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24th Annual MS Bike Tour To Raise Funds and Awareness for Multiple Sclerosis

Loudoun, VA-- The National Capital Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society will hold its 24th Annual MS Bike Tour on May 20 and 21, 2006. The ride will begin in Purcellville, Virginia's beautiful Franklin Park and meander through Loudoun and Fauquier Counties.

The MS Bike Tour is open to participants of all cycling abilities—riders can partake in anything from a 60-mile ride to a 140-mile ride over the weekend. The tour is hailed as one of the best-supported bike tours in the country. Riders are treated to a first-class experience complete with mechanical support, scenic routes, supportive volunteers, and terrific food and snacks from popular restaurants like Red Hot & Blue and Corner Bakery Café. The first MS Bike Tour was held in 1980 in Minnesota. Twenty-five years later, 80,000 people participate in MS cycling events across the country each year, raising over \$50 million to fight MS. The local MS Bike Tour expects to host 800 cyclists and raise over \$500,000.

Even if cycling is not your forte, there are other ways to participate and contribute. Volunteers play an intricate role in the MS Bike Tour's success. They are needed to help with tasks such as hosting rest stops, helping with check-in, and serving meals.

“The volunteers at the event will make sure you have an amazing experience, understand a little more about MS, and feel exceptional by the time you finish. If a person rides in one bike tour all year, this is the one to choose,” says National MS Society Chapter President Jeanne Oates Angulo. The tour raises awareness and funds for MS research and local programs.

MS is a lifelong disease of the central nervous system. It causes unpredictable symptoms, ranging from weakness to total paralysis, that come and go without warning or pattern. Nearly 400,000 Americans are living with MS, and a new case is diagnosed every hour. Thanks to the significant advances in research, the FDA has approved several treatments that may alter the underlying disease course of MS.

Locally, the National Capital Chapter of the National MS Society provides a wide range of vital services in the areas of counseling, education, employment, information and referral, public policy development and advocacy, and financial assistance to people with MS and their families. The Chapter serves people in Washington, D.C., Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties in Maryland, and Virginia's Alexandria, Arlington, Fauquier, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William counties.

For more information about multiple sclerosis or the MS Bike Tour, **contact the National Capital Chapter at (202) 296-5363 or visit them online at www.MSandYOU.org.**

Please designate the National MS Society #8203 in your United Way or Combined Federal Campaign.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is proud to be a source of information about multiple sclerosis. Our comments are based on professional advice, published experience and expert opinion, but do not represent therapeutic recommendation or prescription. For specific information and advice, consult your personal physician.