

From the community: HIGHLAND PARK RESIDENTS INSTRUMENTAL IN RAISING OVER \$1.2 MILLION THROUGH 38th ANNUAL CAROL COHN & MARGIE WEIL MEMORIAL MS OUTING



The 38th annual Cohn Weil Memorial MS Outing raised over \$1.2 for multiple sclerosis research. Pictured are committee members (L to R): Chairman Joseph Weil, Michael Fohrman, Jeff Silverman, Ron Zelikow, Rob Nardick, Jim Schallman. (Posted by jbarewin, Community Contributor)

By **Community Contributor jbarewin**

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The 38th annual Cohn Weil Memorial MS Outing took place on July 11, at Northmoor Country Club in Highland Park, raising over \$1.2 million to support [multiple sclerosis](#) research and services, one the highest totals in the event's history. More than 600 people attended the all-day outing, which included morning and afternoon golf, bridge, mahjong, canasta, lunch, silent auction, and gourmet dinner and program. Sponsored this year by BMO Harris Bank, the Cohn Weil event has raised over \$14 million over the past four decades.

For Cohn Weil Committee members Laura and Jim Schallman of Highland Park, multiple sclerosis hits close to home. Since being diagnosed with the disease in 1994, Laura has seen first-hand the physical and emotional challenges brought upon by MS, especially during the warm summer months, when hot temperatures can lead to an exacerbation.

"It is always scary with a chronic illness not to know what the future holds and MS is a very unpredictable disease," she said. "One of the ways that MS affects me is that my immune system is compromised. I seem to always get sick during and after I travel. It becomes more and more difficult to be spontaneous."

Advances in MS treatments and therapies over the past 20 years, however, have made living with the disease much more manageable. Today, there are 14 FDA-approved disease modifying therapies for the relapsing remitting form of MS. Breakthroughs in MS research and new drugs can be attributed in great part to groups like the Cohn Weil Committee, who are dedicated to raising critical funds for MS research.

"We're not going to stop until a cure is found," said event Chairman Joseph Weil, of Highland Park, who has been the driving force behind the outing's success for the past 33 years.

From an extremely young age, Weil has witnessed the impact that MS can have on a family.

"This cause is one that is very personal to me as my mother was diagnosed with MS when I was one years old," he said. "I watched her face the physical and psychological challenges of having one's mobility and independence taken away in the prime of her life and watched her courageous fight for many years before her passing."

The Schallmans joined the event's organizing committee - which now consists of more than 50 individuals - in 1995, soon after Laura was diagnosed, and have been active participants ever since. Jim currently serves as the event's Luncheon Chairman and Laura the Mahjong/Canasta Co-Chairman. The committee has become a support network of sorts to many like the Schallmans, through the friendships formed, camaraderie and compassion.

"The people that are part of this committee are committed and really just such a source of strength," said Laura. "We enjoy working with everyone to make the event successful however we also enjoy the social interaction and being able to see so many familiar faces on a regular basis."

For Laura, remaining involved with the cause through the Cohn Weil Committee and Walk MS, the largest annual fundraiser of the National MS Society in Illinois, and having a positive attitude, makes managing the disease and outlook for the future an optimistic one.

"I hope to live a full, productive life with my family and friends and during that time I hope that I see a cure for MS," she said. "I will continue to be a part of this organization as long as it goes on, but I hope that there will not be a need for fundraising because there will be a cure in the near future. That is my sincerest hope."

Other outing highlights included presentation of the 2016 honoree award to Patrick Larmon, President and CEO of Bunzl Distribution USA, Inc., and Executive Director of Bunzl plc. In addition, Highland Park resident Lawrence "Woodgie" Reich was honored as the fourth inductee into the "The Chuck and Margie Barancik Hall of Fame of Giving," established in the names of Chuck and Margie Barancik. The award acknowledges selfless individuals who have exemplified extraordinary annual financial support of the Cohn Weil Outing.

The first Carol Cohn Invitation Golf Outing was held in August 1979 at Westmoreland Country Club in Wilmette. The outing honored the wife of Norman Cohn, then president of the National MS Society, and former chairman of the chapter. Mrs. Cohn, who lived with MS, was a regular attendee at the outing until her passing in 1988. Margie Weil lived with MS for 40 years, and during that time raised three children while dedicating many years to counseling MS clients and supporting her husband Julian Weil's 20 years of volunteer leadership with the chapter. In 1998 the event was renamed the Carol Cohn & Margie Weil Memorial MS Outing in her honor.

Multiple sclerosis, an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system, interrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body. The disease affects more than 20,000 individuals in Illinois and 2.3 million worldwide. The National MS Society's vision is a world free of MS, and moves toward that end by driving change through research, advocacy, facilitating education, collaborating with others and by providing helpful programs and services. For more information, visit MSIllinois.org.

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