

## Member Profile: Holly LeGros

My name is Holly LeGros. I am a 64-year-old mother of three (Ryan, Sean and Lindsay). I have lived most of my life in suburban Minnesota. In 1988, life was good and the future looked bright, even after a difficult divorce.

Then, in 1996, everything changed drastically, when I was forced out of my home for good—all because of a weatherization that was too tight, heavy rain and a bathroom remodel. I weatherized my home twice (in 1986 and 1988), but I made no connection afterward between the toxic air quality and my sinus infections, fatigue, headaches and stomach problems. Then, in 1989, water from a storm infiltrated the basement, causing extensive mold growth that was not covered by insurance.

Then, the worst part of the nightmare began. The (now-deceased) worker hired to remodel the bathroom—he didn't use protective wear--removed all of the shower tiles and exposed us to three disgusting black walls of mold. He became very ill and went to the hospital with lung pneumonitis, and he didn't return for eight weeks.

Meanwhile, I became sicker and sicker with pain and more bizarre symptoms. I kept begging them to finish the job. The first worker returned and lasted only half a day and went back to the emergency room. Yet, nobody told me about the health risks nor did they offer any advice or protection. Eventually, 4-5 men came and tore down the walls but without proper containment which meant they caused further contamination of my home with mold, VOCs and mycotoxins.

By the time they finished, I was very sick. I had experienced a significant toxic exposure with burning eyes, stinging nostrils and aching chest and tingling in my upper body. I knew in that moment I had to leave my home of 18 years to stop the pain and save my life!! Between the toxic mold and the adhesives and other products used in my shower, my body was overwhelmed with toxins. I could never go home again! I lost all of my personal property. I eventually sold the home and disclosed the mold and water damage problems to the buyers.



*Holly LeGros*

## Member Profile: Holly LeGros (continued)

The past 16 years has consisted of ongoing health problems painstaking searches for safe housing and depleted finances. I am extremely sensitive to mold and chemicals, so safe housing and stable health seem unattainable especially after five disappointing and unhealthy housing choices. I've seen fantastic environmental doctors who helped a great deal (and also mainstream, rude, dismissive ones who need more training and open minds).

I'm on a MISSION to make a difference and raise awareness of environmental illnesses (especially mold-induced illness). I don't want to be a statistic fighting a lost cause and have these 16 "lost dream" years be in vain!! I feel like a pioneer lady now and hope I can save even one person from this nightmare journey of health obstacles, lost family connections and preventable life losses and challenges. I still love life and this journey reminded me what truly matters--family, love, faith, community and purpose.

Holly has been seeking safe, mold-free housing in her area since October 31. Due to her sensitivities and on-going exposures, she has been unsuccessful in her search. **[If you are in Minnesota and have any ideas for Holly about safe housing](#)** or would like to talk with her to share ideas, please contact Holly at:

[holegros@hotmail.com](mailto:holegros@hotmail.com)

---

In order to help educate others about these "invisible disabilities," I am re-posting the following links:

[Invisible Disabilities Association](#)

[Invisible No More](#) (video with Andrea Fabry)

See *U.K. Family at Risk* on page 5