



LAND O' LAKES, INC.

Valley Wide Cooperative
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For immediate release

Dollars to help strengthen communities

November 30, 2020

Since 1920, Valley Wide Cooperative has been involved in the communities where we live, work and play. This Fall, we were able to present funds raised this Spring in our Valley Wide Country Stores to the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

The Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) received \$18,039.86 from Shamrock sales in Valley Wide Country Stores. Funds will make a real difference in the lives of individuals living with muscle-debilitating diseases in our local communities, at a very critical time. COVID-19 presents a huge threat to people with muscular dystrophy, many of whom already have respiratory issues.

What is Muscular Dystrophy?

The muscular dystrophies are a group of diseases that cause weakness and degeneration of the skeletal muscles. There are more than 40 different types of muscular dystrophy, which vary in symptoms and severity. The diseases mostly affect people of all ages and can cause problems with breathing, swallowing, walking, talking, sight, hearing, heart and lung function, and more. Unfortunately, many people with these conditions don't live a full life span. There's no known cure for muscular dystrophy, but certain treatments may help.

What is MDA?

Muscular Dystrophy Association is committed to transforming the lives of people affected by muscular dystrophy, ALS and related neuromuscular diseases. They do this through innovations in science and innovations in care. As the largest source of funding for neuromuscular disease research outside of the federal government, MDA has committed more than \$1 billion since their inception to accelerate the discovery of therapies and cures. Research they have supported is directly linked to life-changing therapies across multiple neuromuscular diseases. MDA runs the first and only data hub that aggregates clinical, genetic and patient reported data for multiple neuromuscular diseases to improve health outcomes and accelerate drug development. MDA supports the largest network of multidisciplinary clinics providing best in class care at more than 150 of the nation's top medical institutions. Their Resource Center serves the community with one-on-one specialized support, and offers educational conferences, events, and materials for families and healthcare providers. Each year thousands of children and young adults learn vital life skills and gain independence at summer camp, at no cost to families.

How are the dollars helping?

Donated funds will go to support MDA's camp, local services, and research. MDA camp changed to a virtual format this year due to COVID-19 precautions. The group hosted virtual week-long camps this summer for campers that helped connect them with others battling muscular dystrophy. The camp is



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intended to promote self-confidence and to show kids that they are not alone. "We wanted to give campers an opportunity to still interact with each other and lean on each other during this difficult time for everyone." said April Gannon, Associate Executive Director of Muscular Dystrophy Association, Northwest District (Idaho). They plan to host a virtual camp reunion this fall to reconnect the 50+ Idaho campers that attended in person in 2019.

"The children we serve are part of the most vulnerable populations," said Gannon. "With neuromuscular disease, all of our families are at a higher risk of developing any kind of complications from COVID-19." Families are having to use strict isolation and other precautions. MDA worked this year to increase technology and resources around telehealth. Educational materials, video doctor visits, and counseling services are being shared with families online and on social media platforms.



Pictured: April Gannon, Associate Executive Director of Muscular Dystrophy Association, Northwest District (Idaho)

Since 1920, Valley Wide Cooperative has been helping farmers and ranchers build their homes and businesses through dedication and expertise. Valley Wide Cooperative engages in every community they do business in and helps to cultivate and strengthen the current and upcoming generation of ag and industry leaders.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.valleywidecoop.com> or <http://www.landolakes.com/> or <https://mda.org>

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