



## Special Interest Articles:

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## Articles to look for in January's newsletter:

- How to Support Financially in 2009.
- How to Register as a Player to Start Playing in May 2009.
- Winter Activities for Miracle League Members.

## Upcoming Events

### Trick or Treating at Miracle League Field

Come all Miracle League members--bring your family and friends to go trick or treating at the Miracle League Field. Fifty organizations, companies and individuals have donated their efforts to making trick or treating easy and fun, just for you. Please feel free to invite special needs children who may not currently be involved with the Miracle League to come out and have fun. If you have not already, please RSVP to Melissa so she is able to ensure enough treats for everyone (484-221-9814).

**October 29, 2008** at the Miracle League Field, rain date October 30, 2008. Call 484-221-9814 after

### Miracle League and Dream Come True Christmas Party

On December 7, 2008 Dream Come True and the Miracle League of the Lehigh Valley will be hosting their annual Christmas party. It is a fantastic event with gifts, food and fun activities. Additional information will be posted on our web site in November. Please mark the date on your calendar and check our web site for more details.

12noon on the 29<sup>th</sup> for possible schedule changes.

*Thank you vendors for making this possible:*

Alvin H. Butz, Inc  
Bieber Tourways  
Jaindl Farms  
Coca Cola  
Just Born  
Rascals Food for Fun  
Stirling Painting and Renovations  
Harwick Family  
Hometown Heroes  
Elias Family  
Friendly's  
Schuylkill Valley Sports  
Sovereign Bank  
IronPigs  
Phoebe Florist  
Wegmans  
HR Block  
Visions Child Care Center  
LSI  
Rothrock  
Elite Mix Martial Arts Center  
Lehigh Valley Hospital  
Christmas City Studio  
Future Business Leaders of America  
Zator Law Offices, LLC  
Cindy Miles & Associates  
Boy Scout Troup 1600

### Miracle League Winter Fun

This winter we will have some great activities for all Miracle League participants to enjoy. The Miracle League understands how important it is for all of its players to stay connected over the winter.

Be sure to check the events section on the Miracle League website regularly. Activities will start in January.

Please contact Melissa if you would like to be on

State Theatre Center of the Arts  
Ashley's Restaurant  
Easter Seals  
Frito Lay  
Herr's  
Cetronia Ambulance  
Zambelli Family  
Bayada Nurses  
NothelferMorrone  
Southern Lehigh Soccer Team  
Daytimers  
Moravian Lacrosse  
Lehigh Valley Martial Arts  
Good Shepherd Pediatric  
Eastern PA Down Syndrome Center  
Southern Lehigh Key Club  
CLIU 21  
Tri Clover Fire Company  
Ellis Optical Co.  
Yankee Fan Club  
Parkland Key Club  
Parkland Red Cross Club  
Parkland 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile and Leo Club

### *Thank you Volunteers:*

Mericle Family, Brown Family, Indelecato Family, Miller Family, Benedetto Family, Rick Richards, Blum Family. LV League Soft Ball, Parkland Key Club, Parkland Magic Club, National Honor Society of Southern Lehigh.



the Winter Activities Committee. The committee will evaluate the various activities to ensure they are accessible to all and will help organize activities when possible. The committee will meet at least once a month.





McGovern Family Children



Miracle League Plays Baseball with IronPigs, on The IronPigs Field. August 8, 2008



## 2009 Season Schedule

The 2009 baseball schedule will be posted in the April newsletter.

Please provide Melissa with any feedback you have about the 2008 schedule. How do you feel things went? Melissa will gather all information provided and make any possible changes.

You can email your comments to [Melissa@miracleleaguely.org](mailto:Melissa@miracleleaguely.org) or mail your comments to PO Box 180, Whitehall, PA 18052

Also, we are happy to announce that Global Village has already booked their Little League World Stars event for

July 19, 2009. Keep checking for further details regarding this great event. It was a blast in 2008 season I.

*Tess Eichman*



## Congratulations McGovern Family

The McGovern Family received the National Parents of the Year Award for 2008. This is clearly well deserved. Those of you who know the McGovern family surely would agree without question. Luke, Eric, Brianna, and Hannah McGovern play for the Miracle League Yankees.

The McGovern family has opened their home and hearts to a very large family consisting of seven children, four of whom were adopted, 50+ fosters kids, and six medical missions.



Parents Kathy and Tom McGovern recently received the national Parents of the Year award. Top row (from left) are Rep. Charlie Dent, Kathy McGovern, Tom McGovern, Jessie McGovern and friend Florence Bannister. Bottom row (from left) Rev. Sue Pizor Yoder, Brianna, Eric, Hannah and Luke McGovern.

## Letter From the Director

Hello All,

As season II of 2008 comes to a close, I can't help but think about how much I am going to miss my weekly interactions with all of you. We have two weekends left, and many volunteers to make those games memorable.

I hope everyone is as excited as I am about Trick or Treating at the

Miracle League on Wednesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>.

Again, I am overwhelmed by everyone's generosity. The Halloween committee instantly went to work and did a fantastic job with event plans. It only took 2 weeks to fill each vendor spot and 3 weeks to fill all volunteer needs. Once the word got out, it took on a life of its own.

This coming winter we will have many opportunities for fun gatherings, so please check our web site often for details and don't hesitate to jump in.

Work is underway to make 2009 even more eventful than 2008. Please feel free to contact me with your suggestions.

Sincerely,

*Melissa Kocsis*

## Ashley Cobb's Story

Ashley is 11 years old. She and her twin sister were born on September 6, 1997. Her twin sister Allison passed away November 9, 2000. Ashley was born with an anomaly of the 4P and 4Q chromosome. This left Ashley with mental retardation and pervasive developmental delays. Although she has autistic traits, she has not been definitively diagnosed with Autism to date. Ashley had profound speech delays and loss of hearing in the 40-60 percentiles in both ears, which she compensates with the help of hearing aids. Ashley was unable to speak until age six, due to her hearing problems and verbal apraxia. Ashley attends speech therapy with Gail Ehrens in Allentown, who was able to bring Ashley's voice out and who has opened up the world of communication to her. Ashley has central hypoventilation syndrome and left ventricular hypertrophy which has been improving over the past year. In July of 2008, Ashley was diagnosed with idiopathic epilepsy through which she suffers from complex partial seizures (4-6 a day.) Ashley receives behavioral support

services through the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit of Fogelsville Elementary School to address issues related to her condition. She has only limited services provided, as the intermediate unit is short staffed.

Ashley lives part time with her Mother in Fogelsville and part time with her Father in Allentown. Ashley has a big sister, Andrea, who works hard to help Ashley with her daily needs. Ashley has a dog named Lulu. Ashley enjoys the 5<sup>th</sup> grade -- especially math, reading and music. In school Ashley is taking drum lessons, in addition to attending Kinder Care daycare before and after school. Ashley was very independent in school until diagnosed with epilepsy. She now requires constant supervision for safety reasons. Ashley has the benefit of a very dedicated learning support team at her school. They work hard to provide Ashley a nurturing, educational and developmentally appropriate environment.

When not in school, Ashley

spends every weekend, Spring through Fall, at the Miracle League ball field. This is Ashley's second season with the Miracle League. She was traded from the Nationals last year to the Red Sox this Year. She is proud of both of her uniforms. Ashley loves playing ball (just like her big sister) and sharing time with the other players from all the teams. Ashley practices baseball, hitting and catching with her sister and father whenever possible. Ashley is a Girl Scout with troop 6449 at the Asbury Church.

Ashley is proud of her association with The Girl Scouts and wears the badges on her vest with pride. Ashley likes being a Girl Scout because Girl Scouts help other people and teach lessons to help them live strong lives.

Ashley has been camping a few times and hopes as her seizures are more controlled she can attend an overnight camping trip with the scouts.

*Adam Cobb*

Ashley's Father

Although, Ashley is involved in various activities to maintain as fulfilling a life as possible, it is not without significant contribution from her parents. We applaud Ashley's parents for their exceptional contribution to Ashley's development and enjoyment of life.

Children like Ashley need organizations which are willing to work with kids who have special needs. If you have such an organization, please feel free to share information about your resources for special needs children like Ashley with the Miracle League and we will be sure to communicate the information accordingly.



## Upcoming Fundraisers

### Kruise4kids

<http://www.kruise4kids.com/>

Kruise4kids is a motorcycle and classic car run which will benefit the Miracle League, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Camelot for Children and The Patriot Guard Rider.

The run takes place on October 19<sup>th</sup>, starting at 8:30 am and ending at Allentown Fairgrounds Grill at about 11:30 am. From 11:30 am till 3:00 pm there will be food and fun for all to enjoy, including admission of the general public. If classic cars and motorcycles are of interest to you, please come out and support the Miracle League.

### "I Bike for Small Miracles"- Letter from Doug Kern

As you may or may not know, when I was 16 years old and a senior in high school, I broke my neck making a tackle on the football field. I was completely paralyzed at the time of the injury and the doctors told my parents that if I survived, I would surely never stand or walk again. Through much faith, help from countless friends, and a grueling therapy schedule, I walked out of Good Shepherd Rehab Hospital 8 months later with the aid of a cane. Close to 40 years later, I am living a life blessed with a loving family,

wonderful friends, and a very strong faith. I now walk with the aid of crutches but try to maintain as active a lifestyle as possible.

I have a very competitive nature and when I had to give up golf four years ago due to balance issues; my wife suggested I try a special bicycle. This opened up a whole new world for me. I can now spend quality time with my family and friends in a sport that I love. I found a company run by a paraplegic man that custom manufactures hand cycles. These are tricycles that sit low to the ground and are powered by arm and upper body strength. Because I am so competitive, I not only ride for fun, I need to set goals for myself.

My ultimate goal was to someday ride my bike in the New York City Marathon ([ingnycmarathon.com](http://ingnycmarathon.com)). I applied for this year's race and have been accepted along with approximately 60 other hand cyclists worldwide. The race takes place on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. I cannot begin to tell you how exciting this is for me and what a thrill it will be to ride in the race of races! Because I have been so fortunate in my life, I have decided to combine my personal challenge with a matching one for my friends and business associates. I will be riding to support **The Miracle League**.

*(Doug Kern's letter continued on Page 4.)*

## Miracle League of the Lehigh Valley

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.MiracleLeagueLV.org](http://www.MiracleLeagueLV.org)



## "I Bike for Small Miracles" Say's Doug Kern

Our church has been involved in this organization by being angels in the outfield. This is a truly humbling experience. What this organization means to these disabled kids and their parents is extraordinary. Because of my situation, I feel a strong connection to these kids and want their lives to be as normal as possible.

Thank you in advance for supporting this very worthwhile cause.

Sincerely,  
*Doug Kern*

*If interested in making a contribution, make checks payable to The Miracle League of the Lehigh Valley, Memo Doug Kern. Send to PO Box 180, Whitehall, PA 18052*



Photo left to right: Jared Brown, Katie Mericle, Doug Kern and Lauren Trussell

## Miracle League Needs 300 Volunteers a Week for Spring and Fall

The Miracle League of the Lehigh Valley relies on a strong volunteer family to provide the best possible experience for the players of the Miracle League. There are many volunteer opportunities available:

### **MIRACLE LEAGUE**

**ANGELS** – The Miracle League Angels are essential to a successful Miracle League. Buddies are volunteers 12 and older. Though we call them Angels, many Miracle Leagues refer to them as "buddies". Angels assist our players with all game related activities on a one to one basis. Our "Angels" will be assigned to a team and attend each of that team's games. Each team plays once a week for approximately one hour. Many schools and youth groups create a team of Angels to support one of our Miracle League teams. However, we encourage you to come

out even if you can't commit to every game.

### **TEAM COACH & ASSISTANT COACH** –

The Team Coach fills the roles typically associated with any little league coach. Maintaining regular contact with team players and families and informing them of schedule changes, rainouts, upcoming events, etc. are important facets of the position. The Coach communicates concerns to the League Director and attends coaches meetings to help formulate league policies and procedures. The Coach also coordinates the on-field experience for the players.

**TEAM PARENT** – The Team Parent assists the Coaches with all team activities. The Team Parent demonstrates enthusiasm, love and concern for all of the

players and helps create a fun, safe atmosphere for everybody involved.

### **CONCESSION STAND** -

The concession stand is open every game and is only able to be open if we have volunteers to staff it. Volunteers keep the hotdogs fresh, the pop corn popping and the pretzels salty.

### **GAME ANNOUNCERS-**

The Miracle League has the capability for a professional sounding announcing system and we are looking for announcers to complete the baseball experience.

### **SCORE BOARD**

**OPERATORS-** The Miracle League is outfitted with a state of the art sound system. We are looking for people to operate the score board and sound system to simulate a professional ball park.



**If any of the above roles sound of interest to you, keep reading to find out how to get involved....**

### **Register as a volunteer.**

Go to the Miracle League web site and register as a volunteer. By doing this, you will receive the quarterly newsletter, as well as monthly to bi-monthly updates on volunteer needs.

### **Attend Volunteer Clinics (Not**

### **required but encouraged)**

During the winter months, go to the events section on the ML web site to see the schedule of volunteer clinics that are offered free of charge. This will help the ML ensure that 2009 is a great season.

### **Great for organization team builders**

Many organizations in the Lehigh

Valley will have "Your Organizations" day at the park. No matter if your company is big or small; your organization can come out and run the ball park for the day. You only need between 10 to 20 people and an hour and a half. Encourage your members to bring their families and friends and come out for a great, fun day at the park.