

Director's Notes: by Candyce Hayes

During the Christmas party I shared MSSP has many exciting gifts for the MS community in 2010. This newsletter is devoted to the power of music to heal, calm and entertain. Dr. Sherman's article (and upcoming workshop) reflects amazing research about the impact of music on the brain. We've also sprinkled in tidbits of information that may make life a little easier. So sit back, relax and enjoy the newsletter. We hope you pick up a useful tip, become inspired and decide to become involved in an event or as a volunteer. Rest assured we are here for you and this is only the beginning of many gifts to come. Take care.



Spots For Wheelchair Users

by Kaisa Carlson

Recently a new disabled parking permit style was made available in Oregon which has caused confusion. According to the Oregon DMV this new style is the result of ORS 447.233 which allows **“persons that use wheelchairs, or low-powered motorized or mechanically propelled vehicles”** to park in **“wheelchair-user only”** disabled parking spots. This

law, highlighted in an Oregonian article last fall, is meant to help wheelchair users. However, if a disabled driver unknowingly parks in a newly specified **“Wheelchair User Only”** parking spot, the driver can receive a \$360 fine. This type of parking spot is not in every parking lot, only the lots with 5 or more standard handicapped accessible spots.

To find the distinction look under a regular blue metal disabled parking sign for a “much smaller blue metal sign... (stating) that the parking place is reserved for ‘Wheelchair User Only’”. For those who qualify for this style of parking permit, complete the Application for Disabled Person Parking Permit, form 265, accompanied by a licensed physician's signature, then drop off this form in person at a local DMV office or mail it to DMV Driver Issuance Unit; 1905 Lana Ave NE; Salem, OR 97314. Once approved, you will receive a lighter blue rearview window placard than the dark blue standard handicap placard. Please note the subtle differences between the standard placard and the lighter blue “Wheelchair User” placard. Here are the examples of lighter

blue “Wheelchair User” placard on the left and the standard dark blue placard on the right. As a reminder, there is no fee for the application or handicap placards. Currently this law only pertains to Oregon State.

Light Blue Permit



Dark Blue Permit



Inside This Issue

Directors Notes	1
Feature 1: Spots For Wheelchair Users	
FYI Mark These Dates	2
Feature 2: Music and Myelination	3-5
Music for MS Benefit	5
Keeping Our Doors Open	6-7

Multa Spes is the quarterly newsletter of the MSSP, distributed to MSers, consumers, families, professionals and friends.

Comments and articles are welcome. Publication depends on space available and is subject to editing. The next submission deadline is: 3/15/2010.

Please send submissions to Candyce Hayes, Executive Director, at: candycehayes@msoregon.org or mail: MSSP, 2901 SE 122nd Ave. Portland, OR 97236.

If you are not currently receiving Multa Spes by mail, we would be happy to add you to our mailing list. Direct all subscription requests or address changes to candycehayes@msoregon.org or call 503.297.9544.

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FYI

Senior Law Project: Free Legal Services

The Senior Law Project (SLP) is a volunteer lawyer program operated by Legal Aid Services of Oregon. Lawyers initially meet with clients for 30-minute appointments at 9 senior centers in Multnomah County. Many times clients do not realize that their problem is a legal issue and that a lawyer could help. While many of the SLP clients have issues such as estate planning, consumer problems, and real property disputes, a lawyer could also assist with the following types of questions:

- At what age should I begin drawing my Social Security?
- How much money do I need to take out of my IRA and at what ages?
- What should I do if my children start talking about conservatorship or guardianship?
- What is a "Power of Attorney" and can I take it back once I have given it to someone?
- How do I let my doctor know about my end of life decisions?

Please call your local Senior Center or Legal Aid Services of Multnomah County at 503.224.4086, Clackamas County at 503.655.2518, Washington County at 503.648.7163. They may also be able to arrange for an attorney to visit you in your home if you are physically unable to go to a senior center.

Mark These Dates

Event/Activity	Date	RSVP
Music For MS Fundraising Benefit	See page 7	
Caregiver class @10:00 a.m. MSSP House	March 20 April - June	March 12 TBA
Educational Workshop	See Insert	
Annual Picnic Oaks Park	June 12	June 7
Educational Workshop	June 26	TBA
Summer Comfort Application Deadlines:	June 30 August 1	Contact MSSP Office @ 503.297.9544

Music and Myelination: What can Mozart do for a brain with MS?

Larry S. Sherman, Ph.D.
Department of Cell and Developmental Biology
Oregon Health & Science University
Division of Neuroscience
Oregon National Primate Research Center

In the first of J.K. Rowling's books about the young wizard Harry Potter, the headmaster of Harry's school for young wizards and witches, Albus Dumbledore, declares "Ah music. A magic beyond all we do here". Music is indeed magical. It can lift your spirits when you are down or bring you to tears even when you are otherwise happy. It can bring back memories of events in your life that you may not have thought about for years. It can alter your heart rate and enhance your attention. It can even make a visit to the dentist's chair seem less painful. But can it help you if you suffer from a neurodegenerative disease like multiple sclerosis (MS)?

Music: Organized sound that turns-on the brain

To find the answer to this question, we must first understand what music is. In the most basic terms, music is the organized vibrations of air molecules converted into specific signals by the brain. When we hear music, our brains are rapidly converting these patterns of air molecules after they enter our ears into signals that integrate pitch, rhythm, timbre, loudness, reverberation, tempo and contour. These parts of music come together in our brains and are collectively perceived as music.

Is there a single "music area" in the brain where the different parts of music are processed? Recent studies using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), a medical imaging technique that reveals where nerve cells are active in different regions of the brain, have demonstrated that many different areas of the brain are involved in the processing of music. If any of these areas become damaged, our ability to understand music is lost. For example, people who have had strokes or injuries to the area involved in timbre (the characteristic of sound that distinguishes how one voice or instrument sounds different from another) cannot tell the difference between a piano or a flute or any other instrument playing the same note. People with injuries to rhythm areas lose the ability to understand or keep rhythm. As a result, these individuals lose the ability to appreciate and understand music.

Interestingly, some individuals who suffer from a severe form of "tone deafness", called amusia, have physical abnormalities in their brains that prevent them from comprehending music. In many cases, these abnormalities involve the white matter of the brain. White matter contains nerve fibers that connect nerve cells to each other. It is also where much of the damage occurs following an MS attack.

Building (and rebuilding) the brain with music

Given that just listening to music can activate so much of the brain, does the brain benefit from listening to music? In 1991, Alfred Tomatis, a French otolaryngologist, published a book in which he claimed that listening to Mozart could promote brain development.

Continued on Page 4

Music and Myelination: by Larry S. Sherman, Ph.D. *“continued”*

This idea was further promoted in a study, published in the journal *Nature* in 1993, that claimed listening to classical music could temporarily enhance IQ. There was so much excitement about this so-called “Mozart Effect” that Governor Zell Miller of Georgia proposed that every child born in his state should be given a classical music CD. More recent studies, however, have failed to support these earlier findings. Nonetheless, there is growing evidence that certain types of music can “wake up” the brain and therefore enhance attention. It is therefore likely that the subjects in the earlier studies who listened to Mozart before taking their tests were simply more alert than the subjects who did not listen to music.

While listening to music may not lead to substantial long-term changes in the brain, practicing music, especially instrumental music, can have clear effects on brain structure and function. Perhaps the most remarkable recent finding regarding how practicing music can influence a part of the brain affected by MS comes from studies of people who play piano. The fibers emanating from nerve cells and coursing through our brains and nerves are called axons. These are the microscopic wires of our nervous system, connecting nerve cells to each other and to our muscles and the organs that allow us to see, hear, smell, taste and feel our world. Some axons need to transmit signals faster than others. These axons are ensheathed by a substance called myelin, which greatly increases how electrical signals travel. It turns out that people who regularly practice piano develop more white matter and myelin than people who do not practice piano (or other musical instruments). This is a very intriguing finding which suggests that by challenging yourself to play an instrument it may be possible to enhance the production of myelin.

Amazingly, practicing a musical instrument may also lead to the production of new nerve cells and new connections between nerve cells. In the last decade it has become clear that certain activities promote the production of new nerve cells and that these new nerve cells are critical for certain types of learning and memory. If you challenge yourself to learn a new instrument, you will likely increase the numbers of nerve cells in your brain as well as the number of connections (called synapses) between nerve cells. Indeed, there is evidence that musicians have a greater number of these connections than non-musicians. Having these connections could mean that there are more synapses remaining in the brain after brain damage occurs, including the damage resulting from an MS attack. It is intriguing to speculate that music practice might help to protect the brains of MS patients thus slowing the onset of MS-related disabilities. To date, however, there are no studies clearly demonstrating if this is the case.

Can music therapy reduce disability in MS patients?

While long-term instrumental music practice may result in structural and functional changes to the brain that could potentially benefit MS patients, there is some evidence that short-term music therapy can also alleviate some MS-associated conditions. These therapy strategies include teaching patients to compose and perform music, teaching specific types of instrumental and singing techniques, and instrumental playing techniques focused especially on rhythm. Only a few reports have been published regarding the benefits of these approaches to relieving MS symptoms. However, music therapy may benefit MS patients in several ways. One study suggests that

Continued on Page 5

Music and Myelination: by Larry S. Sherman, Ph.D. *“continued”*

following music therapy, MS patients had improved memory and learning skills, while another study suggested that music improved memory retention when information was transmitted by song. Other studies have demonstrated that music therapy can improve mood, reduce fatigue, and help promote self-acceptance in MS patients. Finally, in advanced MS patients, one pilot study found that music therapy focused on breathing tended to help advanced MS patients who were experiencing respiratory muscle weakness although the results were not significant and more studies will be needed to validate this approach.

While we still have much to learn about how music may influence the progression of MS or relieve MS symptoms, it is clear that music holds many potential benefits for patients suffering from MS and other neurodegenerative diseases. Playing instrumental music and singing may be especially beneficial. If you have MS and decide to give music a try, a key is not to worry about how good you sound – only about how good the music makes you feel. If you find a musical activity that is a little bit of a challenge but still enjoyable you will very likely benefit from it and take another step towards improving your quality of life.

Music For MS Benefit by Jason Mockley

My name is Jason Mockley. My long time girlfriend (now fiancée) was diagnosed with MS approximately 12 years ago. She was fine to begin with, still working, still driving, etc. Her situation started to slowly change over the years, and when the day came that she could no longer walk, the MSSP was there and donated a life changing wheelchair to her. Also, some handrails for the bath tub, and a few misc. items around the house to make the progression (we like to call it adapting to our new situation) easier and safer. I could not believe there was a group out there that was doing this type of work for people with MS.

I have been playing, writing, and performing music all over the NW region most of my life. I have played in benefits through the years for various causes, but never have I actually organized one myself. It occurred to me one day last year that this was something I wanted to do. I was looking at that wheelchair (which still gets lots of use) and thought, “why don’t I do a benefit for the MSSP to help pay it back?” If I get a group of local musicians to perform, and a nice accessible venue that everyone can go to, then it might be one of the best benefits I have ever been to. I am proud to say that McMenamins felt the same way, and donated the use of their Kennedy School for us to use. Out of the 7 acts listed to play at the event, I will be performing with 4 of them. These are all great people, with great hearts, and I am proud to be a part of this event. The musicians are all donating their time and music to this for free. Cash donations in lieu of a cover charge will be accepted at the door. A guitar signed by each act and a 2-night stay in Lincoln City will be raffled off too! “Music for MS” is something that will hopefully reach a lot of people, and evolve into a yearly event with each year a little bigger than the last...

So please spread the word about this exciting event. To learn more about the bands, the day’s line up and details for the February 21st event, see page 6.

KEEPING OUR DOORS OPEN:

Ann & Bill Swindells Grant

Thanks to the generosity of our friends at the Ann & Bill Swindells Charitable Trust, MSSP is half way towards our goal of remodeling/repairing the garage and medical equipment closet after water damage. Their grant of \$17,500 is very much appreciated. Grantwriting volunteers Stacey Bankhead and Dave Peery's (also Board President) goal is to raise the balance of monies soon so we can complete the project in 2010!

Music For MS Benefit

McMenamins Kennedy School

Sunday, February 21st from 2-7pm
5736 NE 33rd Ave, Portland, OR 97211

FEATURED BANDS:

2:00-2:30: Uncle B & Auntie & J-DOG (interactive kids music)

<http://www.myspace.com/unclebmusicforkids>

2:30-3:00: Floating Pointe

<http://www.myspace.com/floatingpointe>

3:10-3:40: Panhandle Pete and Cookie

<http://www.myspace.com/panhandlepeteandcookie>

3:45-4:15: Adam + Kris

<http://www.myspace.com/adamandkris>

4:30-5:10: David Bryan Wilson & the Wild Frontier

<http://www.myspace.com/davidbryanwilson>

5:20-6:00: Pale Bue Sky

<http://www.myspace.com/palebluesky>

6:10-End: Jesus Presley

<http://www.myspace.com/jesuspresley>

Thank you Happy Valley Peets Coffee

They did it again! Two years in a row Peets Coffee customers and employees helped raise money for MSSP. This year's December campaign generated \$699.04 dollars to support our important work.



Art student, Heather Zinger (and sister of MSer) raised \$1,779.31 last December during a unique campaign to increase public awareness about living with Multiple Sclerosis. To learn more visit www.endurems.org

Boeing Awards \$1,800 Grant

The Employees Community Fund of Boeing has awarded MSSP a \$1,800 general operations grant.

Sling Ball For MS by Kaisa Carlson



Looking for a reason to go to the beach? The 3rd Annual “MJN (Marilyn Jean Neu) Help Defeat MS Sling Ball Tournament” is coming this summer. The Neu family, while remembering their mother Marilyn’s love for life and people, organize this annual event. The game is easy to play and just as much fun to watch.

Like horseshoes and bocce ball, Sling Ball is a game where 2-4 people play against each other and try to score by wrapping the Sling

Balls around 4 sets of cross bars. The game continues until one player lands exactly on 21 points. The first player to land on exactly 21 points wins.

To register for this year’s tournament go to www.slingball.com or contact the MSSP office at 503.297.9544



Summer Comfort Program Gets 2 Grants!

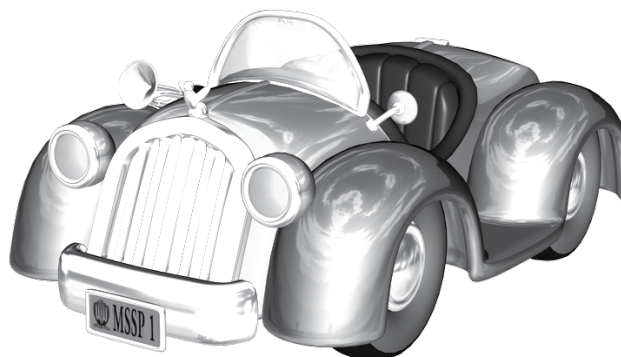
It’s raining grants: UPS=\$2,500 and WalMart=\$1,000. These grants enable MSSP to help alleviate the affects of heat this summer for many of our friends and neighbors living with MS. The average cost to buy and deliver a new, energy-efficient, portable air conditioner is \$175.

So that no one is turned away, please consider supporting this vital program with your tax deductible donation.

Vehicle Donation

Finally ready to unload that old car, truck, RV or boat? Let us help you! Save yourself the work of doing it yourself, and help people living with MS and chronic illness.

Thru MSSP’s partnership with the Northwest Charity Donation Service now you can quickly and easily donate that old vehicle. It is as easy as visiting www.NWCDS.com and donating online, or call 800-961-6119 today.



Yes, I want to help improve the quality of life for persons with MS!

Here is my contribution to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Portland, Oregon, Inc.

☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$20 ☐ other _____

My Contribution is for:

☐ Project Helping Hands

☐ Social Programs

☐ Summer Comfort

☐ Medical Equipment

☐ Caregiver Classes

☐ Greatest Need

My Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

If you would like to send this gift in honor or remembrance of someone, please include a note with their name & address or if applicable, the name of whom we should send acknowledgment to with their address.

Please clip this form and mail with check payable to MSSP:

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