



MDA at the national convention

Reflection. The dictionary defines it as “careful thought or consideration.” Few of us take the time to look back at recent events and try to place them in perspective. Perhaps it is too near to give us a proper view of what just happened in our lives. Maybe we are just too busy to give time to idle thoughts.

The just-concluded NALC National Convention in Boston is worthy of reflection. As I think about what happened there, a number of pictures come to my mind. Members lined up to donate to MDA and try to putt for chances to win a big-screen television; hundreds of delegates attending the MDA seminar on Tuesday afternoon. Who will forget MDA Goodwill Ambassador Luke Christie, greeting the delegates on Friday morning of the convention with his parents, Brad and Gloria, by his side? And, of course, our members honoring Luke with an emphatic “letter carrier cheer” after he spoke words of thanks for all NALC does to help those afflicted with muscular dystrophy.

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My goal at this convention was to create some excitement around our efforts for this worthy charity. Many delegates came up to me to say how much they enjoyed the MDA booth. And amazingly, we raised more than \$11,000 through ticket sales, which went directly to MDA. I want to thank each and every one of you who contributed to the success of our efforts. Additionally, we gave away two prizes on Friday morning to members who had bought tickets. Congratulations to John Trujillo from Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Don Southern from Miami, Florida.

However, I would be remiss if I didn't mention Tom Boyle, the director of program administration for MDA nationally, and all the local MDA folks who showed up to help with the booth and the seminar. What a group of dedicated people. No task was too small for them, and I appreciated their efforts.

We also had volunteers from around the country who worked before and after the convention to sell tickets and help do anything I asked. Thank you to all who gave of their time!

But the lasting memories of this convention related to MDA came at the MDA seminar we presented Tuesday afternoon. Representatives from the 11 category winners shared their “secrets” to success. Everyone who attended walked away with many ideas to help bolster their involvement with MDA. I want to thank them for all they do, year in and year out, to make our fund-raising efforts a success.

We also had the honor of having Dr. Brian Tseng, head of the local MDA clinic and a brilliant physician, speak to the delegates and give an explanation of the most recent research gains through MDA. But Brian didn't stop there. While describing himself as a “nerd,” he went on to display his humanity by showing pictures of his personal involvement in MDA summer camp. The sincere emotion was apparent and his heart for these kids was amazing.

With people like Brian on our side, I have great hope we will see a cure in my lifetime.

By the time this article is published, the Labor Day telethon will have come and gone. I will be proud to represent NALC again in

Las Vegas and will have presented our totals for last year and our pledge for this year's amount. Please join me in pushing hard for the rest of the year to raise even more for “Jerry's kids.” They are worthy of the best we can do.

Next month, I'll be writing about another way to join the fight against muscular dystrophy. In Boston, we started the NALC Motorcycle Club. It doesn't matter whether you own a bike or not. Join me next month for the details!

We have tremendous pride in our union and we should. I am constantly amazed by the generosity and caring shown by our members. I can still remember, and will never forget, the first time I walked into a convention hall and stood shoulder to shoulder with this nation's letter carriers. It was an awe-inspiring event in my life. That feeling of pride has never left. Let's continue to push on in all our endeavors and deliver the cure for all those afflicted with this disease. 