



# DRS

# Connection

Summer 2007

News and views promoting independence for people with disabilities

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## Volunteer Profiles

# Schonbrun advocating for increased public awareness of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

Caryl Schonbrun is a woman with a disability—and a mission. She suffers from Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS, also called Chemical Injury and sometimes Environmental Illness) and advocates in Fort Collins for passage of laws mandating the use of safer alternatives to common pesticides and herbicides.

One of the biggest problems for someone with her condition are neighbors who use pesticides that can threaten the life of a person who has MCS. She has personally been in disputes with people who don't understand and won't cooperate with her.

MCS awareness days are held annually in 24 states now because so few people are aware that *this condition affects 16 percent of the*

*population.* Ultimately the cumulative effect of toxins in the body can overcome the immune system.

A former nurse, Schonbrun can no longer work or move freely in the community. She is much less able than many other people with different disabilities to live a "normal" life.



Caryl  
Schonbrun

Her problems began in 1987 with her feeling that "something was wrong" but tests unable to show anything.

Then in 1999 she began to have a permanent metallic taste in her mouth and realized that even everyday smells made her feel ill and unable to function properly. She

felt sick and disoriented. The world had become one big, horrible odor. A medication prescribed for tooth pain threw her into an overdosed state and the paramedics had to come. Yet doctors could not figure out what was wrong...until she met one whose wife had the same problem.

Finally she had a diagnosis.

Schonbrun looked well on the outside but on the inside she was ill. Her family wrestled with all the difficult, necessary changes needed to cope with this medical condition. They built a non-toxic home in which her immune system is not constantly challenged. Even the ink on books and newspapers can make her ill.

Her husband now does almost  
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## Thanks, NaturalBuild for sponsoring this newsletter

The sponsor of *DRS Connection* this quarter is a Northern Colorado design/build company offering complete custom residential and commercial services. They believe each project is unique and strive to tailor services



and solutions accordingly. This is, in part, why Caryl Schonbrun selected NaturalBuild to build her "safe" home.

With NaturalBuild, a client can

expect to get the most value out of every dollar spent. Because each person has different priorities, they believe that "value" is defined by the client. NaturalBuild has a reputation for delivering projects that

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