



The Inside Story
Social Networking to Support Starlight
October 2009

Preamble: This is the next in a series of letters from the Executive Director of Starlight Children's Foundation – WA to our special donors, partners and constituents. Through these letters I hope to provide you with “the inside story” of our activities, our progress, our plans and our thinking. These letters are intended to be somewhat exclusive in that some of the information will be shared with you before we share it in more public formats. I am including you to receive these letters because you are very important to Starlight and this is one way to share directly with you and to invite you to provide feedback.

In my last letter I discussed how our Starlight chapter is prioritizing and organizing to expand and build our networks in an integrated way. This last quarter we had additions to our Board of Directors and our Spokane Leadership Council. New events made more people aware of Starlight and new directions for existing events are bringing new people in support of Starlight. We are launching a new strategic initiative that we feel will strengthen our chapter at every level.

I am very happy to share with you that so far this year in a continuing economically challenging time the generosity of individual and business supporters, existing and new, have allowed our chapter to meet our budget targets. Reducing our staffing and other expenses this year has also helped. This is a much better scenario than last year's declines and deficits. I am also very happy to state that our annual audit is completed and the auditors found our chapter meeting standards with no areas requiring improvement.

With John Sanders, our board President, stepping down for personal reasons, Pat Sundgren, our 1st Vice President, was elected by the Board to fill the President role through the fiscal year. Since my last letter, new Board members include MonaLisa Oaks with Evergreen Bank, Don Young with Wells Fargo in Spokane, and Janet Gindin educator and with Osborne Books. We are currently at 20 Board members with a goal of 25. Our goals of networking and fundraising are best served with this size of Board.

We continue to focus on our volunteer leadership groups: Board of Directors, Board of Advocates, Alumni Board, and the Leadership Council in Spokane to further expand our outreach and relationship building. **We are actively recruiting for our Board of Advocates (low on meetings, high on advocating for Starlight). Please let me know if you are interested in this group.**

We continue to ask all of our members and supporters to engage others by reaching out to individuals, employee groups, and businesses and inviting them to learn more about Starlight. This can be approaching companies we know or work for and ask if we can come and make a lunchtime presentation to employees, or setting up a one-to-one meeting with business or community leaders where I or a Board member presents Starlight to increase awareness and the opportunities to get involved. People are now using facebook and twitter to build Starlight's network and awareness.

Our new partnership with the Fashion First fashion show on September 17 was a great success with 700 attending. Many new people became aware of Starlight's mission and we met our fundraising goal. Coming up next is our annual Luncheon on October 27 (honoree – Kathi Goertzen). Please join us at the Seattle Westin for lunch. We have a new development for our Oscar's Night Gala on March 7, 2010: it will be held at the Snoqualmie Casino. In addition to the awards and a great dinner, there will be much more to do and some surprises, too. Information on these events is on our website (www.starlight-washington.org). You can help Starlight strategically by helping in one or more of the above actions. **Please contact me with your ideas.**

We have advanced our efforts for “cause marketing” partnerships with areas businesses. See our website – “How to Help” and then “Corporate Partnerships”. It details the “win – win” partnerships Starlight can offer businesses. Current partnerships include Hollywood Video, LeMaster Daniels, Qdoba, California Pizza Kitchen, Embassy Suites, Coldwell Banker Bain, Coca-Cola, YTB Travel, Celebrated Chefs, and others. We feel this is a strong area for growth. **Please let me know of businesses you know that we can approach.**

We have been preparing and are now launching an earned revenue strategy. Opportunities with our hospital partners for contract staffing services are advancing. I have spoken with several hospital CEOs and interest is developing. I will share more detail and positive developments on this front in my next letter to you.

Brian Tracy, owner of Ride the Ducks, conducted another Ride the Ducks fundraiser for Starlight this fall and committed that Starlight will be the Ride the Ducks long term charity partner. We are in discussion with a major grocery company to partner on a toy and book drive this holiday season. Our “Rent a Santa” fundraising program is expanding with local hotels offering our service to their bookings of corporate holiday parties in their facility.

With all of these efforts, however, we cannot succeed with Starlight’s mission without your continuing support. It is always a team effort to achieve worthwhile goals and missions. Please include Starlight in your positive actions this year. We need you and we are counting on you.

Please contact me directly to get more information or to explore how you can get more involved or benefit Starlight (steve@starlight-washington.org, 425-861-7827 x101).

You are part of this partnership where together we act on the value that seriously ill children and their families deserve and will get the support they need to deal with the fear, pain, isolation, and trauma of serious illness. Together we bring light and joy into some of the darkest moments of these children’s and families’ lives. Thank you and bless you for sharing and acting on that value.

Steve

Steve McGraw, *Executive Director*
425-861-7827 ext. 101
steve@starlight-washington.org

California Pizza Kitchen hosted a daylong fun Great Escape in August at Woodland Park in Seattle for more than 150 Starlight kids and their families, complete with games, prizes, magic show, science show, buffet lunch, plus the opportunity to visit the zoo thanks to tickets donated by **Woodland Park Zoo**.

