



# Making a muscle for MDA



## Carriers collect \$1.9 million for official charity

**N**ALC President Fredric V. Rolando joined representatives of the Association's most successful fund-raising branches on stage during the annual Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon for the Muscular Dystrophy Association at the South Point Casino in Las Vegas September 5-6 to deliver a check for \$1.9 million, representing the national union's collections for the MDA over the past year.

"The nation's letter carriers have been with the MDA since 1952," Rolando said, noting that the organization is the union's only official charity. "Our commitment to MDA is to be here until a cure is found."

Perhaps reflecting the effects of the worst recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s, the total collected by the NALC and the telethon's final tally were somewhat lower than last year's figures. Still, the tote board at the end of the 2010 telethon showed total pledges and donations of more than \$58.9 million.

"When so many Americans are forced to choose between giving to a reputable, established charity and putting food on the dinner table, declines like these are understandable," Rolando said.

"Even so, that we're able to still collect donations in the millions is still quite an accomplishment," Jim Williams,

the union's national MDA coordinator, added, "and we are more committed than ever to improve our showing a year from now."

Rolando, an MDA national vice president, first took the stage during Hour 5 of the 21½-hour broadcast to introduce representatives of some of the top fund-raising NALC branches. In Hour 13, Williams, a member of Portland, OR Branch 82 and a retired national executive vice president, brought to the stage a second group (see photos of both groups above). Then, in Hour 18, Rolando presented the \$1.9 million check to telethon co-hosts Jann Carl and Nancy O'Dell, as well as to MDA National Youth Chairman Luke Christie.

"I've had the pleasure of being at several of the NALC conventions," Christie said, "and your letter carriers are some of the greatest people I know."

"This [contribution] means a lot," he added, "so thank you so much for being here."

After the NALC signed on as an official sponsor of the MDA in 1952, the union's first nationally coordinated campaign to raise funds for MDA came during Thanksgiving week a year later. After completing their routes, tens of thousands of letter carriers in more than 800 cities volunteered to walk those routes a second time to solicit donations

## Top NALC fund-raising branches

- ◆ *Highest amount collected:* New Jersey Mgd. Br. 38, \$128,434
- ◆ *Category I (2,000 members or more):* Brooklyn Br. 41, \$56,000
- ◆ *Category II (1,500-1,999 members):* Hartford, CT Br. 86, \$30,832
- ◆ *Category III (1,000-1,499 members):* Louisville Br. 14, \$17,024
- ◆ *Category IV (700-999 members):* Northeastern New York Br. 358, \$21,320
- ◆ *Category V (500-699 members):* Grand Rapids, MI Br. 56, \$24,709
- ◆ *Category VI (350-499 members):* Shreveport, LA Br. 197, \$10,954
- ◆ *Category VII (200-349 members):* Green Bay Br. 619, \$12,850
- ◆ *Category VIII (100-199 members):* Fargo-West Fargo Br. 205, \$11,091
- ◆ *Category IX (50-99 members):* Freehold, NJ Br. 924, \$6,801
- ◆ *Category X (10-49 members):* New City, NY Br. 5229, \$8,140
- ◆ *Special Category:* Brooklyn Auxiliary 2003, \$4,700

Opposite page: Representatives of the top fundraisers among NALC branches appeared on the annual Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon for MDA.

Top: Appearing on stage in the telethon's 13th hour were (from l) Scott Andrus, Grand Rapids Branch 56; Bob Bracy, Louisville Branch 14; Michael Curran, Northeastern New York Branch 358; Richard O'Connell Jr., representing New Jersey Merged Branch 38; Curt Roessler, Hartford, CT Branch 86; Marie Tartaglione, Brooklyn Branch 41.

Bottom: Coming to the stage during Hour 15 of the telethon were (from l) Michael Bagarozzi, New City, NY Branch 5229; Alison Coad, Green Bay Branch 619; Jeffrey Harness, Freehold, NJ Branch 924; Lon Smedsrud, Fargo-West Fargo Branch 205; and Donna Sterner, Shreveport, LA Branch 197.

for the MDA. They carried their leather mail satchels with them as a public reassurance that carriers could be trusted with the money they were collecting.

Since then, NALC members have raised tens of millions of dollars in contributions by holding car washes, poker tournaments and bake sales, and by passing the hat at union gatherings. Last November, the union inaugurated an annual national bowlathon for MDA (*see "Rolling Right Along," below*).

The Muscular Dystrophy Association is a non-profit health agency dedicated to fighting neuromuscular diseases such as muscular dystrophy and ALS,

commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. It provides funding for research as well as comprehensive health care and support services, advocacy and educations. Money also goes toward medical clinics and summer camps and helps cover family expenses for equipment, including leg braces and motorized wheelchairs.

Nearly 40 million viewers watched the 2010 telethon broadcast over more than 170 television stations. The show also was available online at [mda.org](http://mda.org), and coverage was provided via the MDA's Twitter, Facebook and YouTube sites. ✉

President Rolando presents a check from NALC to the MDA's Luke Christie.



# Rolling right along

## Second annual MDA Bowlathon approaches

**S**cores of NALC branches are gearing up for the second annual National Bowlathon for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

The event, set for Sunday, November 7, will take place in bowling alleys and lanes across the nation.

"From collective bargaining to our annual food drive," NALC President Fredric Rolando said, "letter carriers understand that pulling together to work as one national union continues to be a winning strategy.

"Banding together to help raise money for the MDA, our only national charity, is one of the best ways I can think of for me and my fellow letter carriers to spend a Sunday afternoon," he said.

In last year's inaugural effort, thousands of carriers, their families and friends helped the NALC raise more than \$300,000 for the MDA, helping to

boost the Association's total contribution to this year's Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon for MDA to \$1.9 million (*see story, page 26*).

"We know that many branches put on fundraisers year-round in support of this worthy cause," Jim Williams, the NALC's national MDA coordinator, said. "Having us focus on this one event helps us inject some extra excitement into our work.

"Where this is different from a national effort like the food drive is that we want this bowlathon to inspire branches to come up with other creative ways to raise money for Jerry's kids," added Williams, a member of Portland, OR Branch 82.

In fact, many branches across the country sponsor a variety of fundraisers for MDA, including golf tournaments, bingo nights, pancake breakfasts and raffles.

## Doing M.O.R.E.

Donna Sterner, the MDA coordinator for Shreveport, LA Branch 197, has put together a PowerPoint presentation designed to help branches get ready, not just for the bowlathon, but for any MDA-related event. The key, she says, is to do M.O.R.E.—to provide Motivation, Organization, Recruitment and Enthusiasm.

The presentation, in both PowerPoint and PDF formats, is available on [nalc.org](http://nalc.org). On the main page under “Community

Service,” select “MDA.”

For more on the NALC’s work with the MDA, see Williams’ monthly column on page 76.

**Branches that registered to participate in this year’s bowlathon should have received their information packets already. After the bowlathon, participating branches should send their official scoring forms to NALC Headquarters as soon as possible. For assistance, please contact Linda Giordano, the union’s community service coordinator, at 202-662-2489. ✉**

## Contributions to MDA, PERF encouraged

**C**arriers are proud of the many ways they help their communities. They go out of their way to watch over their patrons, step in when they encounter emergencies on their routes, and collect food for the hungry.

With the annual Combined Federal Campaign under way, there are two other ways letter carriers can pitch in to help those in need—by signing up to give to the Postal Employees’ Relief Fund (PERF) and the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) through automatic payroll deductions.

Over the years, aid from PERF has gone to assist thousands of postal employees whose lives were touched by tragedy, from Hurricane Katrina to fires and natural disasters nationwide. PERF extends a lifeline to our coworkers in the Postal Service.

The MDA, which letter carriers support through so many varied activities, can also benefit from our CFC donations. MDA helps thousands of families affected by muscular dystrophy and works tirelessly toward developing treatments and cures.

President Fredric Rolando recently sent a letter to the presidents of the union’s largest branches asking them to urge their members to give to the charity of their choice through CFC.

“By contributing to this year’s Combined Federal Campaign,” Rolando wrote, “we are helping fund the vital services necessary to help people get back

and stay on, their feet. Whether it’s through financial stability, early childhood education, or health and well being, our contributions go a long way to support the programs that advance the common good for all of us.”

PERF gives grants to postal employees who face disasters like fires and floods, covering expenses not covered by insurance or other disaster relief. A committee of union leaders and managers, including President Rolando, oversees PERF. The vast majority of assistance has gone to active and retired members of the NALC and the American Postal Workers Union—the two largest Postal Service unions—with the remainder going to mail handlers, rural carriers, supervisors, postmasters and other employees.

PERF depends heavily on CFC donations—more than 90 percent of its income comes from payroll deductions. Because PERF has very low administrative costs, nearly all the money goes directly to postal workers in need. Donations to PERF and MDA are tax-deductible.

Like all charities, PERF and MDA face difficult times because of the economic downturn. Sustaining their ability to continue helping people in need requires extra effort from their core supporters, so now is the time to support PERF, MDA and any other charities through the CFC.

The CFC number for PERF is 10268. MDA’s CFC number is 0536. ✉



President Rolando’s letter to NALC members asking that they donate to the Combined Federal Campaign.