

\$2.1 million carrier collection boosts NALC's MDA total

Members gear up for first national bowlathon

Despite the deepest recession since the 1930s, NALC members managed to collect another \$2.1 million last year to help support the research and assistance programs of the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the union's only official charity.

Nonetheless, Williams said, "Our members took that as a challenge to work even harder and we were able to match the \$2.1 million we raised for MDA in 2007."

The NALC became the first national sponsor of MDA in 1952. Ever since, President Rolando said, "There has been a steady march of promising discoveries and new treatments in the fight against neuromuscular diseases. But until an actual cure is found, letter carriers will be out there, raising money for 'Jerry's kids.'"

Here are the designated representatives to the 44th annual telethon in Las Vegas from the top fund-raising branches and branch totals:

- Bill Trudell, New Jersey Merged Branch 38, the top fund-raising branch, \$131,511
- Darrell Berube, Brooklyn, New York Branch 41, Category I, 2,000-plus members, \$60,260
- Ron Blazell, Milwaukee, Wisconsin Branch 2, Category II, 1,500 to 1,999 members, \$22,415
- Bob Bracy, Louisville, Kentucky Branch 14, Category III, 1,000 to 1,499 members, \$18,634
- Ed Walsh, Northeastern New York Branch 358, Category IV, 700 to 999 members, \$26,274
- Larry Ames, Grand Rapids, Michigan Branch 56, Category V, 500 to 699 members, \$26,083
- Dennis Spoto, Bergen County Merged, New Jersey Branch 425, Category VI, 350 to 499 members, \$10,100
- Thomas Scott, Green Bay, Wisconsin Branch 619, Category VII, 200 to 349 members, \$18,770
- Randy Sorby, Fargo-West Fargo, North Dakota Branch 205, Category VIII, 100 to 199 members, \$14,677

In September, representatives of the union's top fund-raising branches during the 2008 campaign joined NALC President Fred Rolando and National MDA Coordinator Jim Williams to present the donations to entertainer Jerry Lewis, the long-time host of MDA's annual Labor Day telethon, which this year pulled in more than \$60 million in contributions and pledges.

"That's about \$5 million less than last year's grand total," Rolando noted. "In this economy, a lot of people just can't afford to give as much as they'd want to."

NALC President Fred Rolando appears on the MDA Telethon with host Jerry Lewis.



● Jeffrey Harness, Freehold, New Jersey Branch 924, Category IX, 50 to 99 members, \$7,202

● Michael Beggaries, New City, New York Branch 5229, Category X, 10 to 49 members, \$10,899

● Fran Mangano, Brooklyn, New York Auxiliary Branch 2003, \$2,828

MDA spends the money it receives for research into treatments and cures for muscular dystrophy and related diseases. The funds also support MDA's medical clinics and summer camps and help subsidize family expenses for equipment, such as leg braces and motorized wheelchairs.

Hitting the lanes

In an effort to invigorate support for MDA, President Rolando is encouraging members to participate in the first national bowlathon for MDA, set for Sunday, November 1.

"Our hope is that this countrywide bowling event will help energize branches everywhere to work for MDA," said

Williams, who became MDA coordinator after retiring as national executive vice president in 2006.

He said a national one-day MDA fundraiser is similar in concept to the NALC food drive, which "both shines a spotlight on the problem of hunger in our communities and highlights the determination to help others that is a characteristic of carriers everywhere." But he emphasized the goal is to inspire branches to develop, continue or expand on year-round fundraising beyond the bowlathon.

The union will award a laptop computer loaded with NALC's software to the top bowlathon fund-raising branch in each of the 10 size categories. Also, the highest handicapped scorer and the highest actual scorer in each branch-size category will receive a new bowling ball and shoes.

Participating branches should send their official scoring forms to NALC Headquarters promptly following the bowlathon. ✉

Behind the scenes at the MDA Telethon were (from l) MDA Coordinator Jim Williams; Michael Bagarozzi of New City, New York Branch 5229; Tom Scott of Green Bay, Wisconsin Branch 619; Jackie Caffrey of Freehold, New Jersey Branch 924; President Rolando; Fran Mangano of Brooklyn, New York Auxiliary 2003; Randy Sorbo of Fargo-West Fargo, North Dakota Branch 205; and Bill Trudell of New Jersey Merged Branch 38.

