

### Newsletter - November 2015: Life in Perspective



Greetings!

This has been a rough week for my family. My dad has been fighting cancer for many years now, and through it all he's maintained his wit, his sarcasm and his smile. More recently, chemo has been extremely rough on him, with side effects more horrible than the actual cancer.

Last Monday, my mom and I took him to the hospital for a routine blood test, thinking we'd be home in time for a late lunch. My dad was craving a burger. He struggled just walking in the door and was admitted in an hour later with drastically low blood counts. He hasn't left a hospital bed ever since.

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## A New Partnership with the North Shore Senior Center

In October, I hosted a four-week memoir class at the [North Shore Senior Center](#).

I was blown away by the talent in the group. We had a retired Chicago Bears player looking back on his life. We had an opera singer recalling memorable performances. We had a woman bravely battling MS, writing about her challenges and triumphs. Talk about a lively class discussion! Each participant brought such diverse life experiences to the table. Thanks to the positive feedback, I'll be back in the summer for a longer stretch of time and would love to see you there. Stay tuned for dates.



[View Workshop Information »](#)

## Featured Story: Gail Burton, In Her Own Words

*Below is from a working memoir of one of my class participants, Gail Burton. Great writer, great personality, great outlook on life.*

I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) almost 20 years ago at the age of 28. At the time of my diagnosis, I was working full time in a stressful banking career and going to college three nights a week to finish my marketing degree. I didn't have time to get sick but MS didn't care. I ignored the tingling pain and numbness in my left foot. The tightness moving up my leg concerned me but didn't slow me down. Even falling down

several times due to a numb foot didn't stop me. It took losing my vision in my left eye to admit something serious was going on.

In 2011, I had to leave work due to my disease. I knew I had to do something to fill my days. Work was all I knew. After months of searching, I became an adoption screener with Adopt-a-Pet animal rescue. I've been with them for 2 ½ years. I just found a home for the 50th animal that I helped. It is an amazing feeling!



Just because my life has taken directions that I hadn't expected or wanted, it doesn't mean I have to give up.

*Inspired by Gail's story? Feel free to check out [Adopt-a-Pet](#) or the [National Multiple Sclerosis Society](#) for more information.*

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Thanks for reading. See you next month. - Nora



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