



Before making phone calls to collect money at the 2011 Muscular Dystrophy Association Lock Up, Amanda Stout gets her mugshot taken behind the bars. L&T file photo/Robert Pierce

By ROBERT PIERCE

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When most think of going behind bars, visions of a cell full of convicts and being sentenced for a crime.

Next Wednesday, some community leaders will go behind bars, in a fun way, and their only crime is "having a big heart."

The Ark Valley chapter of the Muscular Dystrophy Association, based in Wichita, is hosting its annual lock-up, and Lacey Mills, the chapter's director, said those raising money come from all over the Liberal community.

"We look for business professionals with a willingness to give back and reach out to folks," she said. "Referrals and nominations are accepted as well."

The MDA Lock Up is a community event that is a unique and fun way to help local children and adults who live with muscle disease.

By being an MDA jail bird, people will ask family, friends and business contacts to make donations to a "bail," which are funds that will help MDA in its mission of curing muscular dystrophy, ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) and related diseases by funding worldwide research, providing comprehensive health care and support services, advocacy and education.

In modern times, social networking sites such as Facebook have made the job of collecting money for participants' "bail" a little easier, and Mills said this year's crop of collectors have other means of gathering money.

Those means include, for the first time, an application for Android and iPhone uses to which everyone will have access. The participants can let people know what they are doing and support them.

By making donations through Web sites, the "jail birds" can post their successes to Facebook.

One of this year's jail birds is First Southern Baptist Church Pastor Dr. Jack Jacob, and he has created just such a page and posted it to Facebook.

