

# Wishes 2009

## LITTLE WISHES FOUNDATION

A Children's Hospital of Illinois Foundation, Peoria, Illinois

*On behalf of Little Wishes Foundation  
and all of the children we serve,  
we would like to extend heartfelt thanks  
to all who have dedicated time and resources to  
continue our efforts to bring smiles to young faces.*



*This 2nd annual issue of Wishes, our foundation newsletter,  
highlights special events we would like to share with you.  
Simple things for us, great things for kids.*

*2009 has been a year of learning, a year of stories  
and most importantly another year of smiles from those  
who need our help, our compassion and our prayers.*

**Peace & Joy This Holiday Season and Wishes for  
a Wonderful New Year filled with Hope & Faith,**





## OUR VALENTINES



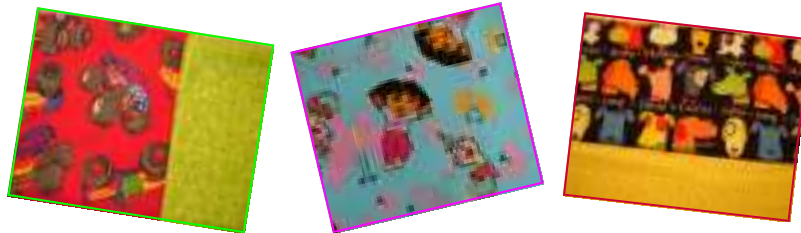
Holidays spent in the hospital are a particularly difficult time for patients and their families. This year, Little Wishes Foundation invited the CHOI patients to a Valentine's Day party for an afternoon of fun. The party was held in the Pediatric Activity Room which was decorated with red tablecloths, white heart-shaped doilies, paper plates patterned with pink and red hearts plus matching napkins. The menu included a frothy pink punch served with chocolate and vanilla cupcakes, both frosted and plain. Most kids chose the plain cupcakes so they could have fun decorating them with chocolate and strawberry frostings and a fun assortment of sprinkles. For those who were not ambulatory, the fun came to them. With my friend Dorothy, a Cafeteria Alternatives manager, we delivered plain cupcakes to patient rooms along with plastic pill cups filled with assorted frostings and sprinkles. Cupcakes certainly brought out the smiles! The kids were also able to make special Valentine cards with colored paper, stamps, crayons, and markers also donated by LWF. Simple activities and a bit of fun during a traumatic time.

### Editor's Note :

This was my first experience interacting with the CHOI kids - to spend time with them, to meet their families, and to hear some of their stories. I was apprehensive; afraid that I would see more than I wanted to remember and more than my heart could handle. I left the hospital remembering their smiles.

## Prayer Blankets

Last year we began providing prayer blankets to children who are patients at Children's Hospital of Illinois. Prayer blankets are made of brightly colored and fun patterned cotton and flannel fabric which is donated by LWF. Each blanket is handcrafted by volunteers through the Prayer Blanket Ministry of St. Patrick's Church, Bloomington. Prayers are said for each recipient as the blankets are sewn and then they are blessed by the pastor of the church before being given to the children. During 2009, LWF donated 415 prayer blankets to pediatric patients at CHOI. Throughout the year we have received wonderful responses from the children and their families and thank all who have contributed time and talent to creating these cherished blankets!



This year one of the recipients held a special place in our hearts. His name is Ethan and he is almost 4. Ethan is extremely bright, active, inquisitive, loves his family, his friends, his toys and especially his bedroom! He is an adorable little one who loves life.

In April Ethan had a very serious illness that required immediate surgery. He was brought by ambulance to Children's Hospital of Illinois. He went through testing, surgery and several weeks of recovery. He was away from home, in a strange hospital room where he was connected to tubes and monitors, and experienced pain much different from his typical "boo-boos".

Ethan chose a prayer blanket with bright colored trucks—his favorite! He kept it close to him along with his stuffed animals, stickers and get-well cards.

Ethan made a full recovery and is back to his normal activities with two small scars to remind him of his ordeal. Ethan received much love and attention from his family and friends, he received excep-

tional medical care from his CHOI medical team and because of the caring hearts of our volunteers he received a blanket which covered him with prayers. A winning combination!





## Your Gifts

Children hospitalized at CHOI suffer from incurable diseases, birth defects, medical disorders and traumatic injuries. Despite the severity of their health problems, they still need to smile and laugh, they need to be carefree, they need to be kids . . . even for a moment. Little Wishes Foundation was established and funded by Cafeteria Alternatives, Inc. in 2007. It addresses the specific wants and needs of children during their hospitalization and for some, coping with life afterward.

During 2008 one of the first purchases LWF made for a child in need was a voice-activated laptop computer. It was given to a young man who is a quadriplegic, suffering from MS at a very early age. He is only able to speak and use his thumbs. He is now 19 and lives in a nursing home. His computer is the only connection he has to the world around him.

In February of this year we were once again able to provide a voice-activated computer to help another young man. He is a victim of an accident which left him permanently paralyzed from the neck down. He is 14.

Children's Hospital of Illinois treats 50,000 children each year; 5,000 of these children are admitted. Many are treated, released and return to normal lives. Some are hospitalized for weeks and months at a time. Others never leave the hospital. There is a new story every day, a new reason to continue and a new chance to help.

To date your donations have also provided:

Wall-mounted DVD players for all patient rooms, portable DVD players for use by children waiting for testing or other procedures, iPods and CD players, a flat-screen TV for the Pediatric Activity Room, gift cards for special occasions, toys, disposable cameras, craft & scrapbooking supplies, story books, games & movies, special celebration, holiday & birthday parties, a professional family photo album, a special Florida family trip, family housing for a St. Jude patient, plus our monthly donation of prayer blankets and fabric for surgical hats.

Our contact with the Child Life Department at CHOI allows us to be aware of the special needs of a child at any time. Little Wishes Foundation provides the funds immediately for purchases so no child will be without for long. During the first eleven months of 2009, Little Wishes Foundation received over \$21,000.00 in donations, including matching funds from Cafeteria Alternatives for all monies collected in the hospital. We are thankful for each contribution and grateful to all who care .

*May God Bless You!*

THE SMILE ON A CHILD'S FACE **NEVER** LEAVES YOUR HEART!

## Our Newest Project

At the request of many of the CHOI pediatric patients, the Child Life Department created a “Kids Board” comprised of former pediatric patients who provide input from their experiences to help improve every child’s hospital stay. One of the suggestions this year was the use of “fun” surgical hats patients could wear to keep their spirits up. The idea was approved earlier this year and LWF now provides the fabric for these hats. Like our prayer blanket fabric, each piece is selected based on age and gender and the fun, bright colors and prints are consistent with our choices for prayer blankets. The hats resemble shower caps and are sewn by several volunteer groups in Peoria. They have been a great hit with the kids as well as the surgeons, anesthesiologists and surgical staff. Since March, we have purchased enough fabric to create over 300 fabulous hats!

## How To Contact LWF

*Wishes*, the newsletter, is an annual publication. Each issue includes stories about the children, special projects, and other information that may be of interest.

You may contact Little Wishes Foundation through:

Susan Rivard, Editor

[surivard@littlewishesfoundation.com](mailto:surivard@littlewishesfoundation.com)



## Donations

Little Wishes Foundation is new but the idea is not. Helping children who are suffering because of disease or trauma is what our hearts and our faith draw us to. The creation of Little Wishes Foundation allows us to become a part of their reality and gives them a chance to smile and laugh, even for a moment.

Little Wishes Foundation is a non-profit, 501c3 organization. All donations to Little Wishes Foundation are administered by the Children’s Hospital of Illinois, Peoria. There are no administrative fees and all monies donated go directly to the needs of the children. Donations are tax-deductable and acknowledged by CHOI. If you would like to make a donation please make your check payable to Little Wishes Foundation and send it to CHOI Foundation, 530 N.E. Glen Oak Avenue, Peoria, Illinois 61637. Donations can be made in your name, given as gifts to others or as memorials.