





Giving all year

At this time of year, our thoughts turn to the joy of giving to others, whether through service or with tangible things. But we don't stop helping others when the holiday season ends—letter carriers think of others through every season of the year. As the stories in the next few pages show, letter carriers across the country kept busy throughout 2014 doing good deeds, such

as raising money for local hospices, helping food banks fill their shelves, collecting toys to delight children in need, donating life-saving bone marrow cells, fulfilling the wishes of terminally ill children, delivering (and answering) letters to Santa Claus and collecting more than \$1 million for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

The Postal Record hopes these stories warm your heart all the way through 2015.

Providing heartwarming holidays nationwide

NALC members across the country step up during the holiday season. From dressing up as Santa to collecting toys for children to adopting families or whole schools, carriers show they care in a multitude of ways.

Ray Walsh, a retired Garden State Merged, NJ Branch 444 member, had been a coordinator for the Stamp Out Hunger Letter Carriers' Food Drive every spring, but he and his wife, Jane, began wondering whether anyone collected food for Thanksgiving where they live, in Somerset County, NJ.

So, Walsh discussed with staffers at the

local food bank what it would take to feed local families in need, and decided on a first-year goal of feeding the shelter's 60 families for \$5 a person. They succeeded.

"It's an extension of the food drive—that's where the first seed was planted," Walsh said. "My wife and I thought there was a need, and we went down to the food bank, and it grew."

Walsh, who carried mail for 38 years, flew solo the first year, but "I'm working on pushing other letter carriers," he said. "They can talk to their handful of customers."

Right: Roberto De Paz of South Florida Branch 1071 shows the donations that will head to a local homeless shelter in time for Christmas.





Houston, TX Branch 283 members collect supplies and toys for kids at Harris Elementary School.

The NALC member said that some previous recipients of the dinners who have gotten back on their feet have paid it forward by donating the following year.

A four-time cancer survivor, Walsh was told 21 years ago that he had two months to live. “I’ve had my lumps and bumps, so I understand what it’s like to be on the bottom,” he said. “When I leave this earth, it needs to be a better place.”

Walsh said that going forward, the program will collect for both Thanksgiving and Christmas—“two holidays that are supposed to celebrate family,” he said.

Walsh emphasized that word of mouth is everything in efforts such as these. “It’s about getting the word out,” he said. “Just tell two of your friends, and this will grow.”

Now in its fifth year, the program is nearing 25 percent of its goal, which is to feed 1,000 families. Since its county-wide inception in 2010, the program has raised more than \$37,000.

“It’s a slow walk to achieve full contributions for the county,” Walsh said, but “if it grows enough feet, we can travel a long distance.”

For years, Belleville, IL Branch 155 carrier **John Ciszczon** has delivered to the Riverbend Head Start facility on his route. The organization helps families that live below the poverty line and have a child with a disability. Its mission is to help, through education, these youngsters and their families develop positive skills to meet life’s challenges.

For seven years, the carrier had taken up a collection on his route to raise

The carrier mentioned his start-up program to the mayor of Manville and members of the governing board of the county, who all thought the adopt-a-family program was a great idea and wanted to expand the effort to cover the entire county. All 21 municipalities in Somerset County now are trying to get on board. “It’s

Belleville, IL Branch 155 carrier John Ciszczon organizes donations for the local Head Start program.



a snowball in the right direction,” Walsh said.

“We have more than 4,000 families in need in the county, and our goal is to feed all of them,” he said. “Nobody should have to be in need of food. We should be helping our neighbors.”

The way the program works is that Walsh and others hand out flyers to their patrons and people in the community, soliciting \$40 donations. “We knock on a lot of doors and talk to a lot of businesses,” Walsh said.

No money is collected at that time—the donors send their checks directly to the food bank, which has more buying power than do individuals. And a donor also has the ability to specify which part of the county he or she would like their contribution to go to, but they don’t know exactly whom they are helping.

“There’s a sense of keeping their dignity,” Walsh said. “We can help them clear the hurdle. It’s a helping hand, not welfare.”



A midnight walk for hospice

Framingham, MA Branch 334 member **Rick Dauphinais** never met Todd Livman. But that didn't stop Dauphinais from walking 50 miles in Livman's name to raise funds for the hospice where Livman died recently of a brain tumor at age 34.

Dauphinais was inspired by a friend of his who had known Livman and who had a talent for fundraising. With his friend handling fundraising logistics, Dauphinais planned a walk to end in Salem, MA, where most of Livman's family and friends lived.

Though Dauphinais has a mostly mounted route and doesn't walk much each day, he's no lightweight—he once walked 217 miles from Ground Zero in New York to Winchester, MA, in support of housing for returning veterans.

When fellow Branch 334 member **Charles Wilkins** heard about the walk, he helped Dauphinais plan a safe route near Wilkins' home—and offered to join him. It was Wilkins' first charity walk.

With a support team consisting of letter carriers **Ray Abbott, Kevin Calden, Brian Murphy** and **Lisa Wilkins** (a carrier and wife of Charles Wilkins) driving a pickup truck along the route, the two carriers walked together

from New Castle, NH, to Salem from 11 p.m. to 3 p.m. the next day. They chose to walk overnight so that they would arrive at a local restaurant, the Black Lobster, with plenty of time for supporters—including some of Livman's friends and family—to celebrate. "We wanted some daylight so everyone could get together," Dauphinais said.

"There were more than 200 people waiting for us," Wilkins said. "It was pretty cool." Wilkins also was inspired by the bagpiper and flags that greeted the two men as they crossed a bridge near the end of their trek.

Through donations, ticket sales to the post-walk celebration at the Black Lobster and raffles of donated prizes, the walk raised more than \$10,000 for Care Dimensions hospice in Danvers, MA.

Though his feet were understandably sore at the end of the walk, Dauphinais isn't tired yet. "We're actually going to do it again next year," he said. **PR**

money for Head Start families at Christmastime. Ciszczon's friend and fellow Branch 155 member, **Bruce Mauer**, also had been doing this for years at his Belleville station. "Because I liked what Bruce did, I wanted to do it in Edwardsville," Ciszczon said.

Last year, Ciszczon attended a county Federation of Labor meeting and heard about the federation's charitable efforts. He approached executive board member Rick Stamer, who lived on his route, and told him that he had collected hundreds of dollars over the years for Head Start families, but wanted to do more to help the nearly 900 children enrolled in the program.

Together, they came up with the "Holiday for Head Start" campaign and raised money to buy \$100 gift cards good at area union grocery stores, and to buy gifts and clothes so that families do not have to choose between a Christmas meal, paying bills, and providing holiday gifts for their children.

"There are a lot of kids who don't see a tree full of presents surrounded by family at Christmas," Ciszczon told KSDK-TV. "We are the ones who are blessed. They are good people; some just aren't fortunate enough to have good jobs."

Holiday for Head Start sent out a mailing to businesses and organizations asking for donations. The response from the community was great—last year, they raised more than \$11,000. The gift certificates are then handed out at a monthly Head Start meeting for the parents taking part in the program.

Last Christmas season, Ciszczon and Stamer also rented a theater to sponsor a free movie event for these

families. They showed the holiday classic, "The Polar Express."

Ciszczon said he's received some help from letter carriers in the office, and he plans to get other post offices involved. "I was fortunate to come up with the idea and get some help, and it's just grown from there," the carrier

said. "This year, it's really blossomed in Edwardsville."

The 26-year carrier said people are really gracious and generous in helping out. "For parents, it's good for them to see that labor is involved in the betterment of the community," he said. "The satisfaction is seeing these kids smile.



Rick Dauphinais (l) and Charles Wilkins

Giving “another chance at life”

Letter carriers sometimes save the lives of people they encounter while out on their routes, but **Richard Maloney** of Southeast MA Merged Branch 18 saved the life of a woman with leukemia who lived a thousand miles away—by donating his bone marrow.

While giving blood at a blood drive in 2012, a Red Cross worker asked Maloney, who has carried the mail for 27 years in Franklin, MA, to join the “Be the Match” bone marrow donation system operated by the National Marrow Donor Program. With a simple swab of his cheek to take a DNA sample, Maloney joined a database of potential donors who are matched with people with certain blood diseases who could benefit from bone marrow transplant treatment.

“It’s a simple swab of your cheek,” he said. “It’s not that hard.”

In just a few months, Maloney learned that he was a match with a woman with leukemia. After he underwent a battery of tests to assure he was healthy enough to donate, the Postal Service gave Maloney three days of administrative leave to travel to the Rhode Island Blood Center in Providence to donate some blood-forming cells in his bone marrow. The cells would be injected into the leukemia patient’s bloodstream, where ideally they would grow and make healthy blood.

Before Maloney began the donation process, though, doctors asked him to promise not to back out. “We’re going to strip the patient of all white blood cells,” the doctors told him. Using chemotherapy, the cancerous white blood cells would be cleared from the woman before Maloney’s donated

marrow cells allowed her to grow new ones—but after losing all of her white blood cells, including her still-healthy ones, the patient could die quickly without a marrow donation.

Maloney assured the doctors that he was committed to the donation.

Donating his marrow did not require surgical extraction of marrow from one of Maloney’s bones; instead, doctors used a non-surgical procedure called peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) donation to gather blood-forming cells present in his bloodstream. A needle drew blood from one of his arms, and a centrifuge stripped the blood of blood-forming cells before returning the blood through a needle in his other arm. The procedure took four-and-a-half hours, and Maloney recovered quickly from the small side effects.

Six months later, Maloney learned that his donation had succeeded. In another six months the patient, a woman from Texas, reached out to him through the “Be the Match” program, and Maloney agreed to talk to her.

“She thanked me profusely,” Maloney said. “It felt good. On my end, it was very simple. In her case, she got another chance at life. There’s no better feeling than that.”

The Postal Service has recruited postal workers as potential donors through its “Delivering the Gift of Life” initiative since 1997. At least 80 postal employees have become donors.

Maloney urged others to join the “Be the Match” registry. “You could save a life,” he said. “Everyone deserves a second chance.”

Got to bethematch.org for more information. **PR**

for local Harris Elementary School for years, after learning that the children were going without supplies. The branch also had been involved with adopting three to four families during the holiday season.

“We’re the carriers and we know the families in need, because we’re out there every day,” Branch 283 member **Ethel Ford** said.

Last year, a representative from the school contacted Ford to see if carriers could put on a career day. Ford and others went to a special needs class to talk about being letter carriers.

“I just felt the warmth of the class,” Ford said. Knowing that they needed to help, carriers in the office decided to adopt the entire elementary school.

The carriers started just after Thanksgiving by talking to store owners about donating toys, gifts, clothes and shoes, and by placing collection bins in the lobby of their post office. “Everyone in the station participates,” Ford said.

Three days before Christmas, the Houston carriers and clerks showed up at the school to do what they do best—deliver. “We had a truckload of toys, and the toys kept coming,” Ford said. “Everybody loves helping the kids. It’s all about the kids.”

Toy drives are a popular way to help children in communities across the country. Branches all over put them on, from Harrisburg, PA Branch 500 to South Florida Branch 1071.

At the Palmetto Lakes office in Miami, Branch 1071 employees held a Toys for Tots drive for more than a decade—then it stopped. “We needed something more tangible,” carrier **Roberto De Paz** said.

People come up and give us a hug. There’s no better Christmas gift.”

Houston, TX Branch 283 carriers at the Cornerstone Post Office also try

to help out the community by doing something different each year.

The carriers at that office had been involved with a school supply drive



When De Paz heard a plea on the radio from a local homeless shelter, he knew he and his fellow carriers needed to help. A local pastor who had been homeless came to speak to the carriers and told “eye-watering stories,” De Paz said. “It puts a face on the charity.”

“We continued what we were doing,” the 29-year letter carrier and Air Force Reserve veteran said. Office employees gave donations and they solicited donations of toys and clothes from those on their routes and from local businesses.

“I put out the word every year,” De Paz said. On his affluent mail route, he even collected seven bikes last holiday season. The office collects between 500 and 600 toys each year, and it all stays in the area, benefitting the Miami Rescue Mission.

“The important thing is it stays local,” he said.

Once the carriers get all their donations together, “we load it up in hampers and the shelter comes and picks it up,” De Paz said. The shelter

throws a dinner for its patrons, where the gifts are distributed. “They’re ecstatic,” De Paz said.

Writing letters to Santa is always a popular holiday activity for children around the county, and kids in Racine, WI even get responses, thanks to the efforts of Branch 436 letter carriers and clerks.

Letters that include return addresses that come into the post offices in Racine, along with those handed to carriers during the city’s annual downtown holiday parade, are funneled to carrier **Laura Lee Dominguese**. There have been up to 600 letters in any given year.

Dominguese gets help at the parade from fellow carriers **Chris Paige** and **Jody Spencer**. The three have done it for many years and keep coming back.

“It gives you a boost into the season, a kickstart into the holidays,” Spencer told *The Journal Times*.

Once all of the letters are collected, Dominguese divvies them up among many carrier volunteers who then

Carriers in Racine, WI Branch 436 get into the holiday spirit.

write responses to the children on behalf of Santa Claus. The return postage is paid for by donations from the postal workers themselves.

Each envelope includes a special, personalized message, and last year they even includes a code for a free subscription to *Zoobooks* animal magazine to promote literacy. *Zoobooks* donated hundreds of subscriptions for the cause.

“What a great way to start the holiday season,” Spencer said.

In whatever ways branches and letter carriers from coast to coast decide to help out in their communities during the holidays, you can bet that they’re delivering more than just the mail.

“The holiday season comes as a reminder to give back to the communities we serve, and carriers find unique and effective ways to do so,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “Just as we deliver year-round, so too must we deliver for those in need in our communities.” **PR**



Retiree gives sick kids a magical piece of the world

Left: Joseph Koch
Below: One child enjoys Disney World thanks to Give Kids the World



needs of these families. Guests stay in villas and visit all the regional attractions they desire—all at no cost. With the help of generous donors, corporations and partnering wish-granting organizations, Give Kids the World has welcomed more than 132,000 families from all 50 states and more than 75 countries.

As part of his volunteer work, Koch does a little bit of everything, including setting up coffee and food for the families and getting gifts prepared to deliver to the wish children and their siblings. In the villages, “the kids rule,” he said.

“Every day, every child gets a gift—not just the wish children.”

Koch has met a lot of the youngsters over the years and says the village is quite a place. “It’s a miracle, some of the stories I could tell you,” he said. One first-grade child who attended was not supposed to survive the year—yet Koch attended her high school graduation many years later. She is now in college. And two of the first wish children kept in touch and got married many years later.

Koch, who began volunteering in 1994, works twice a week at Give Kids the World. He has logged more than 22,500 volunteer hours and is still going strong. “We can help somebody and they can pass it on,” he said. “Your health is your wealth. Somebody’s got it worse than me, and seeing smiles on the faces of kids and their families—it makes you feel good.”

For more information about the organization, check out gktw.org. **PR**

Letter carriers are known for their service in their communities. Some even carry that commitment well into retirement.

Joseph Koch of Central Florida Branch 1091 is such a person. For 22-plus years, the retired carrier has volunteered for the Give Kids the World program, which brings terminally ill children to central Florida for week-long vacations free of charge. Koch delivered mail for 38 years.

“I enjoyed the job,” the 87-year-old said. “I don’t deliver mail anymore; I deliver gifts.”

Koch originally belonged to Philadelphia Branch 157 but relocated to Florida with his wife, who had been diagnosed with cancer, for warmer weather. When the longtime NALC member got to Florida and saw a newspaper ad asking for volunteers at a place called “Give Kids the World,” he was interested.

“I’m a cancer survivor and had heart surgery, so I just wanted to do something after my wife passed away,” he said. “You just have to appreciate your health.”

Give Kids the World, founded by

Holocaust survivor Henri Landwirth in 1989, is a non-profit foundation dedicated to enriching the lives of terminally ill children and their families. The children must be certified by a doctor as terminally ill and are usually referred to Give Kids the World by wish-granting organizations. The children and their families are given a six-day, all-expenses-paid vacation to Give Kids the World Village. The organization provides flights or train rides to families to bring them to the village, and also provides them with a free car or van for the week.

“He survived and wanted to do something because he never had a childhood,” Koch said of Landwirth. “What a compassionate man.”

Located in Kissimmee—just outside of Orlando, near Disney World, Universal Studios Florida, Sea World, Busch Gardens and other theme parks—Give Kids the World Village is a resort that caters to the special



Branches deliver for the Muscular Dystrophy Association

In a September ceremony in Washington, DC, NALC recognized the hard work of letter carriers from 11 branches that raised the most money in 2013 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), NALC's official charity.

NALC President Fredric Rolando praised the overall fundraising leader, New Jersey Merged Branch 38, as well as the top branches in each of 10 size categories for their work and dedication. Branch 38 raised \$82,632 for MDA.

"Letter carriers have been strong supporters of MDA since 1952, when the very first broadcast fundraising events that later became the MDA Telethon were born," Rolando said. "Our commitment has only grown since then. Last year, letter carriers in branches across the country raised a total of \$1,142,432 for MDA programs."

MDA is the world's leading non-profit health organization sponsoring research seeking the causes of and effective treatments for neuromuscular diseases. MDA research grants currently support more than 250 projects worldwide. MDA also provides support to people with neuromuscular diseases and their families through projects such as summer camps.

MDA also thanked the top fundraising branches—and all letter carriers—for NALC's support of MDA, with a plaque presented to President Rolando at the September event.

The other top NALC fundraisers honored were: 2,000 or more members—Long Island Merged, NY Branch

6000 (\$57,277); 1,500-1,999 members—Atlanta, GA Branch 73 (\$25,979); 1,000-1,499 members—Hartford, CT Branch 86 (\$44,913); 70-999 members—Northeastern New York Branch 358 (\$20,006); 500-699 members—Colorado Springs, CO Branch 204 (\$12,697); 350-499 members—Rockford, IL Branch 245 (\$13,097); 200-349 members—Saginaw, MI Branch 74 (\$11,583); 100-199 members—Fargo-West Fargo, ND Branch 205 (\$18,895); 50-99 members—Jefferson City, MO Branch 127 (\$5,289); and 10-49 members—Adrian, MI Branch 579 (\$3,117).

Activists from the winning branches say their success stems from a combination of dedication, broad participation levels and creativity.

Branch 38 built on the past success of its core MDA fundraising events to reach the highest overall amount for MDA, **Christine Strasser**, the branch's MDA representative, said.

"We sent out an MDA mailing to particular towns in our area," she said. "We have a night at the races at The Meadowlands for about 150 attendees; we have a golf outing every October with about 96 golfers in attendance; we have donation canisters placed at many locations." Still, Branch 38 keeps experimenting



Top: The award-winning branches were honored by President Rolando at a ceremony in Washington, DC, in September.

Above: Members of Adrian, MI Branch 579 collect during a fill-the-satchel drive.

with new fundraising ideas, such as having letter carriers bag groceries at stores that have donation canisters.

"We get so many volunteers from the branch, and we get a lot of participation from the branch," Branch 74 President **Brad McKenna** said of the Saginaw, MI branch's MDA events. The branch relies on two annual fundraisers, a bowlathon and a golf scramble, in which teams of 2 to 4 players all hit from the best ball any team member hits. The bowlathon raised nearly twice as much as the previous year's, thanks in part to support from nearby NALC branches.

To squeeze every penny from the golf event, Branch 74 includes additional chances to donate, such as raffles, auctions and contests at each hole with donated prizes for the winners. Players won prizes for hitting a ball closest to



Raising money by playing donkey-ball

West Palm Beach, FL Branch
1690 carriers will do almost anything to support MDA, including playing basketball on donkeys.

With 10 rented donkeys, the branch's carriers broke into two teams and entertained a crowd with four quarters of unique basketball play at the Fenn Center in Fort Pierce, FL, in October.

"Carriers could dismount the donkey when getting the basketball," Branch President **Rick Abbarno** said, but they had to be on their animals while shooting. "The event was absolutely hilarious and very entertaining," he said. The branch raised money through ticket sales, donations for taking photos with the donkeys, a 50/50 raffle and door prizes.

"It's very tough to shoot while on a donkey," Abbarno added, which explains the 9-5 final score. But the number that really matters is \$2,520—the total the event yielded for MDA. Though playing basketball on a donkey isn't easy—several carriers had "bumps, bruises and very sore muscles" the next day—Abbarno said the chance to support MDA made the effort worthwhile. **PR**



the pin, for instance. On the practice green at the end of the course, they could enter a putting contest.

The same applies to the branch's bowlathon, where events such as a "last man standing" contest tested bowlers' ability to roll consecutive strikes until a winner emerged.

"We keep really busy finding ways for people to get a lot of bang for their buck," McKenna said.

Branch 204 also boosts its bowlathon receipts with incentives and contests, **Renae Birnell**, the Colorado Springs, CO branch's MDA coordinator, said: "There are prizes for the team that raises the most and the station that raises the most." The branch boosts fundraising with side events such as strike poker, in which players earn playing cards with strikes, and gives T-shirts to teams that raise \$500 or more.

"There are a few extras that we experiment with," she said. "We always try to add something new to see if it works."

Branch 579 has only 27 active members, but the Adrian, MI branch's size hasn't stopped it from raising thousands for MDA. It also hasn't kept the branch from finding big-name corporate sponsors. Branch President **Tracy Shuck** said her branch added Kohl's department store and La-Z-Boy, whose corporate headquarters is nearby, to its long list of local sponsors. She scored the Kohl's donation of \$500 through the company's policy of donating to any event in which five or more Kohl's employees participate—the branch recruited five bowlers from the local store for its bowlathon.

Broad participation from active and retired branch members, spouses and other postal employees make Branch 579's success possible, Shuck added.

But sustaining success year after year isn't easy for such a small branch.

"The hard part when you're a small branch is the same people are doing everything," she said. "We try to make it creative and come up with different things each year."

Branch 127 has teamed its letter carriers with other volunteers in the community, including family members of people with muscular dystrophy, to boost its fundraising. "We have quite a few letter carriers who participate," the Jefferson City, MO, branch's president, **Patrick Baker**, said, "but to be honest, we could never raise what we raise if we just counted on letter carriers."

Baker's branch relies on a bowlathon and golf event. He said bad weather this year kept his golf tournament from raising even more—but that his branch will aim for more next year.

Part of the Northeastern NY branch's motivation comes from volunteer work with MDA, the branch's director of community service **Michael Curran** said. "We send two or three carriers to the MDA camp every summer. It is a great experience more of us should have. It puts things in perspective. It has inspired our branch to expand on our efforts over the past 11 years."

To supplement its No. 1 event, a golf tournament that turned out 148 golfers last year, Curran said that Branch 358 has turned to "bowlathons, hockey and baseball nights with the local minor league teams, satchel drives, and our latest and most enjoyable event—our poker pub crawls.

"Whether an event is big or small doesn't matter," Curran added. "Just having an event and getting the members together is a success."

Long Island Merged Branch 6000's success stems from a strong, year-



round commitment to MDA, according to the branch's MDA chairman, **Nick D'Avanzo**.

"We try to run an MDA event every couple of months," he said. In 2013, the branch supported MDA with a bowlathon, mailing, raffle, rock and blues concert and an annual Joe D'Avanzo Memorial Golf Outing, named for D'Avanzo's son, who died in 2000 at age 21 due to complications from muscular dystrophy.

D'Avanzo's son once was Branch 6000's MDA ambassador and appeared several times on the MDA telethon. His father and the rest of Branch 6000 still work hard to sustain his legacy.

"Besides running a lot of events each year," Nick D'Avanzo said, "I believe our success has come from our tremendous full-time officers and shop stewards, who really get behind our fundraising efforts."

D'Avanzo or his assistant, **Charles Smith**, talk about MDA at every branch meeting. "We try to inform our members about upcoming events and possible treatments or cures the MDA is currently working on," D'Avanzo said. "We also occasionally remind our membership that MDA is the letter carriers' official national charity, and has been for over 50 years."

NALC MDA Coordinator **Jim Williams** said, "I know that MDA and people with neuromuscular diseases and their families are grateful for the steady commitment of letter carriers to providing support and searching for treatments. Thanks to every branch for your hard work raising money for MDA, no matter how much, and helping at MDA camps and events."

Fargo-West Fargo, ND, Branch 205 has raised the most in its category for eight years running, thanks mostly to its annual MDA auction. "Every year it has gotten bigger and better," Branch 205 MDA Chairman **Randy Sorby** said. "After the first of the year, we start going to local businesses and asking for donations. Any time I can find time for the next four months, I'm out there gathering donations—gift certificates or merchandise, whatever sells." The 2013 auction yielded \$16,000.

Carriers who want to see the fruits of their labor raising funds for MDA, Sorby added, should go to an MDA camp. Sorby has gone twice. "It's heart-warming, eye-opening and very rewarding," he said. "I know I have made a difference for these kids with muscular dystrophy."

This year's Combined Federal Campaign ends Dec. 15, so there is still time to support MDA through automatic deductions from your paycheck. MDA's CFC number is 10561. **PR**

Postal hot rod helps fill the satchel

For Syracuse, NY Branch 134, the recipe for success in MDA fundraising was a group of dedicated volunteers, a pair of young men with muscular dystrophy and a custom USPS "rat rod."

Retired Branch 134 member **Jim Bye** parked his hot rod, a white car sporting the Postal Service logo, at the branch's booth at the annual Syracuse Nationals car show in July. As one of the largest car shows in the northeast, the show promised to reach many potential donors for this fill-the-satchel event.

Through Facebook, branch member **Doug Lawrence** had connected with 15-year-old Noah Cole of Cortland, NY—the son of old high school friends of his. Lawrence invited Noah, who

has muscular dystrophy, to help at the car show.

"Noah is very active with raising money for the MDA with the firefighters in his hometown," Lawrence said. "He was delighted and more than willing to offer to help us." Joined by another young man with MD, Noah and the Branch 134 carriers filled their satchels with more than \$4,800 in three days. **PR**

