



**MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE ASSOCIATION NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH NEWLETTER**

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A warm welcome to you all again. Following on from the first and second newsletters please find the following updates.

**NI Branch receive an OSCARR**

The Branch received an OSCARR in 2008. We were highly commended in the 'Inspirational Influencing' category for the work done in procuring government funding for the Care Centre. Dr.Patterson, Helen McLean and Stephen Thompson completed this work.

**The Caring Caretaker Christmas Collection.**

The Branch is very happy to be linked with Mr. Davy Boyle from Coleraine for 2008. Davy will complete his sit out from December 8th until Christmas Eve every day excluding Sunday. So if you're in the town please pop by the Town hall and show your support.

**Committee Member Darren Cheevers completes his 2008 Challenges and looks to 2009**

Lisburn 10k - 18<sup>th</sup> June was a great event and provided a good test of what time I could finish my first 10k run in. I posted a time of 51 mins which although didn't break any records I was pleased with the time. Up next was the Ballyronan Triathlon - 16<sup>th</sup> August had to be one of the wettest days ever and definitely not the type of day to do your first one. Posting a time of 3hrs 29mins and 51secs and finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> last I was delighted to just finish. Over 400 people signed up and only 251 finished so to say I was pleased was an understatement.

Sponsored Cycle London to the champagne district, Reims was an unbelievable experience and I would strongly recommend doing something like that at least once in your life. The group of folks I met were kind, funny and most of all very committed to the cause. There is talk of doing a sponsored cycle in 2010 here in Ireland. So keep your ears open. The Dublin Half Marathon may be attempted but there is always next year.

Speaking of which I have already committed myself to the following events in 2009 to raise more money for MND, with more to come.

- Belfast Marathon
- London Triathlon
- Ballyronan Triathlon

**New Committee Member Arthur Newell attends the 2008 MND Conference**

The Association's AGM and Conference was held at the Barcelo Daventry Hotel, Northamptonshire on the 20<sup>th</sup> September. I'm not sure why I decided to go but I'm very glad I did. Everything was at a relaxed pace with comfort breaks between the presentations which allowed lots of time to chat and to view the various stands displaying equipment or providing useful information.

The conference started with Prof Paul Ince explaining some very promising research about TDP43, other sessions included Caring for the Carers, Fundraising and Alternative Therapies. In the evening the Gala Dinner was held. A magician did a few tricks up close and we spent a lot of time trying to work out how on earth he did them. Lembit Opik was the Master of Ceremonies and gave a speech, which was serious at times but hilarious at other times.

It was a great conference both educational and enjoyable, I would hope to be there next year and I hope that some of you are there also!