

Jackson's Mulligan on Life

Family Tees Up to Give Back

In the game of golf, a mulligan happens when a player gets a second chance to perform a certain move or action. A mulligan in life, getting a second chance, is something 6-year-old Jackson Heller knows all about. And Jackson and his family are anxious to show the world what the miracle of life – the gift of a second chance for an organ recipient – can look like. And how a resource such as the Family House is critically needed in Philadelphia.

Jackson was born with a rare liver disease, biliary atresia. After a seemingly never-ending cycle of doctors, hospitals, blood transfusions and procedures, Jackson was admitted to The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia in December, 2003, where he received a new liver from a generous family whose one-year-old child had died. Unfortunately, a blood clot damaged Jackson's new liver and another transplant was required.

While Jackson was hospitalized in Philadelphia, the Heller family – parents Gregg and Gabi, and older sister, Morgan – continually made the three-hour trip between Philadelphia and upstate New Jersey over a six-month period. Daily trips to and from the hospital, taking turns sitting at the bedside but unable to hold their baby, and the overwhelming deluge of medical terms and information all take their toll.

A second "angel" appeared, and a second liver transplant gave Jackson yet another chance. Now, more than four years later, Jackson is enjoying a normal life. He just attended the 2008 Transplant Games in Pittsburgh July 11-16, representing Team Philadelphia in the softball toss and the 50 meter dash. Jackson, entering first grade in September, loves playing sports and spending time with his sister and new baby brother, Travis.

The Hellers truly understand how blessed they are and how the Gift of Life Family House could have provided additional support for them during this stressful time. "We were able to stay at a Ronald McDonald House in the area so we know what a great support that is but being with transplant families going through the unique transplant experience would have been extremely helpful! Our needs were very specific – how to manage his medication, making sure he wasn't exposed to anything that could set his treatment back. The Family House will provide such a supportive environment focused on the needs of organ recipients and their families. From parents to siblings!"

For the past four years, Gregg's employer, Hennion & Walsh, has sponsored a golf outing – Jackson's Annual Mulligan on Life Golf Outing - to raise money and awareness for organ donation. This year's proceeds benefit Gift of Life Family House, and they have made a commitment to help out over the next five years.

"Every time we look at Jackson," Greg adds, "we are reminded that we owe his donors and their families such a debt of gratitude for their unselfish gifts. Jackson has been transformed into a happy and healthy child and we want to give back so that other families can have this same experience."



Jackson races to the finish in the 50 meter dash at the 2008 Transplant Games in Pittsburgh. At right, Jackson and his father, Gregg, enjoy a pre-race moment.



"If someone had told me..."

Family House becomes eBay Sellers' "Mission"



Terry Meade is still amazed at what she and her husband, Mark, have been through in the last three years. Thankful and amazed!

"If someone had told me," Terry states, "that this girl from Brooklyn, who never drove beyond her neighborhood, would tackle I-95 twice each day for four months, on my own, crying all the way home each night, overwhelmed by the isolation of leaving Mark in the hospital and the terror of not knowing what was going to happen, I would have said that they had the wrong story."

Their journey began in 2005 when Terry, an eBay Power Seller, traveled with her husband, Mark, to attend an Ebay Live! Convention in San Jose, California. While in San Jose, Mark suffered a massive heart attack and was immediately transferred to Sequoia Hospital where he underwent surgery. Terry and Mark

were without the support of New Jersey family and friends but they found much needed support in surprising places.

While Mark was being cared for at Sequoia Hospital, Terry was fortunate enough to stay in a "Guest House" located on the hospital grounds. The Guest House provided lodging to a limited number of family members, allowing Terry to be near Mark during his six-week recuperation. And although Terry was 3,000 miles from home, her wonderful eBay community rallied around them to provide a network of support.

Terry's eBay family was again alerted in February 2008 when Mark was admitted to Hahnemann University Hospital and placed on a waiting list for a heart transplant. But this time, without the benefit of a "guest house" nearby, it was necessary for Terry to make the daily trip from their home in Princeton, NJ to Philadelphia to be near Mark. Terry traveled back and forth every day for over four months because she could not afford to stay in the hotels near the hospital while paying for meals, parking, gas and all of the other out-of-pocket daily expenses.

But on June 4, 2008, all the challenges were worth it because Mark received his heart transplant from an anonymous but generous family.

While Terry and Mark plan to join Gift of Life Donor Program's speakers bureau and Hahnemann's Second Chance group to share their experiences to increase awareness about the critical need for organ donation, they are especially committed to raising funds and awareness about the critical role that Gift of Life Family House will play.

"Staying at the Guest House for six weeks in 2005 saved my life." Terry recalls. "I was so far from home. Frightened. Exhausted. Alone. It provided a constant source of support and I met other family members in the same situation. Mark and I have lifelong friends that we met during that time, that are still in our lives."

Working through eBay Giving Works, Terry has enlisted her eBay universe to buy or sell items on eBay – or simply make a donation that will directly benefit Gift of Life Family House. This is their way of giving something tangible back.

Terry and Mark are appreciative of the outstanding care that Mark received from Dr. Eisen and the cardiac transplant team at Hahnemann. They are grateful that their donor family said "yes" to organ donation and that Mark has been given a second chance at life.

"We have been so blessed." Terry adds. "I still can't believe where we've been ... but we're on the other side now, and it feels good to exhale."

Stay tuned for more information...

- Gift of Life Family House Introduces Capital Campaign to help "Open the Door to Life"
- Updated Gift of Life Family House website being launched www.GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org

Many Thanks to our Generous CONTRIBUTORS

Michael and Heidi Adams
Aetna/NME Department
Charles and Pauline Albert
Ann Baker
Bloomingdale's Inc.
Borgata Heart and Soul Foundation
Buchanan Ingersoll and Rooney PC
Roger Butler
Edward J. Butts
Phillip W. and Gisela I. Meyer-Caprio
Marcia R. and Elias S. Cohen
Shirley A. Cohen
DeSales University
Beverly and Nathan Getzenberg
Valerie Graham
Hennion & Walsh – 2008 Jackson's Mulligan
on Life Golf Outing
Mark and Terre Hutchinson
Rev. Sigmund Benham and Joanne Pokras Kahn
Mary P. and James K. Keller
Masonic Blood Donor Club of Pennsylvania
Rev. Leighton and Dr. Deborah McMillan
Carlos and Beatriz Moreno
Charles and Mary Pacheco
Anna Roberts
Rabbi Robert B. & Susan W. Brown Rubin
Michael and Christine Rugalla
Christine G. and Ernest R. Seltzer
Sovereign Insurance Group
Joseph Tittermary
Elizabeth A. Turich and Robert J. Scullin
Webster B. and Margaret W. Ulin
Poikayil C. and Sosamma Varghese

In Memory of...

Ed Bragger
Allentown Train Meet Associates

Caitlin M. Ciquero
Thomas Lembo

Stacey Sylvina Connell
Larry Davis

Tracy G. DePietropaolo
David M. and Caryn N. Vertigan

Scott Griffin
David H. and Linda J. Evans

Sarah Hendrix
Virginia H. Scruggs

Anthony Jensen
1st Annual Anthony Jensen Memorial
Golf Tournament
Tim and Debbie Griffin

Jack Kupzoff
Joyce Silberman

Betty Malloy
Gary J. and M. Valere Egnasko

Joseph Andrew Mastrangelo
Mark W. and Caroline Adams
Pierre and Karen A. Annaballi
John J. and Jo Ann Birkmire
Michael and Elizabeth Calvano

Robert Creager
Teresa Dirvin
Marie Dirvin
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Marian G. Feil
Frank J. and Mary Therese Ferro
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Mary Ann and James E. Lennox
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Frank C. and Anne M. Palopoli
James R. and Mary Ellen Potts
Geoffrey and Sally O. Preston & Family
Evelyn R. Rice
Natalie Rokaski
Rekha Sankaran-Kutty and Daniel Martin
Samuel Schoell
Dawn Marie Stuempfle
James and Margaret Stuempfle
Howard J. and Christine Taggart
Nancy Threlfall
Dawn Warfield

Michael D. McVey
Joseph and Pauline Dinoia

Tenesha Middleton
Jennifer Negron

Ryan Mohn
Nicole DeFrank
Mohamed Tanamly

Jean Ryder Morrissett
John Bastian
Kimberly Doggett
Matthew Morgan
Denise Scobee
Andre and Catherine H. Susanin
Elizabeth Therrel

Kassandra Watson
Don and Nancy Weaver

Marcella Catherine Motyl
William V. and Alma Z. Keys

Catherine Mulderig
Jean Alessi
Pauline Cleighton
Ellen Davidson & friends
Carmella James
Scott and Mary Johnson (on behalf of
co-workers and friends)
Salvatore and Diana Pantano
Meta Sanford
Robert S. and Maryann M. Stuart

Boris Rosenfeld
Svetlana Katok

Maria Luisa Solorzano
Christine R. Macrina

Helen Willis
Lawrence and Ruth Gach

In Honor of...

Katie Alessi
Richard A. and Toni Bonnette

Bill Hodgen
Michael and Heidi Adams

Lynn Kirschner
Robert and Randie Harmelin

James Mendez
Richard Fallstich

Diane Morton
Jane Lewis

Carole Resnick
Thelma M. Segal

Joseph Romano
Theresa and Jason Burnitskie

Bobbi and Irv Schrob
Alison North

Gifts Received April 1 – July 31, 2008

Borgata Grant Aids Family House Mission

In April, the Borgata Hotel Heart and Soul Foundation in Atlantic City awarded a grant to Gift of Life Family House. The Borgata Heart and Soul Foundation is committed to making a difference in their community and selected the Family House program because it will provide lodging and support for New Jersey families who travel to Philadelphia for their life-saving transplant care.

Last year, Gift of Life Donor Program coordinated almost 400 organ transplants for patients from the Borgata service area. Currently, 1,014 patients who live in New Jersey will travel to Philadelphia when they are notified that an organ is available.



Rosalie Lopez, (center) a dedicated spokesperson and volunteer for Gift of Life Donor Program, and a Borgata employee, was instrumental in the Family House selection and presented the grant to Howard M. Nathan, President and CEO, Gift of Life Donor Program, and Debra Roberts, Director, Family House, at the 2008 Volunteer Appreciation Event.

THANK YOU Bloomingdale's

Fashion Events Benefit Family House

Young transplant recipients Joelle Atkinson, Daniel Carrasquillo, Priscilla Lane and Ryan Snyder, ambassadors for Gift of Life Donor Program, took to the runway with students from Upper Dublin High School's Fashion Club during Bloomingdale's Shopping Works Wonders Event at the Willow Grove location in April helping to raising organ donor awareness while showcasing Bloomingdale's finest fashions. The Fashion Club students chose Gift of Life Family House as the recipient of 10% of

the proceeds of Bloomingdale's same day receipts amounting to \$4,500!

On October 23, YOU can participate in Bloomingdale's Shopping Benefit at both the Willow Grove and King of Prussia locations and help raise money for Gift of Life Family House. A pre-purchased \$10 ticket will entitle you to receive 15% to 20% in savings on purchases that day only. Family House will get 100% of the ticket proceeds! For more information, visit our website, www.GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org.

Family House Events

August 28

Third Kidney Open

Golf outing benefiting the Family House

Location: DuPont Country Club, Wilmington, DE

Tee off: 2 PM

Contact: Dan Sinnott at 302-893-7013

September 17

Wachovia Dealer Services 2008 Golf Challenge

Location: Makefield Highlands Golf Club, Yardley, PA

Registration: 10 AM

Shotgun Start: 12:30 PM

Dinner & Awards Ceremony: 5:30 PM

Contact: Mark Lubas at 610-331-4433

September 23

Young Friends of the Family House Kick-off Meeting

Location: Gift of Life Donor Program
401 N. Third Street, Philadelphia, PA

Time: 6-8 PM

RSVP: 215-557-8090, Ext. 1312 or E-mail:
kszczepanski@donors1.org

Join other young professionals and get excited about friend-raising and fundraising for Gift of Life Family House.

October 4

Mark R. Phillips 2008 Memorial Ride

Location: Grace Lutheran Church
498 Church Road, York PA

Registration: 10 AM to 12:30 PM

Ride begins: 1:00 PM through York, Adams and Cumberland counties

Tickets: \$20 (check or cash) per vehicle and driver, \$15 per passenger

Ticket includes ride, after-ride picnic with food, beverages and music. All proceeds benefit Gift of Life Family House. For more information, call Craig Phillips at 717-332-6664.

October 23

Bloomingdale's THE SHOPPING BENEFIT to benefit Family House!

A storewide event featuring special savings, gift incentives, entertainment, fashion events, kids' activities, product demonstration and more.

Location: King of Prussia and Willow Grove store locations

Time: Thursday, October 23, 2008
10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$10 ticket will entitle you, to a 15% to 20% savings certificate valid only during THE SHOPPING BENEFIT event (with limited exclusions)!

For more information regarding these events benefiting the Family House, contact **Kathy Szczepanski** at kszczepanski@donors1.org or call (215) 557-8090, ext. 1312

United Way

Did You Know? You can designate support for Gift of Life Donor Program in your United Way Workplace Campaign – with those proceeds benefiting Gift of Life Family House.

Select Donor Option #5995

Gift of Life Donor Program.

A great way to "give at the office!"



Children of all ages will enjoy the beautiful collection of books presented by the Women of Reform Judaism of Temple Judea in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. In thanking Janice Schwartz Donahue for the wonderful donation, Debra Roberts stated, "As the Family House will be serving both pediatric transplant recipients and children of adult transplant recipients for frequent and/or extended stays, it is essential that we have a variety of activities to entertain these children and teens."