



Planning for MDA success

Now is the time for branches to begin planning their efforts for MDA in 2009. As we approach the end of 2008, we can take comfort in our successes. NALC branches have followed up on our good work in 2007 by raising even more this year, and I'm hoping that at the telethon in 2009 we can top \$2.5 million in contributions for "Jerry's kids."

What does it mean to plan? One of the things I've learned through my many years of involvement with NALC is that most branches don't take the time in their busy schedules to sit down and look at where they want to be months and years down the road. Has your branch registered with NALC Headquarters? Go to the NALC website and download the form you can find there.

Why is it important? When I was asked to work with MDA, we had fewer than 300 branches participating each year with MDA. As of this *Postal Record*, we now have more than 425 branches raising money for those afflicted with muscular dystrophy. But signing up as a participat-

put together events that really work. Talk to your local MDA office and enlist their help. These are people who know how to advertise and plan effectively. Get to know those families afflicted with MDA in your community. Invite them to your events and ask them to speak about what MDA means to them. If it is a letter carrier family, look for other ways you can help. As you can see, planning for success has a lot of steps.

Once your branch holds an event to raise money for MDA, it is imperative that a copy of the MDA fund-raising form is sent to NALC Headquarters. That way, we can compare our records with MDA to make sure you get credit for the hard work you do.

Another thing to remember is that we always need to keep our efforts fresh and new while staying the course to find a cure. It is my intent to keep looking for ways to raise money that challenge our members to stay engaged with MDA.

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ing branch is only the first step in planning.

When a branch registers with NALC Headquarters, you will be sent a packet that includes a DVD and the *NALC-MDA Handbook*. The handbook contains a wealth of information about events and planning steps for these events.

Does your branch have an MDA coordinator? I'm urging branches to appoint a coordinator and then sit down with those who volunteer to craft a plan for next year and beyond. The most successful branches set goals and work to achieve the goals that are set. Get out a planning calendar and come up with a list of events. Make it fun for our members and have more than one event. Keep MDA on the front burner. Remember, MDA is our national charity and it is important.

Don't let the coordinator do all the work. Appoint an MDA committee to help with all the details necessary to

In next month's *Postal Record*, we will be trying something completely different. The December issue will include an envelope for a contribution for MDA. The thought behind it is that many people

are looking for year-end opportunities for tax deductions. Please take a look at the envelope and contribute so we can end 2008 on a high note. You will be able to write your branch number on the envelope so that the contributions will be credited to your branch.

Don't forget: Planning can make a huge difference in determining the success of our MDA efforts. Together, we can continue to grow our MDA commitment. As writer Harvey MacKay has said, "Failures don't plan to fail; they fail to plan."

John Dick, the letter carrier from Royal Oak, Michigan Branch 3126 who made that thousand-mile motorcycle ride up and down the state of Michigan back in June (story in the October 2008 *Postal Record*) reports he wound up collecting nearly \$5,000 in donations for MDA. Way to go, John!

