Hotel near Dublin Airport

The days agenda will include the following:

- ◆ Managing Fatigue in MS – Louise Lawlor, Occupational Therapist, Beaumont Hospital.
- ◆ Exercising when you have MS – Whats good? How much? Jennifer Gilchrist, Physiotherapist, Mater Hospital.
- ◆ Managing Pain in MS – Dr Josh Keaveny, Pain Specialist, Beaumont Hospital

€18 per person

This event is being organised by our Northern Area office, so please contact them for an application form. Applications and payment (cheque or postal order payable to MS Ireland) to **MS Regional Office, 65 Bushy Park Road, Dublin 6** - or you may phone Jennifer on 01-4905933 and pay by laser card or credit card.

CLOSING DATE FOR BOOKING IS WEDNESDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2012.