It's November!

...And the holiday season is almost upon us. In this MG Minute you'll find terrific ways to cope with holiday stress. I also invite you to read a story of personal determination by MG patient Heather LeBron, news of Illinois handicap parking changes effective January 1, research news, and a flu shot update.

Speaking of the holiday season, this issue contains an invitation to celebrate with MGF of Illinois at its Holiday Bocce Ball Party in Oak Brook, Illinois! And speaking of invitations, we invite you to support MGF of IL at this time of the year. Consider using iGive.com when you shop online; make a purchase and the merchants (such as amazon.com, Best Buy, Kohl's and ToysRUs) donate to the charity you select. And if you'd like to restore your equilibrium after Black Friday and Cyber Monday, #GivingTuesday might be just the answer.

Thankful for so much,

Jean Winetstein

MGF of Illinois Executive Director

Join us Sunday, November 17, from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. for a game as old as the hills of Italy...in a sparkling new venue! You're invited to the MGF of Illinois Holiday Bocce Ball Party fundraiser at Pinstripes in Oak Brook, Illinois - whether you're a bocce ball expert or have never played before (like
A live demonstration of the game will show you how easy it is! Sign up as a single or as a team of two. Bring your friends and family. You don’t have to play to attend.

The MGF of Illinois party will have its own area with three bocce ball lanes, space to mingle and appetizers. To add some holiday spice to the event, we’ll have a split-the-pot game and award prizes to the winners!

All proceeds support MGF of Illinois’ work to provide patient support and education. Help us help other MG patients!

Click HERE for details and registration information.

Think of the stress you encounter in one day. Is it “good” or “bad” stress? Within your control or not? Important to you, or not so much? Deborah Smith, M.Ed., LCPC, posed these questions to 35 attendees at the MGF of Illinois Stress Management seminar on October 20 at Edward Hospital in Naperville. Noting that just one coping method is not enough, she suggested we have five or six strategies to handle stressful moments throughout the day. Then Dr. Tim Fior, family practitioner and lecturer, explained the benefits of using meditation and led the group through a practice meditation session.

Click HERE for easy-to-understand and easy-to-practice ways to cope with stress, which were outlined by Ms. Smith and Dr. Fior.

Today i was able to walk to one end of the street :) haven’t done that in forever i think a lot of it is fear stopping me -- Facebook post

We often share stories of individuals who have overcome MG. But how do you manage when you’re in the thick of things? Heather Lebron describes the life she was building pre-MG, the illnesses that
deconstructed it floor by floor, and her efforts to rebuild a life that is "much better, taller, stronger."

Click HERE to read her inspirational perspective.

Handicap Parking Change in IL

Starting January 1, 2014, Illinois residents with disabilities will no longer be exempt from paying parking meters unless they have the new yellow/gray parking placard. Disability parking license plates or a blue disability parking placard still allow you to park in handicap parking spots. However, these plates and placards don't exempt you from paying parking meter fees and honoring parking meter time limits.

Click HERE for more information.

Support MGF of IL When You Shop Online

When you go through iGive.com to shop online at the stores you love, those stores will contribute a small percentage of your purchase to the charity of your choice. (We hope you choose MGF of Illinois!) There's no extra cost to you at all - now that's painless! MGF of IL has received over $200 so far this year because two members used iGive.com to purchase office supplies. That amount covers the cost of about 200 pamphlets we include in patient packets. If we all used iGive.com for even one holiday purchase, it could really help us serve MG patients!

Click HERE to learn more.
Click HERE to go directly to iGive.com.

Research Update
The process for determining the 2014 MGF of Illinois research grant is underway. Abstracts were reviewed in October and finalists have been invited to submit full applications. The applications are due in January 2014. Peer review begins in February, and the grant recipient will be announced in May.

The preliminary study on exercise and myasthenia gravis, to be conducted jointly by the University of Illinois and the GH School for Healthy Living and funded by MGF of Illinois, has cleared the approval hurdles and will begin recruiting participants in November 2014.

Black Friday. Cyber Monday. Are you dreading post-Thanksgiving shopping? Here's an idea: Take part in #GivingTuesday on December 3. On #GivingTuesday, you're encouraged to put aside holiday spending and be generous in whatever way matters to you, whether that's volunteering or donating to a favorite cause.

At MGF of Illinois, we hope to raise $600 on #GivingTuesday. This will cover the cost of MG information packets given to newly diagnosed patients during the first two months of 2014. You don't have to be a billionaire to do some good in this world!

Click HERE to join us.

Flu Shot Reminder

With the holiday season comes flu season. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reminds us, "Yearly vaccination is the first and most important step in protecting against flu." The CDC notes that some groups should especially get the vaccine because they are at higher risk for severe complications if they get the flu. Included
on this list are those who have chronic neurological disorders and those who are taking immune-suppressant medications. Keep in mind the CDC recommends that these groups should not get the nasal spray vaccine. Click HERE for more detailed information from the CDC about who should or should not get a flu shot, and which form of the vaccine is appropriate.

How contagious is the flu? The CDC says you can transmit the disease beginning one day before you get symptoms and lasting up to 5 to 7 days after you become sick. To avoid getting ill, steer clear of sick people and wash your hands often with soap and water. Avoid sharing linens, eating utensils and dishes with those who are sick, before first washing them thoroughly.