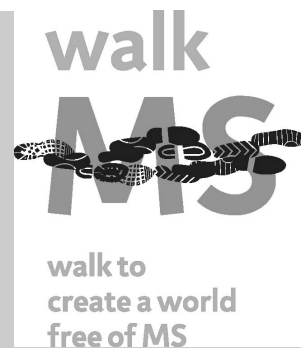


# The 2009 WALK MS FOOTNOTES



Alabama Chapter



## *The Official Handbook for Walk MS*

### Inside this handbook.....

- Important Info About The Walk
- Volunteer Opportunities
- What To Look For In 2009
- What Is MS
- Where The Money Goes
- Fundraising Tips
- Team MS
- Sample Team Recruiting

## CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

Do you have any free time before the walk? Do you have any friends or family who would like to help on the day of the walk?

We need volunteers to help make the MS Walk a success and to ensure a fun, safe and organized Walk! Whether it is at registration, a rest stop or at the finish line, we have a job for you! We need energetic and enthusiastic people to help register walkers, serve refreshments and much more. If you are interested in volunteering, please call Melissa Powell at the National MS Society at (800) 373-8881 or (205) 879-8881.

## WELCOME TO 2009 WALK MS... THANKS FOR REGISTERING!

### About The 2009 Walk MS

- ◆ The average walker raises \$225.
- ◆ Use the enclosed pledge sheet to keep a record of your pledges.
- ◆ Please completely fill out the enclosed pledge envelope before the MS Walk and bring it with you to the event.
- ◆ The MS Walk will take place RAIN or SHINE!
- ◆ Rest stops along the route offer drinks and snacks to walkers.
- ◆ For some of the walks, support vehicles are available along the route for tired walkers.
- ◆ Recruit 4 or more people to form a team (Teams can be: friends, family, co-workers, church groups, clubs...anyone!).
- ◆ TeamMS members must all register individually for the walk.
- ◆ Bring a message to send to a loved one, friend, colleague or anyone you know who has a connection to MS to put on our WALL OF HOPE. This will provide inspiration to those affected by MS. We will provide the ribbon paper for your messages at each Walk registration.
- ◆ Please Note: If you would like to turn in your money early to the chapter office, we will gladly accept your money before the walk. Some participants find this to be more convenient.
- ◆ The dollars you raise will fund programs to over 4,000 families in Alabama affected by MS and will help bring researchers closer to discovering a cause and cure for multiple sclerosis.

# 2009 Walk MS Important Information

**PLEASE REMEMBER:  
ALL WALKS ARE HELD RAIN OR  
SHINE!!**

## **REGISTRATION**

Bring any collected contributions and your pledge sheet to check-in. All walkers will be asked to sign a waiver at registration.

Registration will start an hour and a half before the Walk begins in Cullman, Mobile and Huntsville. Get there as early as possible so you can get registered and enjoy the festivities!

Please note: The **Birmingham Walk** will begin with a *soft start*. This means as soon as you register and your group is together, you may begin your walk. Festivities will be held after everyone has completed the walk!

## **FOOD**

Refreshments will be served. You will also receive energizing snacks at each rest stop along the way. There will be drinks provided as well.

## **ROUTE**

There are two route options, a one mile and a three mile. Route maps will be available at check-in and all turns will be well marked along the route. There will be rest stops available along each route where you can pick up a high-energy snack and a drink to keep you going! Be careful, roads will not be closed completely to traffic. Please make sure you respect both the law and motorists!

## **WEATHER**

Remember to wear appropriate clothing - the event will go on regardless of weather! In the event of severe weather, the MS Walk staff will make the call whether to postpone or cancel the walk. **We walk rain or shine!**

**Special Thanks:**



## **WALK TIMES & LOCATIONS:**

**FIND THE ONE  
CLOSEST TO YOU!**

### **Cullman, Alabama**

**Saturday, March 21, 2009**

**Heritage Park**

**Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.**

**Walk begins at 10 a.m.**

### **Mobile, Alabama**

**Saturday, March 21, 2009**

**Spring Hill College Campus**

**Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.**

**Walk begins at 10 a.m.**

### **Huntsville, Alabama**

**Saturday, April 4, 2009**

**University Fitness Center**

**UAH Campus**

**Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.**

**Walk begins at 10 a.m.**

### **Birmingham, Alabama**

**Saturday, April 18, 2009**

**Homewood Central Park**

**Registration begins at 7 a.m.**

**Walk begins with a soft start**

# What To Look For In 2009

## THE WALL OF HOPE

In 2009, participants will have the opportunity to send a very important message to a loved one, a friend or colleague, or anyone who has a connection to MS on our "WALL OF HOPE." This message will be posted at the event on the "WALL OF HOPE" and will provide inspiration to those affected by MS.

## THE CHAMPIONS AGAINST MS "SOLEMATES"

Champions Against MS is a program that connects people living with multiple sclerosis to MS Walk participants for the common mission to end the devastating effects of MS. For the walker, this personal connection adds additional meaning and motivation to the walk. For the person with multiple sclerosis, it is a reminder that there are many people dedicated to finding the cause and cure for MS. It is truly a partnership program that creates a feeling of enthusiasm and cooperation between the walkers and people living with multiple sclerosis. To sign up for Champions Against MS, please call the **Alabama office at 1-800-FIGHT-MS.**

## TOP FUNDRAISER RECOGNITION

Anyone that raised \$1,000 or more in the 2008 WALK MS will receive special recognition at the 2009 WALK MS!

## SPIRIT PRIZES

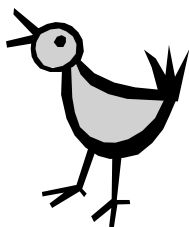
Do you have spirit?  
Make sure you show it at the walk!

The MS Staff will be looking out for the best:

T-shirt  
Sign  
Overall spirit!

You don't want to miss out on the fun prizes that will be given out!

**Register before  
February 1, 2009  
and  
receive your  
"Early Bird"  
Surprise!**



**Get ready for tons of fun!**

# What is Multiple Sclerosis?

Multiple Sclerosis is an unpredictable and devastating disease. It strikes individuals between the ages of 20 and 50. The progress, severity, and specific symptoms of the disease cannot be foreseen. People with MS never know when the attacks will occur, how long they will last, or how severe they will be. Over 400,000 Americans have multiple sclerosis. Counting their family members and those who care for them, MS affects more than one million Americans.

## What are the symptoms of MS?

Symptoms of MS vary greatly from person to person and from time to time in the same person. Symptoms may include: visual impairment, bladder and/or bowel disturbances, loss of coordination, swallowing dysfunction, stiffness of muscles, cognitive deficits, numbness, intolerance for heat, fatigue and emotional disturbances

## What causes MS?

The myelin sheath, which is a fatty substance that surrounds and protects the nerve fibers of the central nervous systems (brain and spinal cord), is broken down or destroyed. When the myelin sheath is destroyed or damaged, it causes a break-down in the transmission of signals, or impulses to and/or from the brain.

Unfortunately, the cause of MS is one of medical science's biggest mysteries. No cure has yet been discovered, and there is no way to predict who might get MS. The National MS Society is funding research programs that are working to unravel these mysteries. We are committed to fulfilling our mission: To end the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis.

## How to Raise \$500 in Nine Days!

For some people, raising money can seem a little scary, but **YOU** can do it! Below are some great ideas on how you can raise \$500 in just nine days!

DAY 1 Start by sponsoring yourself for \$25.

DAY 2 Ask two family members to sponsor you for \$25 each.

DAY 3 Ask five friends to contribute \$20 each.

DAY 4 Ask five co-workers to contribute \$10 each.

DAY 5 Ask five neighbors to contribute \$10 each.

DAY 6 Ask five people from your religious or social group for \$10.

DAY 7 Ask your boss for a company contribution of \$25 or better yet, see if they offer matching funds!

DAY 8 Ask five local merchants to sponsor you for \$20 each.

DAY 9 Ask two businesses you frequent for \$25. This can be your doctor, hairdresser, barber, dry cleaners, or mechanic.

**Now do the math and you'll see it's simple to raise \$500 in 9 days. GOOD LUCK!!**

# Where Will the Money Go?

The money you raise for Walk MS can help provide a variety of programs and services.

The money raised in this event will be distributed in the following manner:

National Programs 44%	Local Programs 43%	Support Services 13%
Research	Public Education	Fundraising
Advocacy	Client Services	Management
	Community Service	
	Professional	

## Programs and Support Services

The Alabama Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society is dedicated to serving the nearly 4,000 people in Alabama with MS. Funds raised through campaigns like Walk MS allow the chapter to continue providing innovative and necessary support to people affected by multiple sclerosis and their families. For information on any of the following programs, please call (205)879-8881 or (800)FIGHT-MS.

- Information and Referral
- Newly Diagnosed Support
- Lending Library
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Educational Programs
- Self-Help Groups
- Peer Support Network
- Children's Camp Getaway
- The MS Evaluation Clinic
- Emergency Financial Aid
- Couples Retreat

## Research

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society spends more money on MS research than any other MS organization in the world. Since its foundation in 1946, the Society has allocated more than \$500 million to MS research. These figures have increased steadily over the years.

**Research is conducted in several institutions worldwide, including the University of Alabama at Birmingham.**

# Making Fundraising Easy...

## Tips and Other Helpful Hints

- **Start with “easy targets”** - your family and friends. Use these to build confidence and technique.
- **Put some brochures on your desk at work.** When co-workers ask what that “Walk MS thing” is all about, explain and ask them to help. (Extra brochures and holders are available at our office).
- **Pin your favorite walk t-shirt on your office wall.** Or create a badge/button to wear advertising your goal.
- **Show potential donors a snapshot of you at the walk.** Tell them “I’ll be doing it all again. Help me top my goal from last year!”
- **Give donors an accurate record for tax purposes.** Remind donors that they will receive directly from our office an acknowledgment of any contribution over \$100. This will serve as an accurate record for tax purposes. We also give you a book of receipts to give donors in exchange for their cash donations.
- **Get your donor’s check when they agree to sponsor you.** Save them the trouble of remembering in April. Ask for contributions around payday or other times when they have cash handy. Make sure your sponsor includes your name on the memo line of their check.
- **Create a challenge with any group of people, not just your family.** This method would find success among your coworkers, your gym pals, or anyone. Have your donors extend a challenge to potential sponsors.
- **Pass the buck.** Have your donors extend a challenge to other potential sponsors. They could attach written endorsements to your pledge sheet, communicate via email, or issue a challenge in person: “I’m supporting Jim with a \$40 pledge. Will you match or beat that amount?”
- **Take advantage of “peer pressure”.** Approach people in a group setting. Make a quick appeal before a business meeting, mention your endeavor at a party, or go into the break room at lunch time and challenge co-workers to donate what they would spend on sodas, coffee, or snacks for the week.
- **Start a trend.** Make a personal pledge of \$50 or more at the very top of your pledge form. Then show your pledge form to your sponsors or have them fill out their own personal information. When they see the personal commitment you demonstrate, you will start a trend. You’ll be surprised at the significant donations your sponsors will place on the lines below after you’ve led the way with your challenge.
- **Trading Favors.** Go to your neighbors. These people know you! “If you sponsor me for \$50, I’ll take the carpool for an extra day!”
- **Keep your pledge sheet with you ALWAYS!** You never know when you’ll run into a sponsor. When you do you will be able to pull out your pledge sheet (and your “Where Does the Money Go?” sheet) and get their actual pledge versus their promise.
- **Remember where you spend your money.** Use your checking account registry as a reference. Ask the managers of your local gas station, grocery store, dry cleaner, or hair salon to make a pledge in return for all those years of faithful patronage.
- **Enlist a go-between.** If a friend has an entry into a particular group, use them to make your appeal. Parents of Girl Scouts are very familiar with this routine.
- **Remind sponsors to use matching gifts.** Many companies match their employee’s donations to non-profit organizations. If your company is one of them, they can double their pledge dollar!
- **Collect pledges online through the e-pledge program.** Register online and log on to check pledge reports, create personal and team pages, send email, view team rosters and more!

# Fundraising Is As Easy As 1-2-3!

There are three tried and true methods to fundraising:

**(1) Face-to-Face (2) Letter Writing / E-mail (3) Telephone Requests**

Choose the method with which you are most comfortable, or try a combination!

## **#1** **THE FACE-TO-FACE ASK**

The most effective fundraising method is asking for your contribution face-to-face. You can build your confidence when asking a “friend” to contribute to the National MS Society by remembering these helpful hints:

- **Remember that you are not asking for the contribution for yourself; you are asking on behalf of the National MS Society and all of the people served by the Alabama Chapter.**
- Educate your potential donor on the mission of the National MS Society: to end the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis. This way, they can feel comfortable about making a contribution. (Carry this handbook with you when asking, to use as a resource for any questions you may receive.)
- Treat your request as an everyday conversation. Don’t apologize! There is value in what you are saying. Build your request around your excitement and enthusiasm for walking and your commitment to end the devastating effects of multiple sclerosis.
- Make the appeal personal. Ultimately, your friends, family and co-workers will support you because YOU are doing the asking.

## **#2** **LETTER WRITING / E-MAIL**

Letter writing is one of the most efficient ways to raise money. Send your letters or an email to your:

- Business Associates (flip through your Rolodex!)
- Family, neighbors and faraway friends (take a look at your holiday card list!)
- College alumni, fraternity / sorority members.

When writing your request letter, remember these tips:

1. Always include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Make it easy for your friends and family to respond.
2. Personalize your appeal. Use familiar details about yourself and why you are walking.
3. Include a deadline as a gentle nudge to get those contributions in. Make a copy of the “Where Does the Money Go?” section and include it with your letter.
4. Follow up with a note or phone call to those who have not responded. Send a thank you note once you receive a pledge.

**Make a team page! Go to our website and follow the easy steps to create your own team page!**

**This is a fun and exciting way to increase your fundraising goals!!**

# #3

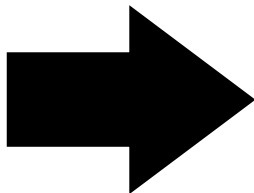
## MAKE THE CALL

The telephone has become a popular part of fundraising in the past few years. It is one of the most effective ways to reach out to a prospective list of contributors—particularly those you do not see on a daily basis, but who may need that “personal touch.”

**There are seven easy steps to raising money over the telephone and being a successful fundraiser:**

1. **Develop your list.** Determine who on your list needs to hear your voice. There is nothing wrong with contacting people that you have not had contact with in several years. Some of your friends and business associates may be better suited to a letter writing campaign, but some may need a personal touch.
2. **Pick the best time to call.** Some calls will be quick and some will take more time. Build a plan of who you are going to call and when—business associates and vendors used to talking to you during the day, family and friends on weekends or evenings. (Avoid the dinner hour and late night calls).
3. **Do your homework.** To avoid uncomfortable pauses, figure out what your request will be before you call.
4. **Make the call!** Once you place the call, people may wonder why you’re calling. Explain your commitment to help end the devastating effects of MS by participating in Walk MS then state your fundraising goal and ask your friend for assistance. Remember, silence is not a “no.” Wait until your prospect has responded to your initial request before you suggest a different amount.
5. **Say thanks!** Regardless of the outcome, thank them for their time, consideration and support. If you find that someone is unable to assist financially, invite them to volunteer at the event. The same goes if you find your caller is very enthusiastic about Walk MS.
6. **Follow up.** It may seem like a detail, but it’s a critical step in fulfilling your goal and showing your appreciation to your donors. Remember to personalize your thank you with the donor’s name and amount of the contribution you agreed upon over the phone. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope; it makes it easier for them to send in their contribution.
7. **Have fun!** If you sound excited about Walk MS and the fight against MS it will be contagious. You can challenge your friends to match your contribution—by either joining you at the walk or sponsoring you with a match of your own personal contribution. It’s important that your sponsors understand your personal commitment.

**Need more  
information about  
the 2009 MS Walk?**



**National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
Alabama Chapter  
3840 Ridgeway Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35209  
(205) 879-8881  
1-800-FIGHT-MS**

**Please contact:**

**Melissa Poynter Powell  
Development Manager  
melissa.powell@alc.nmss.org**





## TEAM MS - DON'T WALK ALONE!

There is no better way to enjoy Walk MS than with your friends, family and co-workers. Involve your company with Team MS to boost morale and teamwork while also showing support for the cause.

When you decide to form a team, you will receive materials and ideas to help you build a team as large as you can and achieve your fundraising goals.

Call the National MS Society at (800) FIGHT-MS or (205) 879-8881 to request a team captain's handbook!

### **Getting Started**

- Select a Team Captain to coordinate recruitment.
- Recruit walkers! (It only takes four or more people to form a team).
- Have each team member complete and return a registration form or call the Alabama Chapter to register. All team members must register individually. For speedy registration, visit our Web site at [www.nationalmssociety.org/alc](http://www.nationalmssociety.org/alc)
- Set a goal = Total number of team members x \$225 (average raised per walker).
- Investigate matching gifts programs available to team members through their employers.

### **Recruiting Team Members**

- Sign up family members, co-workers, friends and anyone and everyone you can!
- Call local schools, social groups, service groups, etc. for support. Speak at meetings to recruit walkers.
- Display MS Walk brochures and posters in the breakroom, lobby and other prominent locations where you work.

Want more ideas?  
Call the National MS Society for your  
**PERSONAL  
FUNDRAISING  
CONSULTATION!**

Call us at 205.879.8881  
or 1.800.FIGHTMS  
or email us at  
[melissa.powell@alc.nmss.org](mailto:melissa.powell@alc.nmss.org)

**We are here to help! If you would like the staff of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society to come to your company and help recruit and register teammates, let us know! We will be more than happy to visit with your colleagues to help build your team!**

## **Sample Fundraising Letters**

### **MEMORANDUM**

To: All Employees  
From: (Your Name)  
Date:  
Re: The opportunity to have fun while helping others!

I am sure you have your own important causes that you assist, but I hope that will not prevent you from helping us in our fight against multiple sclerosis. MS is a devastating disease of the central nervous system. Approximately one third of a million Americans have MS & every week about 200 people are diagnosed with the disease - more than one person an hour.

If you are interested in being a part of an exciting Walk MS Team please join the (your company, association or group) team on (Date) for the 2009 Walk MS. It will be fun!

To be part of our team, stop by (location) to pick up your registration form and add your name to the team sign-up sheet.

Thank you!

### **Sample Letter**

Potential Donor  
555 Anywhere Lane  
Metropolis, ST 12345

Dear Potential:

On (insert walk date here), I will be joining thousands of walkers in Walk MS organized by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society—Alabama Chapter. By making a donation on my behalf, you are supporting research and local services and programs to those affected with this unpredictable disease.

My goal is to raise \$ \_\_\_\_\_. Please assist me in reaching this goal with your donation. Your donation is tax deductible within the IRS rules. Use the enclosed envelope to mail me your donation and make all checks payable to the National MS Society.

Multiple sclerosis is a chronic disease of the central nervous system. Symptoms are fickle; they come and go without any pattern or warning. The unpredictable physical and emotional effects of MS are lifelong.

Thank you in advance for your support of this worthy cause. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,  
Your name

### **Sample Email**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ : My name is Jane Volunteer and I work for \_\_\_\_\_. I am participating in Walk MS on (enter date) to raise money for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. MS is a disease that randomly attacks your central nervous system, wearing away the control you have over your body. If you want more information or want to sponsor me, please notify me of your donation at (email address) or send your tax deductible donations (made payable to the National MS Society) to me at (mailing address). Thank you!

The Staff of the Alabama Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society is very appreciative of you lending your time and dedication to our cause. Here are some of the costs for our programs so you can see how the monies that you raise will be used.

\$15,000 – The Lending Library is a comprehensive library with current up to date information about MS. Clients from across the state can come in and access up to date information about MS.

\$10,000 – The Children’s Getaway Weekend is a camp that provides both educational and fun-filled weekend activities for children whose parent is affected by multiple sclerosis.

\$5,000 – Provides information and education to people with MS and chapter constituents through the Alabama Chapter’s newsletter MS Connections.

\$4,000 – The Emergency Financial Assistance Program for indigent MS clients provides financial assistance to people with MS who are unable to receive funding from other means.

\$3,000 – Provides a weekend retreat for 12 couples affected by MS with an opportunity to learn about the disease and to improve their communication skills with one another.

\$2,000 – Provides funding for the Gateway to Wellness program, a six-week course for people with MS that teaches goal setting towards living a healthy lifestyle.

\$1,000 – Will fund training and support of self-help group leaders that lead groups across the state to educate and empower people with MS.



Studies show that early and ongoing treatment with an FDA-approved therapy can reduce future disease activity and improve quality of life for many people with multiple sclerosis. Talk to your health care professional and contact the National MS Society at [www.nationalmssociety.org](http://www.nationalmssociety.org) or 1-800-FIGHT-MS to learn about ways to help manage multiple sclerosis and about current research that may one day reveal a cure.