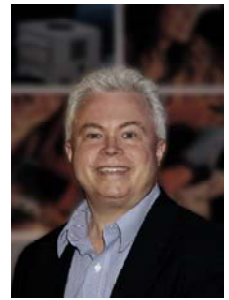




February 2007 Update

*From the desk of Washington Chapter's
Executive Director, Steve McGraw*



Community Partners Extraordinaire!

We are most grateful for the hundreds of people volunteering over the past year in office, event, and warehouse roles.

More than 30 "teams" of volunteers helped out during the holidays in our toy warehouse as upwards of 115,000 donations of new books, toys, and games were received from the Starbucks Joy Drive, Bellevue Square Mall, Microsoft, and from many individuals, businesses, schools, and community groups.

These toys will be distributed year-round and statewide to over 80 hospitals and pediatric organizations.

A total 356 Starbucks employees volunteered in our warehouse during the holidays with opening boxes, doing inventory, boxing, and direct shipments, for a total of 878.4 hours! Also volunteering were employees from Safeco, Lake Side & Interlake high schools, Cascadia, Seattle/Team Works, Voice, Afflerbach, Boy & Girl Scouts, and many individuals from the community.

The estimate value based on an average toy/book retail price of \$16.48 is over \$1.8 million! A grand total of 16,657 toys were distributed during the holiday season (value of \$274,507.36) to Starlight Starbright families and hospitals.

A new inventory tracking barcode scanning software program has been implemented this year, funded by a grant from the Archibald Foundation, and was used to track the donated toys, by whom, and their distribution.

Many "Hospital Happenings" holiday parties were held, including the massive shopping party at Children's where more than 4,000 toys were displayed in a large room for each patient to come in individually to choose gifts for brothers, sisters, and parents, and self, and then move on to the next room for King County Deputies to wrap the gifts for the kids to give to their families. Once again joining as a wrapping volunteer was Congressman Dave Reichert, former King County Sheriff, whose Godson, Kyle, is a Starlight Starbright child.

Marketing Specialist Arri Burgess Joins Staff

In January, we welcomed Arri Burgess to our staff as our marketing specialist, partially funded by a grant from our NY Chapter. Arri will focus on media relations and cause related marketing. We are thrilled to have her join our staff!

Oscar Night® America Party February 25th

Please join us at our 3rd annual party, Oscar Night® America, to be held Sunday, February 25th, at Seattle's Triple Door, with dinner inspired by Wild Ginger. This is Washington state's only Academy-sanctioned Oscar party, which will also include silent and live auctions, and "celebrities"!

Our major sponsors are Davis Wright Tremaine, Nintendo, and Clearwire.



A Parent Speaks . . . Hannah (above) was born five weeks early, and weighed only two pounds four ounces. We brought her home at three pounds eight ounces after four weeks in the Pediatrics Intensive Care Unit. At six months, Hannah was back in the hospital with what was believed was osteomyelitis. After treatment, she did well for about a year. Hannah was then hospitalized with pertussis (whooping cough).

Hannah was relatively healthy for about two and a half years when she again began having problems. It started with an undiagnosed stomach pain and high fever. She was hospitalized because of a distended stomach. In an attempt to reach a diagnosis, the doctors elected to perform a surgical procedure called a laparotomy, suspecting lymphoma because of enlarged lymph nodes. Tissue samples were sent to all parts of the US and Canada including Stanford. The results were "inconclusive". Four weeks later, the surgeon felt that they needed further samples to be sure. They performed a second laparotomy, and discovered that it was definitely not lymphoma. They performed the second operation even though she had a respiratory infection.

After the surgery, Hannah developed pneumonia. An ultrasound exam discovered a clot in the portal vein of her liver. She had three blood clotting disorders: one was hereditary, the other two were acquired. She spent seven weeks in the hospital as a result of both surgeries. They found various secondary problems but have never been able to reach a primary diagnosis. One of her main problems is a severe immune deficiency. Another problem has been an enlarged spleen. After eight years, her spleen became so distended that it was causing many other problems. Her growth was stunted from lack of nutrient absorption. She was in constant pain. She had loss of appetite. She couldn't sleep. She was losing weight. She also had developed a very large hernia on the scar where her previous surgery had been.

Hannah's story continues on the back page

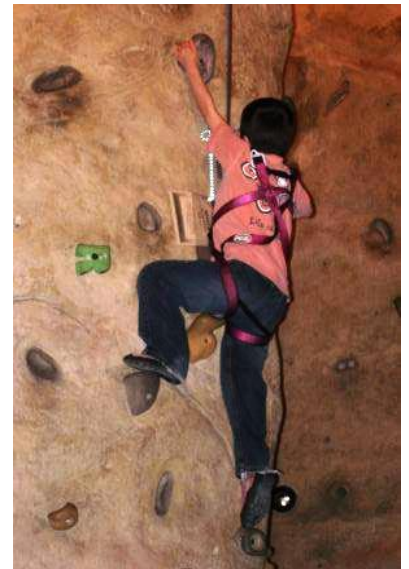
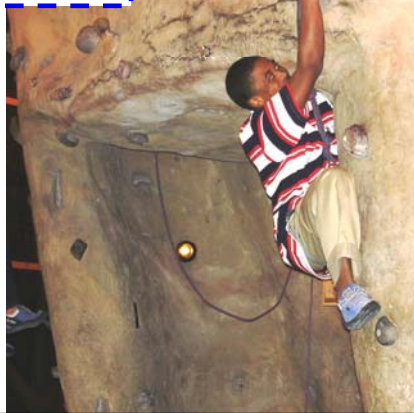
Hannah's story (continued from front page)

The doctors at children's decided that Hannah's spleen needed to be removed. In September, she underwent a 10-hour operation to remove her spleen. Between prep and recovery, she was in the operating room for 14 hours and was given two units of blood. She spent 30 days recovering at Children's hospital. Her Mom stayed with her the entire time.

In the last three months, Hannah has gained weight, grown one inch, and become more mobile. She doesn't feel self conscious in public because her stomach looks normal. She previously looked as if she had a basketball under her shirt.

Another result from the surgery is that after nine years of her always having to be protected and not allowed to be a normal child because of the risk of her spleen, Hannah can now do things that other kids can do, such as ride a bike, roller blade, and her latest adventure, rock climbing. - Bobbi Pearce

Did you know that there are companies that have a matching program? For every hour an employee volunteers at Starlight Starbright, that company matches a \$ donation to our organization. So talk to your HR department and see if your company has this opportunity for employees. If so, please let me know. If your company does not have this program, then you are welcome to introduce us! -Tanja (vol. coordinator)



Kadazia Perry (left) and her brother Darius (right) at the REI climbing the wall.

In January, Hannah (above right) participated at a Great Escape – to climb REI's rock wall! As reported by her family, "This was such an amazing experience for us. Before Hannah's surgery we would never have even considered bringing her to an event like this. It would have been way too dangerous for her. But watching her climb that wall (a total of four times) was such a wonderful gift. For her to be able to participate in a normal activity after 10 years of constant worry was thrilling. Though Hannah still has many medical issues, her quality of life is very much improved, and we are very grateful for the opportunities that Starlight has given her."

Chapter Staff

Steve McGraw, *Executive Director*

Erin Garrett, *Program Services Director* ~ Joyce Bottenberg, *Development Director*

Julie Karber, *Great Escapes Coordinator* – Spokane area

Arri Burgess, *Marketing Specialist* ~ Stefany Peterson, *Office Manager* ~ Tanja Pineda, *Volunteer Coordinator*

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Starlight Starbright is a 501c3 charity, federal ID #91-1558287

Join Us for Golf 2007!



Football greats Sonny Sixkiller and Jack Thompson are again participating with Starlight Starbright, serving this year as Honorary Chairs at our 3rd annual Starlight Starbright Golf Classic & Auction coming up Tuesday, August 21st, at The Golf Club at Newcastle.

Event chair is Todd Johnson, with committee members Chris Baldwin, Paul Martin, Tim Leahy and Howard Bogie.

Please join us! You're welcome as a golfer, dinner guest, and auction enthusiast! Tickets are limited. Please contact joyce@starlight-washington.org or 425-861-7827 ext. 102.

"Brightening the lives of seriously ill children and their families"