



A Worthy Mission

Dream House increases the number of families and communities prepared to care for medically fragile children at home by:

1 Providing them safe, temporary homes;

2 Training families and caregivers;

3 Preparing specially-equipped and accessible homes;

4 Championing positive change via community and corporate partnerships.

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The Silver Lining

A Printed Publication of Dream House for Medically Fragile Children, Inc.

Volume 8: July 2009

From Our Family to Yours...

How many 11-year-olds do you know willing to give up birthday presents to help a complete stranger? Kayla Whitner's generous spirit made it possible for little Gianni Shields to travel in June to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota for a long-awaited diagnostic evaluation.

Finally an Appointment, but...

Gianni's mom, Catherine, called Dream House for financial assistance to offset the anticipated \$600 in expenses for their journey to Minnesota and back. Gianni breathes with the help of a mechanical ventilator, and commercial air travel was not an option. Insurance covered rental for a van large enough to transport all his medical equipment and supplies, but travel expenses for the 2,500 mile round trip were outside the family's budget. Immediately, Snellville-based Career Training Concepts, Inc. donated \$200 to help Gianni. Encouraged, we hoped to soon secure the full \$600.

Never Underestimate the Power of a Compelling Story

Blessed with two healthy kids, Lisa Whitner is very sensitive to stories about children with special health issues because she had an unfounded scare when expecting her son. Over two years ago, Lisa read the January 8, 2007 *PEOPLE Magazine* article about Dream House. She was so touched by the mention of Ken and Judy Hammett, a local couple who have devoted their lives to caring for their medically fragile adopted and foster children at home, that she kept the article. Now this is where the story really gets interesting...

Lisa's daughter Kayla recently attended a friend's birthday party. Instead of presents, the guests were asked to bring donations for a pet charity. Inspired by the experience, she asked her parents if she could do something similar for her own birthday this year and would they help her choose a charity to support. Lisa remembered the Dream House article. She pulled it out for Kayla to read and also suggested other charities to evaluate. Together they learned about different causes that interested Kayla.



Kayla Whitner playing with her new friend, little Gianni Shields the day before he traveled to the Mayo Clinic.

Kayla's Choice? Help Other Kids

The day we needed to call Gianni's parents, Lisa came to the Dream House office with donations from Kayla's birthday party. Six friends plus family members had given Dream House \$480 and a \$50 Kroger gift card.

The significance of Kayla's gift did not dawn on us immediately. Minutes after Lisa left, we had the 'ah ha' moment. This was the remaining amount the Shields needed for their travel expenses, plus a little extra.

Story continued on page 2





◁ Kayla, Keith, Kielan and Lisa Whitner with Gianni Shields.
▽ Catherine Shields with her son Gianni and Kayla.



continued from page 1

In a written note to Kayla, we offered to arrange a visit with Gianni before his trip. Days later, Lisa called asking if it was too late. Kayla had just read the note after returning from a visit with her grandparents.

The entire Whitner family made time for a quality visit with Gianni in his home the day before the Mayo Clinic trip. By the visit's end, Kayla and Gianni had made a connection.

Kayla and Lisa dropped by the Dream House office a few days before the Shields got home. Kayla had made a blanket to give Gianni. She also had a belated birthday gift to share. Her grandfather was so touched that Kayla got to meet Gianni, he felt compelled to make a significant donation to Dream House in her honor. Kayla shared with us how she wants the money to be used. The next steps for Gianni's treatment? That is not yet clear.

Read Kayla and Gianni's full story in the June 2009 Silver Lining eNews at www.DreamHouseForKids.org.

Collaboration Got Abby to Boston, PDO...

(May 11, 2009) *As I write this note, Abby and I are sitting on a tarmac in Boston, on a Delta Airlines jet, waiting to return home to Georgia. Our son passed away in 2001 at age 7 from this same disease. We were hoping to never live this again, but here we are...*

Lauren Fitzpatrick received a call May 5 from Floating Hospital for Children. Her daughter Abby, who has mitochondrial disease and a GI condition, had been wait-listed to see one of three specialists in the country who care for children with this specific combination of health issues. An opening was available. She contacted Angel Flight Atlanta, GA but inclement weather prevented Angel Flight from accepting the mission. Having referred a number of other families to Dream House this spring, Bernadette Darnell at Angel Flight suggested the Fitzpatricks call.

The past 20 months, Dream House has helped numerous children like Abby with transportation for out-of-state medical procedures. Through its SkyMiles Home Run Program, Delta Airlines donated SkyMiles to Dream House for each home run hit by Jeff Francoeur during the 2007 Atlanta Braves season.

(Lauren's note continued)...*It is so important that word gets out there is such a gap financially, emotionally and physically when caring for a chronically ill child at home. We both have jobs and insurance, yet we are on the verge of bankruptcy. The copays, out of pocket expenses and missed work are so much that most people cannot understand it unless they live it. Read Abby's story online in May's Silver Lining eNews.*



Doing Whatever It Takes...

The Wallace family is dedicated to helping Dream House fulfill its mission. Following are email excerpts that chronicle their support since first hearing on the radio how Dream House is making a difference for kids in Georgia.

(July 29, 2008) *We could not imagine abandoning our children for any reason whatsoever. I know there are always extenuating circumstances for some families, and I really cannot imagine how hard it must have been for many of those parents who have felt they have had no other choice but to give up their children. We want to do our part to make sure no child is abandoned and as many children as possible can receive the care they need and deserve. We are making it a point to tell our friends and family about Dream House every chance we get. We know that \$30 a month just from us is not going to take care of the children, so we will do as much as we can to help it multiply by as many families as possible.*

(February 5, 2009) *I just wanted to give you the courtesy of letting you know that, beginning in March, we are going to have to drop our monthly donation...I received news this week that, effective next week, my hours are being cut...Unfortunately, that means we also have to cut all of our charitable contributions by one-third.*

(April 16, 2009) *Since I emailed you, my hours shot back up...so we did not have to decrease our donation amount even once. My wife and I were ecstatic about our income stabilizing for a number of obvious reasons, but one of the biggest was that we did not have to "scale back" our charitable donations.*

Read the Wallace's full story in the April 2009 Silver Lining eNews at www.DreamHouseForKids.org.




Supporter Spotlight

The Meiflower Project

Mei Ling Liu contacted Dream House on behalf of the Korean American Coalition, in hopes of identifying a community service project. Via the Family for Keeps™ Bridging the Gap program, Dream House acted as a liaison to connect Mei and her friends with a local family. The group completed a home improvement project for them in May. See the Meiflower Project's photo album at www.DreamHouseForKids.org.



 ADD DREAM HOUSE AS A CAUSE ON YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE

The International Business Brokers Association and M&A Source gifted Dream House, at their national conference in Atlanta, with a donation from 53 individuals in 14 states, plus London and Hong Kong. Thank you!



Across the Nation

Since mid-2008, Melville, NY based Lend America makes a donation to Dream House for each loan it closes. Thank you for this consistent support!



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Katie Moore accepts ProcareRX Charity Golf Tournament proceeds from Dream House beneficiaries Roger and Barbara Burgess.

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Because you cared enough to help...

During the first six months of 2009, Dream House has provided our ground-breaking *Family for Keeps™* transition care program and related services for 55 medically fragile children and their families in 13 Georgia counties, as well as seven others in California, Florida, Missouri, Mississippi and West Virginia. We are so thankful your support helps bring our mission alive, one child at a time.

\$25

Provides one week's supply of disposable diapers and wipes for any age medically fragile child.

\$50

Buys gas for one month to help a family travel to medical appointments.



\$200

Covers one weekend of respite care for a child at the Dream House Lilburn Transition Care Center.

\$325

Scholarships one parent taking the Dream House 2-day *Family for Keeps™* Basic Caregiver Course.

MICHAEL KOENEN



Dream House Golf Classic

To benefit Dream House for Medically Fragile Children, Inc.



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS: www.DreamHouseForKids.org Meet our Atlanta Falcons Guests, Sponsors and Dream House Golf Participants.



The 2009 Dream House Golf Classic raised over \$26,000 thanks to Michael Koenen, the Atlanta Falcons and sponsors:

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Join Michael Koenen & Friends • Tuesday, April 6, 2010 • Hamilton Mill Golf Club

Mark Your Calendar

August 2009

August 3 — **Snellville Commerce Club Presentation**

August 14 — **2nd Fridays in Old Town Lilburn**

Shops stay open late to benefit Dream House

August 20 — **BIG Expo/Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce**

Courtesy of ER Snell Contractor and E2E Benefit Resources

September 2009

Sept. 12 — **Main Street Fair (11-3) and Music-On-Main (5-10:30)**

See event details below or at www.DreamHouseForKids.org

October 2009

Oct. 3 — **Dream House 500 Ride** www.dreamhouse500.com

Oct. 11 — **Tim Hawkins Benefit Comedy Event**

Smokerise Baptist Church • Stone Mountain, GA

November 2009

Nov. 19-22 — **Abigail Grace Chambers Memorial Football Tournament**

Gwinnett County Youth Football

Nov. 21 — **Boot Scootin' Barn Raiser** *Gwinnett County Fairgrounds*



Family Fun Trail Ride

Thanks to event sponsors Yamaha and SETRA, The Fun and Reliable Tiddlers, plus each participant of the 2009 Family Fun Trail Ride who helped raise \$18,000 to improve quality of life for medically fragile children.

Two Community Events, One Fun Day!

Hosted by the City of Lilburn and Lilburn Business Association

September 12, 2009

Lilburn City Park • Free Shuttle

11 AM — 3 PM **MAIN STREET FAIR**

*Family-Friendly Fun • Free Health Screenings
\$5 Carnival Zone • Monster Truck & Fire Engine
Meet Your Neighbors Village and more!*

5 — 10:30 PM **MUSIC-ON-MAIN**

*Banks & Shane Concert • VIP Sponsor Reception
\$10 General Admission (bring chairs, no coolers)
Silent Auction • Food & Beverages Sold*



MAIN STREET FAIR



Music on Main

To benefit Dream House for Medically Fragile Children, Inc.

EVENT VOLUNTEERS • DONATE AUCTION ITEMS • CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS • BUY TICKETS

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Influence 2010 corporate budgets (philanthropic, community relations, marketing or advertising line items).

Include Dream House CFC# 91945 in employee gift campaign selections.

Introduce Dream House to religious and civic organizations for missions and community service initiatives.