

Caitlin's Connections

Summer 2009



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Smiles Central Grand Opening a Hit

Thanks to everyone for our very successful Open House on April 25 at our new office and warehouse at 3303 North Sixth Street in Harrisburg, PA. It was attended by approximately 350 friends, neighbors and volunteers and was staffed by about 50 volunteers. The event included Shriner's clowns, clowns on stilts, balloon animals, bag decorating, office tours, art contests, Susquehanna Rescue Fire trucks, LOTS of great food donated by local restaurants and businesses, great volunteers and board members staffing booths, fantastic silent auction items, and much more. A special thanks to Lisa Bleiweiss and Nichole Murlin for coordinating the Open House efforts.



*Cutting the Ribbon
at Smiles Central*

The walls are brightly painted in purple, red, orange and yellow. Large crayons, a castle, dragon, rent angels, kids on bicycles and parachutes decorate the murals on the walls, which were donated by Fast Signs in Mechanicsburg. Thank you notes from hospitals and ill children are posted on the bulletin boards and in

"SMILES CENTRAL" CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Greetings from the Founder & Director

Dear Friends:

I can't believe that spring raced by and that summer is nearly over. Our new office space has worked out super! Thanks to all of you who helped get us here. A special thanks to Pastor Randy Barr for coordinating our building fundraising efforts, Elsie Stroup for getting our warehouse supplies up and organized, and Lisa Bleiweiss and Nichole Murlin for coordinating our Open House efforts. We are excited to be settled in across from the Harrisburg Community Theatre and beside the new office of the Channels Food Rescue.

We've had lots of excitement going on here, including visits from volunteers from Vacation Bible Schools, Church Mission Groups, children needing hours for confirmation or bar mitzva's, senior school work service hours, clubs, neighbors looking for volunteer projects, people in between jobs, etc. We'll have an exciting year coming up as the PA Key Club has chosen us for their charity for 2009/2010. See the article later in the newsletter for more information.

Even with the economy, we have been extremely blessed to have been maintaining our current operations and continuing to grow. We have new volunteers in between jobs and in between paychecks, in addition to our friends who have found us in our new space. Our donors give what they can - a \$10 check here and there and a case of crayons when on sale during the back to school days. This is what keeps us operating!

We have also been blessed to be working with some additional hospitals the past several months. They were directed to us by local Kiwanis clubs who have been assisting our organization. These new hospitals include: Suburban Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh (part of the Allegheny System), the Children's Home in Pitt (for medically fragile children), Lehigh Valley Hospital - Muhlenberg Campus, and the Indiana Regional Medical Center in Indiana, PA. On the other hand, several smaller hospitals have either closed their pediatric units or have downsized them. The economy and increasing medical costs are affecting all of us.

We are already getting ready to gear up for the holiday season. If your work, club, school or church donates to charities over the holidays, please keep us in mind for a fund raising project or craft drive. In addition to our craft donations, we also provide toys and family care kits (gas cards, phone cards) for children and their families who might be in the hospitals over the holidays. We also are also searching for corporate sponsors for our annual holiday party. Contact me at caitlinsmiles@comcast.net if you might be able to help us continue to put smiles on the faces of hospitalized children!

Sincerely,

Cheryl Hornung

Cheryl Hornung, *Founder & Director*



“SMILES CENTRAL” CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

scrap books. Smiling photos of children receiving their Bags of Smiles are also scattered throughout the building.

This kickoff generated \$26,000 in cash and pledges towards our annual goal of \$100,000 for our first year. We had six individuals and groups step up to be our rent angels to donate \$2,500 to cover our rent and utility payment for a month. A special thanks to Pastor Randy Barr for spearheading our fundraising for this new space.

We are having many great groups (including Deloitte, Vacation Bible Schools, Highmark, Keystone Services, Girl Scouts, Daycares and individuals) in to assemble craft kits, work on hospital orders and help with office duties. Deloitte is also helping us with our grant writing and fundraising, as well as our craft kit assembly. Check out this footage from the Central Penn Business Journal.

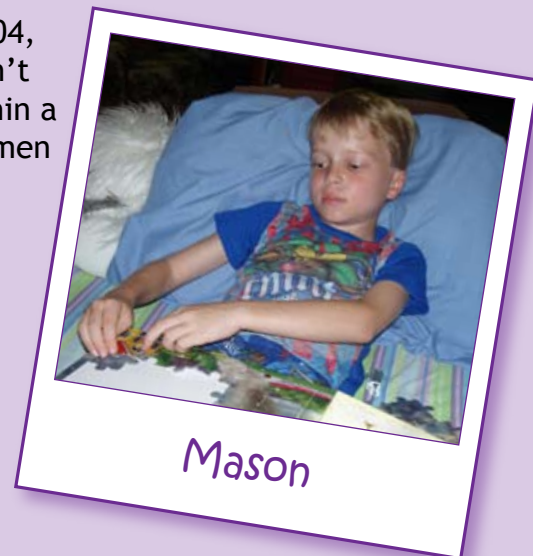
In addition, about 250 employees of the professional services firm Deloitte fanned out across the Harrisburg area recently to work at nonprofit organizations. Caitlin’s Smiles was lucky enough to host some of them at our location. To see video of how they helped, visit www.youtube.com and search “Deloitte Impact Day at Caitlin’s Smiles.”

Send us an email at caitlinssmiles@comcast.net to see how your group can help!



Family Focus: Mason Koppenhaver

I remember the very first bag Mason received. It was in July 2004, he was getting prepped for surgery at Harrisburg Hospital. He wasn't quite 4 years old at the time and this was to be his 3rd surgery within a one year time period. So he was terrified ... scared of the men/women wearing the "white coats". The entire atmosphere was frightening for him. But we learned from his previous 2 surgeries to make sure we brought along items to occupy his mind ... his favorite blanket and teddy bear. But this day his comforts from home weren't helping and he was becoming more and more fearful of what the men in white coats were getting ready for. He cried and cried, asking me "Mommy, please take me home". I was busily consoling him, when in walks the Child Life Specialist Lisa ... in hand, she had a Caitlin's Smiles bag. Suddenly Mason became focused on the bag and what treasures lied inside. In a second, he went from this very unhappy and crying little boy to a child simply amazed at the treasures this bag held. He pulled out a craft kit, and a few other craft items and a can of PlayDoh (his favorite). He completely forgot about why he was there and his fear was gone. It was this amazing transformation! Brian and I felt so blessed that someone out there thought so much of children and to want to help parents like us ... in this time of need. I made sure to keep the card that was in the bag telling me what organization had done this for our son so I could personally thank them! After Mason's surgery took place he was very quick to ask where his "bag" was so he could play again.



Mason

After that happened, and he was scheduled for another surgery ... his first question was whether he'd get another Caitlin's Smiles bag "of goodies" (as he called them). He anticipated getting his goodies, and didn't worry near as much about the men in white coats as he had done in prior surgeries.

After he had his surgery to place a gtube in his abdomen for feeds, he again anticipated getting a smiles bag. This time he also received a very cool book, each page containing a different puzzle. What an amazing gift for a little guy who would have much difficulty with walking for the next two weeks following surgery. He did those puzzles every day!!

He also always anticipated all the Caitlin's Smiles events held throughout the year ... like going to Knoebel's Grove. He also loved getting to meet the Senators baseball players and watching them play and seeing the awesome fireworks display afterwards. And he LOVES the Christmas parties each year where he gets to make gifts for his family and friends, as well as receive gifts from Santa and Mrs. Claus (he still believes Elsie is Mrs. Claus). And he couldn't believe it when his big sister Ashley was asked to be Santa's personal helper this past year (he thought that was such an honor for his big sister to be Santa's helper ... he still tells people about how his sister got to be an ELF for a day!).

He also was granted a wish, the wish of a lifetime via Caitlin's Smiles recommendation to Fox 43. He got to meet his Hero, Donovan McNabb, and was even allowed to throw a football to his Hero! That was something that even took McNabb's people off guard (as this generally isn't allowed). That was a day we will never soon forget. We feel so blessed that this happened for Mason! What an inspiration for our son!

We also have made deliveries for Caitlin's Smiles. Being able to hand a sick child a Smiles Bag is one of the most touching experiences we have all ever had. This organization has brought out my

"MASON" CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Key Club Corner



Pastor Barr & the Key Club

This past winter the members of the Pennsylvania District of Key Club International chose Caitlin's Smiles as their statewide "youth serving youth" service initiative. That means more than 10,000 high school student leaders from around the state will be working with Caitlin's Smiles over the 2009-10 academic school year to help bring smiles to the faces of sick children. Key Club is the oldest and largest student-led service leadership program for high school students. Sponsored by Kiwanis International, Key Club is one of several Kiwanis Service Leadership Programs which are making a difference in the lives of students from elementary school through college, as well as adults with disabilities.

In Pennsylvania, the members of the Kiwanis Service Leadership Programs are proud to support Caitlin's Smiles! The first successful project was recently completed at Shikellamy High School Key Club. The Key Club of Shikellamey raised money through various fundraisers. They were challenged by their school principal to raise at least \$1000.00 for Caitlin's Smiles. If they were able to raise the funds, Principal Roden would sleep over night on the roof of the school. With that challenge, "Roden on the Roof" was born! Through several fundraisers (including selling t-shirts that read "Roden on the Roof") the students were able to exceed their goal. In order to commemorate their achievement, before Principal Roden made his way to the roof the students held a dance in the cafeteria to celebrate their efforts. Invited to attend on Friday May 22, 2009, were members of the Pennsylvania Key Club Committee and Caitlin's Smiles Board Members. Several boxes of craft supplies, beads, Playdoh and more were collected and donated, as well as checks totally more than \$1000.00!

To acknowledge the success of the fundraiser, as well as other projects being completed around the state by other Key Clubs, Caitlin's Smiles came up with several 5 foot tall crayons to be passed around from club to club at the end of successful fundraisers. Any Key Club who raises at least \$1000 will get to celebrate by having their school host one of the crayons. As another club raises the funds, that crayon gets passed along. At the end of the year, each crayon will have many stories associated with it from its journey around the state, from school-to-school. In addition to being recognized for the donation by the giant crayon display, each Key Club will get their name on a crayon decal to be put onto the mural at Smiles Central's donation mural.

Key Club, and the entire Kiwanis Family, is proud to support the Caitlin's Smiles program! We look forward to many more successful projects and fundraisers to continue to help bring smiles to the faces of children!



Key Club in Action

Volunteer Spotlight: Collette Shultz



Hi. I'm Collette Shultz and I'm the Central and Southwest Ohio Director for Caitlin's Smiles. But...the title I am the most proud of is that I'm Caitlin's "Aunt Coco". I've been along for this awesome ride and watching with amazement as Cheryl just keeps doing more and more, along with so many dedicated people. I cannot believe how far it has come in 5 short years!

I have been teaching over 20 years and currently teach high school in an alternative center for youth with severe emotional disturbances. My students are my current lifeline for putting kits together for my Ohio hospitals. Without them, I'd be putting kits together in my living room just like I was doing in the beginning! This summer I am volunteering at Dayton Children's Medical Center and have had the opportunity to pass out craft kits out directly

in the emergency department and I have also had the thrill of seeing journals and smile bags in patient rooms while passing out materials for the Family Resource Center. It makes me so very proud to be a part of Caitlin's Smiles. While training for my volunteer work, a hospital employee came up to me and said, "aren't you Caitlin's aunt?". I was speechless!!!! (and of course, in tears) My hospital contact was a child life employee and knew I was coming in and had been looking for me! That just shows how one tiny little person can impact many many lives, doesn't it?

I would never be able to continue this work without my other half, Mike. We had a house concert in the fall as a fundraiser for Caitlin's Smiles featuring two of our friends from the Cincinnati School of Performing Arts. The response and love from our friends was wonderful. We are also proud to be rent angels for the new office. I think I brag about Cheryl as many parents brag about their children, but she is such a role model to me. I keep running to try to keep up, but it's hard to do. I figured if I just hold her hand when she slows down to take a breather than it may be all I can do. I learned a long time ago that I can't fill her shoes, so I just go barefooted and be the only person I know who to be, Aunt Coco.

"MASON" CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

own children's "compassionate" side. All 3 of my children have learned that by giving to others less fortunate, that they also receive so much in return ... it is one of the most therapeutic things we have done for ourselves - by helping others in this way, via Caitlins Smiles.

So when Caitlin's Smiles asked us to attend the Circle K convention at Lake Erie this year, we felt this was the perfect opportunity to tell other young college-aged people how much their own volunteering efforts and the efforts of Caitlin's Smiles Organization truly impacts sick kids and their families. I felt so honored to be one of the guest speakers that day. Mason also spoke ... telling them how much it meant to him over the years when he was so sickly. It was such a nice opportunity for us to speak on behalf of a wonderful organization that brought so much happiness and joy to our son. We have learned time and again, how something as simple as a Smiles Bag can heal the soul of a child ... we've seen it first-hand!

I also felt very honored to be a guest speaker at the Caitlin's Smiles Open House! It felt really good to be able to tell even more people my perspective of Caitlin's Smiles, not only from having my son being a recipient but also why we enjoy helping this wonderful organization. I know Caitlin's Smiles will reach more and more children every year, because this is an organization that truly cares!

Borders and WITF Partner for Caitlin's Smiles!

Annual August Bookdrive begins August 1

Beginning August 1, five regional Borders stores in Harrisburg, Camp Hill, Lancaster, Reading and York will begin to collect books and art supplies for Caitlin's Smiles to distribute to children in hospitals. (Several other Borders Express stores will also be collecting. Visit our website for a complete list). This year's drive will again kick off with a live remote with WITF at the Harrisburg Borders store. Stop by to say hi to your favorite radio personality, make a card for a child in the hospital and purchase a book to donate to Caitlin's Smiles!

Last year's drive yielded fantastic results! The drive brought in \$58,000 in books - over 300 CASES! These books were distributed in the Caitlin's Smiles "Bags of Smiles" and were used to restock area hospital children's playrooms and library areas.

Thanks to the generosity of WITF 89.5 listeners and Borders shoppers, you have put smiles on the faces of thousands of hospitalized children!

Upcoming Events

AUGUST 12 - Fundraiser at Isaacs Restaurant, Oakhurst Plaza in Linglestown from 5-9 pm. Email caitlinssmiles@comcast.net for a flyer. Bring in the flyer and Caitlin's Smiles will receive 25% donation from your total bill.

AUGUST 13 - Craft Kit Assembly Night in Harrisburg, PA from 6 - 8 pm at Caitlin's Smiles headquarters, 3303 N. 6th St, Harrisburg, PA 17110. Email smileyelsie@aol.com to register.

AUGUST 15-23 - Five Below Fundraiser, 5096 Jonestown Road, Harrisburg, PA. Download our flyer from website, present to cashier with purchase and 10% of the dollars spent will be donated to Caitlin's Smiles.

AUGUST 19 - Craft Night at Caitlin's Smiles from 6:30 - 8:30 PM - 3303 North Sixth Street, Harrisburg, PA. Contact Lisa at llili@hotmail.com to register.

SEPTEMBER 10 - Craft Kit Assembly Night

in Harrisburg, PA from 6 - 8 pm at Caitlin's Smiles headquarters, 3303 N. 6th St, Harrisburg, PA 17110. Email smileyelsie@aol.com to register.

SEPTEMBER 12 - Pig Roast & Old Fashioned Day from 2 - 9 pm at Lion's Club Park in Dauphin, PA.

SEPTEMBER 16 - Craft Night at Caitlin's Smiles from 6:30 - 8:30 PM at Caitlin's Smiles headquarters, 3303 N. Sixth St, Harrisburg, PA. Contact Lisa at llili@hotmail.com to register.

SEPTEMBER 18 - Car Wash to Benefit Caitlin's Smiles from 10 am - 2 pm at Your Place Restaurant, Union Deposit Road, Harrisburg, PA. (HELP IS NEEDED - email DIANEM.BOYD@ohiocasualty-ins.com if you can assist!)

For a full event calendar, visit www.caitlins-smiles.org. For more information or to help with an event, contact caitlinssmiles@comcast.net.

About Caitlin's Smiles

For Caitlin Mary Hornung, glitter and glue provided a miracle cure. While it couldn't cure the malignant brain tumor doctors discovered in 1997, Caitlin's zest for arts and crafts chased away the blues and kept her smiling. Caitlin passed in 2000, but her smiling spirit is alive through Caitlin's Smiles.

WHAT DOES CAITLIN'S SMILES DO?

Caitlin's Smiles helps children with chronic and life-threatening illnesses by giving them hope, laughs and smiles. Our programs encourage them to focus on creative arts activities that boost their confidence and self-worth.

WHAT ARE CAITLIN'S SMILES PROGRAMS?

Caitlin's Smiles provides patients with "Bag of Smiles" packages through our Creative Arts Care Program. These packages promote activities such as drawing, creative writing, and sculpting. We also provide individual arts and crafts kits to hospital departments and clinics, where children wait for lengthy treatments.

The organization also offers children a monthly card program and supports families with care kits that include items such as gift cards for gas, food, and phone use.

HOW IS CAITLIN'S SMILES FUNDED?

Our funds come from grants, community and civic groups, businesses, manufacturers, special events, churches, schools and private donations. Caitlin's Smiles is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Caitlin's Wish List

Drawing pads

Coloring & activity books

Play-Doh or Crayola Model Magic (individual sizes)

Writing journals or diaries

Bags of pony beads

Lacing for necklaces

Foam tubs of stickers, beads, etc.

Small Ziplock bags

Gift cards for: Dollar Tree, Wal-Mart, Michael's, AC Moore, Staples, Office Max, gas, phone, and local restaurants

Get Involved!

There are lots of ways help Caitlin's Smiles bring joy to ill children in our community. These include:

ASSEMBLE craft bags/kits for ill children

MAKE hand-made cards to bring joy to an ill child

DELIVER bags and cards to hospitals and clinics

ORGANIZE a craft drive in your community or at your place of work

SPEAK to your friends, church group, or community group about Caitlin's Smiles

WRITE grant applications for funding

DONATE supplies like beads, activity books, and gift cards or make a monetary donation

SPONSOR an event through your business

Caitlin's Smiles Thanks You!

Caitlin's Smiles thanks the businesses, community groups, and individuals who send us smiles! Thanks to everyone contributed time, talents and donations to make our move possible. A special thanks to the follow donors.....

RENT ANGELS (donation of \$2,500)

The Gilbert family

The Barr - Reeves families

Collette Shultz & Mike Babb

Hornung's Hardware & Rental Center

The Rubin family

The good friends at Zion Lutheran Church,
Dauphin, PA

BOULDERS/CASTLE FOUNDATION

Valenti Management/Wendy's

Our good friends at ISG

Fast Signs in Mechanicsburg

Jump Street/Allied Arts Fund

Ronald McDonald House Charities

Forester's International - Susquehanna Branch

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

Zion Lutheran Church, Dauphin, PA

WITF

Borders

Pavone

Eat n Park

FLOWERS

Kiwanis family (Aktion Club, Kiwanis, Circle K
Club, Key Club, Builder's Club and K-Kids)

Deloitte

CRAYONS (donation of \$1,000)

Sherry Morgan

Valerie Ventre

John and Susan Grab

Lower Susquehanna Synod - Women of the ELCA

Shikellamy High School Key Club

Walmart - Mechanicsburg



Donate today to help us bring smiles to a child tomorrow!

Gift Enclosed: \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other: \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

RETURN TO: CAITLIN'S SMILES, 3303 NORTH SIXTH STREET, HARRISBURG, PA 17110

The official registration and financial information of Caitlin's Smiles may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.