Diseases

The Lafayette Daily Advertiser

May 9, 1994

Page 10, col. 2

WALK, RUN & ROLL FOR MS

The 1994 Super Cities Walk, Run & Roll for MS will take place on Sunday, May 29 in Scott, just minutes from Lafayette. The walk will begin at the Lions Club and will continue for 6.2 miles through quaint city streets, ending again at the Lions Club.

According to Willie and Elsie Domingue, event co-chairmen, the activity is designed to raise money for the 4,000-plus Louisiana residents afflicted with multiple sclerosis, a progressive disabling disease of the central nervous system. The money will also support national and local research efforts and early identification of MS, effective treatment, and an eventual cure.

The disease is generally diagnosed among people ages 20 to 50, and 40, and this age group parallels the majority of people who will join the Super Cities Walk. Team members raising a minimum of $50 will qualify for team awards.

In 1993, the Walk attracted more than 207,000 people from over 405 cities and raised over $16 million.

To register for the event, call the Lafayette Walk Headquarters at 233-4234 or 1-800-346-7021, Or, fax 1-504-831-7188.

Making sense of MS

Articles by Pamela Glisson

Health Editor

Vicki Trahan and her husband Larry had been married three years when she learned she had MS. The diagnosis came 10 years ago, and it totally changed her life.

She describes the initial shock as "a pretty low blow — you have your life all mapped out, and then you find out it's not going to work that way."

"I was always a people person," she says, and had enjoyed her job selling insurance. "I was gonna be the breadwinner, and he gonna be Mr. Mom."

"Then, as it turned out, Larry would go to work, and I had to stay home and be a housewife and I hated it."

Trahan — sharing her pleasant, spacious living room for an interview with The Advertiser — seems to have found peace in the past decade in a peace to balance with the plethora of her country home.

But it didn't come easily, nor will it ever. "It takes a lot of patience on both our parts," she says, "and sometimes I wish I had more."

Trahan says isn't something that has come to her well before the diagnosis. She felt clumsy, and her hands would numb or tingle. Just before her marriage in '81, she had surgery for carpal tunnel syndrome and learned she had multiple sclerosis, but she didn't know it.

"In '82, when her vision began blurring and one foot began to drag, a physician told her she had a spinal infection — but that it wouldn't go away."

Trahan reads a lot in the quiet hours she has while her husband is at work — "anything from a VCR booklet to Time to Southern Living to best sellers.

Her aunt gives her best sellers in large print, to aid her weakened vision, and she also gets Reader's Digest in large print. Unfortunately, she points out, few magazines are offered in anything but standard print.

"Yes, I get depressed. Yes, I get angry," she says of any given aggravation. "You have your little pitty parties by you-self and then you get on. It's my faith that has gotten me this far, without a doubt." She likes the saying "God never give us more than we can handle."

Vicki Trahan, outside of her country home in Scott, models a T-shirt that commemorates the 1994 Walk, Run & Roll for MS.

GREAT DRUG AT A GREAT COST

In the battle to combat multiple sclerosis, a new drug called Beta Seron has been discovered. Unlike steroids now used, which only mask symptoms of the disease, the new drug stops — or at least slows down — the progress of MS.

The FDA-approved treatment involves 15 shots a month, for a period as yet undetermined.

Cost, however, is prohibitive for persons not well insured. The expense each month runs nearly $1,000.

Reader's Digest in large print. Unfortunately, she points out, few magazines are offered in anything but standard print.

"Yes, I get depressed. Yes, I get angry," she says of any given aggravation. "You have your little pitty parties by you-self and then you get on. It's my faith that has gotten me this far, without a doubt." She likes the saying "God never give us more than we can handle."

As for societal reaction, Trahan claims, "I just wish people weren't so judgmental. But I guess somebody feels like that."

"A cheerful person by nature, she brightens even more in discussing how she's helped her husband to keep his own life as normal as possible.

She can't any longer do some activities he enjoys — camping and fishing aren't practical in her condition, given that the sun's heat is one of her three worst enemies (stress and fatigue are the other two)."

But she arranged for Larry to take dancing lessons — found him a partner and all. Now, when they go out, she says, "I stay at the table and cut up with whoever's there — I'll talk to anyone."

Overall, she concludes of meeting the challenge of MS, or life in general, "I'm Cajun to the bone." Her philosophy, accordingly, is as simple as it is wise: "Keep the good stuff — throw the rest out."
Vicki Trahan, outside of her country home in Scott, models a T-shirt that commemorates the 1994 Walk, Run & Roll for MS.

GREAT DRUG AT A GREAT COST

In the battle to combat multiple sclerosis, a new drug called Beta Seron has been discovered. Unlike steroids now used, which only mask symptoms of the disease, the new drug stops — or at least slows down — the progress of MS.

The FDA-approved treatment involves 15 shots a month, for a period of 1 year, for a monthly cost of $1,000.

"face it: None of us know what the future will bring whether we have MS or not."

As she looks upon her life now, she reviews it in this way: "It's an inconvenience. It makes everything a lot harder. I may not do things the way you do it, but I do them the way I do it, and they get done. I have MS, but MS does not have me."

As part of her new direction, Trahan reads a lot in the quiet hours she has while her husband is at work — "anything from a VCR booklet to Time to Southern Living to best sellers."

Her aunt gives her best sellers in large print, to aid her weakened vision, and she also gets Reader's Digest in large print. Unfortunately, she points out, few magazines are offered in anything but standard print.

"Yes, I get depressed. Yes, I get angry," she says of any given aggravation. "You have your little pettinesses by you-self and then you get on it. It's my faith that has gotten me this far, without a doubt." She likes the saying "God never gives us more than we can handle."

As for societal reaction, Trahan claims, "I just wish people weren't so judgmental. But I guess everybody feels like that."