

Friends and Neighbors: Marlins infielder Dee Gordon teams with Parkinson's fundraiser

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Siblings David Blechman and Melissa Blechman are honored to be partnering with Miami Marlins baseball player and stolen base champ Dee Gordon, center, in the Dee-Feat Parkinson's Disease fundraiser.

Miami Marlins infielder Dee Gordon is challenging himself to steal as many bases as he can this month, and it's all for a good cause. He has teamed up with the Blechman Foundation for Parkinson's Research in a partnership to promote awareness and raise money for research.

"Parkinson's disease is a movement disorder, and base stealing places a premium on movement," said David Blechman, president of the Blechman Foundation in a news release. "Dee Gordon is a champion base stealer, and because Parkinson's disease steals so much from its victims in terms of motor control, we naturally drew a connection between PD awareness and Dee's talents on the diamond."

Gordon is encouraging all baseball fans to pledge support to the Miami-based foundation for every base he steals during games throughout April, which is also Parkinson's Awareness Month and the start of the Major League Baseball season.

“Dee’s partnership with the Blechman Foundation in the Stolen Base Challenge is a natural fit,” wrote Melissa Blechman, vice president of the Blechman Foundation, in email. “Dee is from Florida and plays for the Miami Marlins. We grew up in Florida as avid Marlins fans, and our mom, Nancy, still lives in Miami. Parkinson’s disease is a movement disorder, and Dee is all about movement on the base path. This all fits together rather nicely, like a hand in a (baseball) glove.”

Nancy Blechman is the inspiration behind the foundation started in 2012 by her children, David and Melissa. Nancy Blechman was diagnosed with Parkinson’s at age 50 in 2008.

All funds raised during the foundation’s first-ever stolen base challenge, called Dee-Feat Parkinson’s Disease, will go directly toward Parkinson’s disease research. It has been estimated that one million people in America are living with Parkinson’s, with 60,000 newly diagnosed each year.

Visit <http://blechmanfoundation.org/> or <http://blechmanfoundation.org/dee-feat-pd/> to help during the stolen base fundraising partnership with Gordon.

“We hope to get a broad range of people involved in our fundraising effort that will be fun and worthwhile,” David Blechman said. “We hope people will join us in saying: ‘I helped Dee steal a base for PD.’”

To see the web version, please click here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/community-voices/article17686820.html#/tabPane=tabs-b0710947-1-1>