



## Walking the talk

**A**ll of us have heard the phrase “walking the talk.” There are many who can talk a good game, but when the chips are down and are nowhere to be found, letter carriers walk the talk on their routes and have devotion to the Muscular Dystrophy Association every day.

On the first Sunday of November, letter carriers and their families and friends went to their local bowling alleys to kick off the first national effort to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association since the famous “porch light brigade” in 1952.

This historic event marks the NALC’s continuing commitment to MDA and the families they represent to find a cure for the more than 40 neuromuscular diseases for which MDA provides help and hope.

I want to personally thank all those who planned, promoted and participated in this new program to increase NALC’s contribution. A special mention is deserved for every branch MDA coordinator who worked so hard on short notice. Your efforts were not in vain, based on the initial reports I’ve received. By now, I hope and trust each branch has appointed someone for this vital coordinator position. Nothing happens in this great union without a single person caring enough to do the work.

To those who took the time away from family to come out and bowl, I believe your heart was blessed to take part and make a difference. Next year, I hope the turnout will be even greater. Circle the date of November 7, 2010, for the second annual NALC bowlathon for MDA. Note the first Sunday of November on the calendar every year and plan for the event. There is no limit to what we can do.

The form to report your totals was to be into Headquarters by December 1, but the deadline for this article was too early to announce the results in this issue. So, in the January *Postal Record* we will list the branch and individual winners. If you have photos of your event, e-mail the best ones to [postalrecord@nalc.org](mailto:postalrecord@nalc.org) as soon as possible and we will publish as many as we can.

**A reminder to all branches: The fiscal year for MDA is January 1-December 31, so don’t delay reporting your totals for 2009 by the end of the year. In addition, please send a copy of the branch activity form to Headquarters so that we can make sure you get credit for your events. Every year, we publish the yearly totals for branches and often totals are incorrect or missing. In almost all situa-**

tions, the form was not sent into MDA and we cannot correct the numbers because we did not receive a copy. MDA has been very good in taking our word, but it is sometimes months before we can do so. Contact the local MDA representative to make sure your totals reflect what MDA has in their records. Thanks in advance for your help!

By the way, the branch activity form and the form for the bowlathon are on NALC’s website at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org).

**I just received new information from MDA about ways our monies are spent. MDA is funding 330 active research projects worldwide at a cost of more than \$42 million. Here are a few examples of what can be accomplished in a single lab during a given time period, but multiply each by 330 to understand how far our donations go.**

- **In 15 minutes, using genomics and computational biology tools, Dr. Antonio Giraldez, an MDA-supported researcher at Yale, can analyze how hundreds of different RNA molecules work with each other to control muscle growth.**
- **In 30 minutes, Dr. Lynn Cooley, an MDA-supported researcher also at Yale, can examine individual living muscle stem cells under a high-powered fluorescence microscope to discover new ways to prompt the body’s own stem cells to regenerate into muscle.**
- **In 45 minutes, Dr. Se-Jin Lee, an MDA-supported researcher at Johns Hopkins University, can conduct a protein-binding experiment to discover new molecules that stimulate the body to grow new muscle in people with muscular dystrophy. In 2007, Dr. Lee discovered one such molecule, called follistatin, which is now under development as a possible therapy for muscular dystrophy.**

This work, we believe with all our heart, will result in cures and treatments for all these diseases. These experiments and hundreds of others are funded with the help of the nation’s letter carriers. When you all showed up to support our effort on November 1, as well as all the other events we hold every year, we got a step closer to achieving that dream. More importantly, every child and adult who has muscular dystrophy and dreams of living a long and healthy life will benefit from our efforts.

Letter carriers truly walk the talk. We walk so that one day, they will, too. 