

## Why MS House, Inc.?

Why is MS House necessary? Numbers and data will tell us only one part of the story. More important are the words and experiences of individuals who have multiple sclerosis. Here are the words of two people. Perhaps you have something in common with one or both of them.

*My name is Sidney Sweet. I'm 52 years old and I've had primary progressive MS for 17 years. I have lived alone at an independent living facility for 10 years. I believe my MS has gotten worse because I do live alone and there is no one to help me. I'm unable to use the stove for meals. I have meals on wheels thru the week but not on the weekend. I no longer am able to take a shower without help.*

Sidney is a perfect example of a person who needs MS House. Sidney is at the point of her life where she needs MS educated people who will encourage her wellness. She is in an independent living facility, but needs some help and assistance. She receives some support by paying someone to help her get up in the morning, and has nursing care that comes in a several days a week. Too often, "independent living" means living alone, without other people.

Cassie Wilhide is one of the founding members of MS House.

*One day in 1995, I drove to my mother's house. When I tried to get out of the car, I immediately fell to the ground, my arms, and legs feeling rubbery and unmovable. It was fortunate that my brothers lived nearby and they were able to carry me into the house and then to Frederick Hospital, where, after many tests, I was diagnosed with Relapsing Remitting Multiple Sclerosis. At the present time I have Secondary Progressive MS.*

*My feelings were lonely overwhelming not clear and learning more each week about food, nutrition, physical activities, and what I could and could not do for myself at this time. After my diagnosis, I moved with a teacher and church friend in Frederick, two different apartments, independent living, an aunt, and uncle who had strokes, my daughter and family, two different moves, three assisted living homes in Carroll County. I feel as though I'm a wandering woman at 65.*

Cassie wants to stop moving. She wants a place that she can call home. She wants a place that has compassionate MS nursing care, an environment of community involvement, a place where her family can visit in comfortable surroundings, and where she has people to talk to, and where her medical and spiritual needs can be met.

Both Sidney and Cassie want to be in a place that can meet their needs today, and that will be able to meet their needs in the future, if more medical or nursing services are needed, and if they require differing amounts of assistance.

We are sure that many of you have stories that are similar to those of Sidney and Cassie. Please share your stories with us. We will include your stories and experiences in future issues of this newsletter and on our website. Your stories, what you need, and the things that you have experienced - these are what keeps our dream alive. That is what MS House will address.

## Raffle

In order to help move us closer to fulfilling our dream – and the dreams of Sidney and Cassie – we are holding a raffle. Tickets are \$5 each. The grand prize is a cash award of \$5000. The drawing will be on December 30, 2008 at 1:00 PM at Baugher's Restaurant. To buy tickets please send your check, made payable to MS House to: MS House, c/o Jane Hubbard, 37 Federal Ave., Emmitsburg, MD 21727, call 301 447-2671, or email MSHouseinc@comcast.net for more information.

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