



Muscle walks—an idea worth exploring

NALC branches across America are always looking for new and fresh ways to raise money for MDA families. Right now, a branch can choose from golf, bowling, softball tournaments and many other ways to involve itself in helping the Muscular Dystrophy Association provide help and hope to children and adults dealing with the more than 40 diseases covered by MDA.

We have just finished our “Fill the Satchel” effort and numerous branches are reporting success from their work. Now I’d like to present a new way to raise money that is easy and can result in a significant increase in your fundraising efforts.

Arizona Merged Branch 1902 has had a real breakthrough by using muscle walks as part of their fundraising. What is a muscle walk? The MDA Muscle Walk is a series of local walk events across the country held to pay tribute to and raise funds for children and adults served by the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The walks are family-oriented gatherings and light exercise for everyone—children, adults, grandparents, students, teams and more.

The best way to get on board is to access the MDA webpage at walk.mda.org to learn how to prepare and organize a muscle walk. All the tools you will need are there, including pictures and captions to use in your personal fundraising page. So how does it work? First, sign up for the walk nearest you. The walks are listed on the webpage. Click on “find a walk” and a listing of walks for the rest of 2012 and 2013 will come up.

Next, set a goal and share it with your members. Involve your friends and family in this effort. Third, set up your personal fundraising page, which makes it easy to raise funds for MDA by using e-mail and other social-networking tools. Use your page to explain why you are walking and to manage your “friend-raising” list. Make your page relevant by uploading meaningful photos of family members and others in your life who inspired you to take part in the muscle walk. The No. 1 reason people contribute to a worthwhile cause is because someone they know reached out and asked them. Then, send e-mails to everyone you know and check your personal page to monitor your fundraising progress.

Many people use social networking to increase the

amount of money raised, and it works! Do you use Facebook or Twitter? Register online to download a copy of the new MDA Social Networking Toolkit.

Last, start a team and send invitations to your family, friends and co-workers so they can sign up under your team. Encourage your team members to use the same online tools that you use and help them get started.

I asked Ron Resop, president of Branch 1902, to comment on the great success his branch achieved last year by using a Muscle Walk as one of its fundraisers. Here is what he said:

Our branch, Arizona Merged Branch 1902, was approached this past spring by our local MDA representative, who asked if we would like to participate in the upcoming MDA Muscle Walk. The Muscle Walk, which took place on March 24, was and is MDA’s largest and most successful event of the year in Arizona. The event raised over \$202,000. Of that, I am proud to say that NALC Branch 1902 raised \$8,600, placing us third among sponsors.

I would encourage any branch of any size to consider participating in an MDA Muscle Walk in your area, especially if your branch has not held an event in the past. You will not find an easier way to raise funds for this worthy cause. How easy? We formed a team for this year’s Muscle Walk, which consisted of seven Branch 1902 members. We registered that team on the MDA Muscle Walk website and set a goal. We created a team page and each member drafted a personal page. Each member then contacted potential donors via e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, etc., by posting their personal page, a mere click of the mouse. Potential donors could then make a donation through any of these mechanisms by a click of their mouse. We were able to monitor the donations to our team by visiting the MDA Muscle Walk website and visiting our team page. Brothers and sisters, it doesn’t get any easier than this.

Ron also has agreed to be available to answer questions anyone might have about the muscle walks. Schedule your muscle walk as soon as possible and if you have questions, call Ron at 480-464-0373. Your local MDA coordinator is available for additional help.

Thanks again for all your efforts, and I hope you’ll consider a muscle walk in the coming year. ☒