2015 is our 125th anniversary... and we're celebrating you!

Akron Children's Hospital
Celebrating 125 years • 1890-2015
Dear Friends,

This spring, we have a lot to celebrate at Akron Children’s Hospital. After years of planning, preparation and construction, the doors to the Kay Jewelers Pavilion – our new medical building – will officially open in May. It’s a revolutionary moment in our hospital’s history, one that wouldn’t be possible without the generous support of our community and our donor family. Thank you.

It’s fitting that the Kay Jewelers Pavilion opens during the same year that we observe another momentous milestone: our 125th anniversary. Throughout 2015, we’ll celebrate this remarkable feat by sharing stories and cherishing the memories, friendships and connections that we’ve created during our history. You can visit our new anniversary blog – 125.akronchildrens.org – to see what turning 125 means to us and to learn about upcoming anniversary events.

This issue of Children’s Progress pays tribute to these stories of celebration and more. Learn about the new expansion of the Ronald McDonald House of Akron and how it will greatly help our patient families. Discover how thousands of local athletes are “lacing up” to support our patients at the Showers Family Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders, which turns 50 this year. Join 14-year-old Luke Ritchey as he and his family reflect on a tumultuous year that started with a cancer diagnosis and ended with remission.

It’s an exciting time to be a part of Akron Children’s Hospital. We’re humbled by the overwhelming support that you – our donors – continue to share with us. Thank you for believing in your children’s hospital. Here’s to the next 125!

With gratitude,

John D. Zoilo
Executive Director
Akron Children’s Hospital Foundation
Celebrating 125 years

14 Sudden diagnosis, fast treatment

Akron Children’s Hospital embraces a philosophy of family-centered care. We believe that every child has the right to world-class medical care, regardless of a family’s ability to pay.

Member, Children’s Hospital Association (CHA).
Member, Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals

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Akron Children’s Hospital realizes that individuals enjoy learning more about our services, programs and developments. We also fully respect the privacy of our patients. If you do not wish to receive fundraising materials from Akron Children’s Hospital, you may make the request by sending your name and address to the Akron Children’s Hospital Foundation, One Perkins Square, Akron, Ohio 44308. We will use our best efforts to honor such a request.

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Celebrating 125 years
Taking time to reflect and say ‘thank you’ in honor of our anniversary

2015 will be a busy and exciting year at Akron Children’s Hospital. In addition to opening the Kay Jewelers Pavilion – our new medical building – in May, we’re also celebrating our 125th anniversary in October.

Looking back at the last 125 years, we couldn’t be prouder of all our memories and accomplishments, big and small – all made possible because of the continuous generosity of our donors. We wouldn’t be where we are today without you, for in 1890, we were founded by a group of supporters who shared a common vision – to bring pediatric care to their community.

Coming to children’s rescue
The Akron of 1890 had moved beyond a canal town to a manufacturing center. It was a thriving Midwest community, but one thing it did not have was a hospital to care for the city’s children.

This was a problem, especially with the prevalence of diphtheria, influenza, scarlet fever, pneumonia, tuberculosis and typhoid fever. More than 25 percent of children died before their fifth birthday.

So a small group of women from two churches decided to join forces to do something about the health and well-being of the children in the community. Those volunteers started the Akron Day Nursery (later named the Mary Day Nursery) on Oct. 20, 1890. Never could they have imagined the size and scope of their endeavor 125 years into the future.

“In 1890, our community of supporters and donors took the hardest first step of all: they believed,” says John Zoilo, executive director of Akron Children’s Hospital’s Foundation. “They believed that the Mary Day Nursery could stand for so much more, and we could develop into what is now Akron Children’s Hospital.”

Celebrating yesterday, today and tomorrow
Our anniversary means so much that we just can’t fit it into a short “thank you” or small celebration. For our supporters, commemorating 125 years will be a year-long celebration, full of events, stories, songs, videos, artwork, tours, milestones, memories and even more memory-making.

Here are just a couple of ways we’re celebrating and saying “thank you”

125th Anniversary Launch Video
Watch a video tribute that kicked off our 125th anniversary at First Night Akron on New Year’s Eve. It brings the iconic ball machine in the Atrium lobby on our Akron campus to life as a bouncing, hopping ball highlights so many of the milestones that make us proud.

See the video at 125.akronchildrens.org.

Collector’s Book
Enjoy this beautifully illustrated, alphabet-themed book that celebrates our history and 125 years of support and generosity. It truly captures who we are and how important our supporters have been to us.

Commemorative Sculptures
You’ll soon see specially commissioned, larger-than-life metal flower sculptures popping up all over town, in commemoration of our hospital’s 125th anniversary. Be on the look-out as these are installed at popular spots throughout northeast Ohio.
The way he C’s it

*Bill Considine discusses memories, milestones and ‘joy’ on new 125th anniversary blog*

He’s one of the longest-serving hospital CEOs in the United States.

Since 1979, Bill Considine has made Akron Children’s his home. He’s overseen exponential growth throughout our hospital system and become a figurehead in the pediatric healthcare community.

But everyone has to get their start somewhere. In honor of our 125th anniversary, Considine takes a few moments to reflect on his journey from a summertime college employee to CEO on our new anniversary blog, [125.akronchildrens.org](http://125.akronchildrens.org).

“I spent some time here at Children’s back in 1969 for a summer before I went to grad school,” says Considine. “I worked in the laundry when we had a laundry at that point in time. I emptied bed pans. I worked up in the Burn Center as an orderly. I did a lot of different kinds of things and met a lot of different people.”

Laughing at how – 10 years later – some of his former co-workers didn’t believe he was CEO and discussing the pride he has in the Akron Children’s family, the blog provides an up-close look at one of the most influential, yet humble, figures in our hospital’s history.

Visit [125.akronchildrens.org](http://125.akronchildrens.org) to read the rest of Mr. Considine’s story, as well as those of other hospital and community members sharing their Akron Children’s stories of celebration and hope.
To some, it’s just a shoelace. To a child with cancer, it’s hope for a better future.

Through the Go4theGoal Foundation’s Lace Up 4 Pediatric Cancer® program, thousands of student athletes throughout northeast Ohio purchased a $5 pair of gold shoelaces and raised $25,000 for Akron Children’s Showers Family Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders.

“These are kids helping kids right in their own communities,” says Beth Stefanacci, executive director of Go4theGoal, a national nonprofit organization based in New Jersey that helps childhood cancer patients and supports research, innovation and technology in pediatric oncology units nationwide. “All the dollars they raise stay local. It’s what helps make the Lace Up program so successful.”

The Akron Lace Up program kicked off in September during Childhood Cancer Awareness month, led by the efforts of Kameryn Zingale, a junior at Archbishop Hoban High School. After spending her summer volunteering at the Showers Center and expressing an interest in becoming a pediatric oncologist, Zingale wanted to find a way she could continue to help.

“Kameryn was enthusiastic about helping others,” says Jeffrey Hord, MD, director of Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders at Akron Children’s. “When I learned she played soccer, I told her about Go4theGoal and its Lace Up program. We thought it would be great as an awareness campaign for Childhood Cancer Awareness month. We didn’t initially see it as a fundraising venture.”

Through Kameryn’s efforts, a social media campaign led by Akron Children’s and coverage via local media outlets, the program took off.

“The word spread quickly and other rival schools and teams started joining in,” says Nate Mulberg, athletics coordinator at Go4theGoal. “It was the first time our organization partnered with an individual pediatric hospital. It was definitely unique and the results were outstanding.”

“There was great enthusiasm from all of the teams,” says Dr. Hord. “They sent pictures and signed banners for the kids at the Showers Center. It was really successful and taught the value of philanthropy to a whole new generation of children.”

“The outreach was impressive,” adds Stefanacci. “There’s a lot to be said about the Akron community. It really cares about its children.”
Go4theGoal Foundation’s Lace Up 4 Pediatric Cancer® program is a year-round fundraiser for Akron Children’s Showers Family Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders. Here’s how you can get involved.

1. Visit [www.go4thegoal.org/Shop.aspx](http://www.go4thegoal.org/Shop.aspx) to buy Lace Up gear for your team. To ensure your purchases benefit our hospital, denote “Akron Children’s” as your team name.

2. To create a larger campaign for your school, fans or community, contact Nate Mulberg at natemulberg@go4thegoal.org.

Be on the look-out for how you can support Akron Children’s when we kick off our Lace Up campaign this September.
Seeing the ‘Promise’

Stark County grants awarded to Building on the Promise capital campaign

When it comes to finding the best pediatric care for children, there are no borders.

Recently, two foundations from neighboring Stark County, Ohio, invested in the health of the children in their communities by awarding grants to support the Building on the Promise capital campaign.

The Timken Foundation of Canton – $400,000.

“The Building on the Promise campaign is a significant project that’s going to impact many children in our county,” says Jeff Halm, executive director of the Timken Foundation. “We believe that by bringing improved technology and advanced treatment to our region, Akron Children’s will provide an even higher level of care to the children and families in Stark County.”

Halm adds that the campaign’s smart funding strategy also was a determining factor in awarding the grant.

“We feel it’s important to believe in and support your own mission,” says Halm. “When you see an organization like Akron Children’s contribute its own dollars while also receiving donations from its board and community, those are significant indicators for us.”

Established and managed by the Timken family, the foundation primarily supports capital projects that improve the well-being of the communities in which associates of TimkenSteel and The Timken Company work and live.

Stark Community Foundation – $25,000.

“We want to better the community where we live, work and play,” says Bridgette Neisel, vice president of advancement at the Stark Community Foundation. “Akron Children’s has a strong service reach in Stark County and meets the healthcare needs of our community. We hope that our grant can have a small impact on the great work they’re doing.”

Stark Community Foundation partners with individuals, families, organizations and businesses to assist them with their philanthropic goals. Funding for the grant came from donors Patricia A. and Larry A. Merriman, who established a fund within the Foundation with particular interest in supporting the needs of children living in our community.

Thank you readers

Hundreds of you responded to our Children’s Progress readership survey this winter. Thank you for your feedback! Your responses will play a big part in the types of stories we share. Start looking for updates soon.

Congratulations to Teresa Hazlett, winner of the iPad® drawing!
When Jill and Ed Maughan learned that they were having triplets, they were shocked and a little scared. “I had a few complications with our first daughter, Mallory,” says Jill. “So, I was more than nervous when I learned about the associated risks with having multiples.”

But that changed when the team at Akron Children’s Hospital Mahoning Valley went above and beyond to put the young couple’s minds at ease. At 13 weeks, Jill and Ed visited the hospital’s new neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) located at St. Elizabeth Boardman Hospital. There, they met with Elena Rossi, MD, MMM, FAAP, associate chair of the department of pediatrics in the Mahoning Valley. Dr. Rossi talked to the Maughans about what they should expect with delivering multiples, and showed them where their babies would be treated.

“Meeting with Dr. Rossi set the tone for the level of care that we would receive going forward,” notes Jill. “Plus, after seeing the new NICU facility with the state-of-the-art equipment and amenities for my family, I knew this was a special place.”


The Maughan triplets stayed in the NICU for the next five days. Then, on Christmas Eve, they were transported to the Alexis Caroline Watanakunakorn Special Care Nursery (SCN) at Akron Children’s Hospital Mahoning Valley’s Beeghly campus.

The newly renovated facilities – made possible through a $1 million gift from Alexis Watanakunakorn’s grandmother, Eleanor – made the Maughans’ stay easier and more comfortable as they took care of their newborns. “The facilities were top-notch,” says Jill. “Ali and Eddie stayed in a special room designed for multiples. Charlie’s room connected right to theirs, so we were only steps away from all three of our babies. We also enjoyed the privacy of individual rooms, making the most of any quiet time as a family.”

In addition to the facilities, Jill and Ed appreciated the professionalism and personal care they received from the staff and hospital supporters. “The staff was beyond our expectations. I knew that when we couldn’t be there, they were holding, caring for and loving our little ones as if they were their own,” notes Jill. “We even received support from wonderful volunteers and donors, like handmade blankets, matching hats, books, teddy bears, ornaments and so many adorable gifts to celebrate the birth of our babies. All from people who didn’t know us but just wanted to help.”

Today, Ali, Eddie and Charlie are all home and healthy. And, as Jill puts it, the real adventure has begun.

If you would like to help families in the Mahoning Valley like the Maughans, visit akronchildrens.org/giving to make your gift today.
Building on the Promise

Making a house a home

Ronald McDonald House of Akron to triple capacity through $10 million expansion project

A home away from home. That’s what nearly 13,000 people in 2014 called Ronald McDonald House of Akron while their children received care at Akron Children’s. They come from near and far, staying one night or several months. For a suggested donation of $10 a night, families have hot meals, lodging and a place of reprieve just a block away from their children and the hospital.

In fall 2015, Ronald McDonald House will launch a $10 million expansion project funded by the Building on the Promise campaign. When complete in 2017, the renovated facility will shelter, comfort and support three times as many families as it currently serves – increasing 7,300 nightly stays a year to 21,900.

“As Akron Children’s grows, so do requests to stay at our house,” says Anne Collins, executive director of Ronald McDonald House of Akron. “Too often, we have to turn families away because we’re at capacity. Our expansion will allow us to keep more families together and provide greater support to the hospital.”

Maintaining its home-like feeling with new amenities to keep families comfortable, the expansion includes:

• 40 new family bedrooms.
• 10 long-term stay rooms.
• Renovations to its 20 existing bedrooms.
• Expanded kitchen and dining room.
• Family laundry areas.
• Common areas.
• Game room.
• Community-based conference rooms.
• New administrative offices.

“Our sole purpose is to help the families who have loved ones at Akron Children’s.”

As excavation plans get underway, so does progress toward the project’s overall fundraising goal. To date, more than $8.5 million of the campaign’s $10 million goal has been raised through philanthropy.

“We’re thrilled to have the support of the hospital, the Building on the Promise campaign and our community,” says Collins. “Our sole purpose is to help the families who have loved ones at Akron Children’s. This project will allow us to care for them in a way never before possible. It will be a home for thousands of families for years to come.”
Help Ronald McDonald House of Akron make more room for our patients’ families. Contact Anne Collins at 330-253-5400 or anne@rmhakron.org.

To take a virtual tour of the new Ronald McDonald House of Akron, visit youtu.be/a2yAkpHO3FA.
Students put their best foot forward

Local universities host Dance Marathons to raise funds, awareness and hope for Akron Children’s

There’s a philanthropic movement that’s taking universities across the country by storm: Dance Marathon.

This spring, college students from three local universities are raising money for Akron Children’s Hospital through the popular Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals’ fundraiser:

- Second annual Walsh University Dance Marathon: Friday, March 20 to Saturday, March 21
- First-ever The University of Akron Dance Marathon: Friday, April 17 to Saturday, April 18
- Third annual Kent State University’s “Flash-A-Thon” Dance Marathon: Saturday, April 25

“These are major fundraising events with significant impact on our hospital,” says Nicci Avalon, Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals program manager at Akron Children’s. “Since Kent State started ‘Flash-A-Thon’ in 2013, northeast Ohio Dance Marathons have raised more than $44,000. It has the power to be our next million-dollar program, like Radiothon.”

Dance Marathon doesn’t require superhuman stamina. While participants don’t dance the whole time, they do stand for kids who can’t, learning line dances, playing games and visiting with Akron Children’s patients, who come to participate and motivate.

Learn more about a Dance Marathon in your community and how you can be a part of it. Visit any one of the following sites for event details, fundraising opportunities and more.

“Each Dance Marathon is student-run. It speaks to millennials’ passion for thinking globally, but acting locally. They take ownership and see it as a way to help improve their world.”

- Zac Johnson, vice president of Youth Marketing, Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals
"I Lived" video featuring Akron Children’s gains more than 16,000 views

Patients and staff at Akron Children’s Showers Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders starred in a lip dub video of OneRepublic’s hit “I Lived.” Led by members of Kent State’s Flash-A-Thon, the video helps raise funds and awareness for the school’s Dance Marathon, which benefits the Showers Center.

Visit bit.ly/ksuach to watch the video on YouTube.
Sudden diagnosis, fast treatment

Happy-go-lucky teen and his family persevere through unexpected illness

It’s easy to smile when you’re around Luke Ritchey.

“He’s a very lovable kid – a real trouper,” says Stephanie Savelli, MD, director of the Cancer Survivorship Program at Akron Children’s Hospital. “He has a good sense of humor. He’s a joy to be around.”

That positive attitude and affable spirit would help Luke through the most difficult time in his life when, at 13 years old, he was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer. With the support of family and friends, and the expert care from the team at Akron Children’s Showers Family Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders, Luke went from stage 4 cancer to remission – all within a single year.

Headache causes frightening conclusion

Luke wasn’t a sick kid, recalls his mom Sharon. Growing up, he never had so much as an ear infection.

But things took an unexpected turn when Luke started to have a headache on Christmas Eve 2013. Within a week, the pain was so unbearable that he ended up in his local emergency room with what doctors thought was mononucleosis.

After undergoing a routine blood test six weeks later to see if the mononucleosis was gone, Luke’s primary care doctor noticed that his white blood cell count was elevated. He immediately called Sharon’s husband, Pete, and told him to take Luke to Akron Children’s Hospital. The staff there would be waiting for him.

Akron Children’s took care of Luke’s entire family while he underwent chemotherapy.
“The hospital wrapped its arms around us. Our door was revolving with people who wanted to help.”
“From that day on, everything changed,” Sharon says.

Within an hour of walking into our emergency room, the Ritchey family had a diagnosis: Luke had cancer.

“We had hoped and prayed that we wouldn’t hear that word,” Sharon explains. “But when we did, we were shocked. How did a healthy 13-year-old boy go from that to stage 4 cancer?”

The immediate priority now was to figure out what kind.

Everything in the next 24 hours happened at lightning speed. Luke settled into the Showers Family Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders, where after several additional tests, the staff informed Sharon and Pete that Luke was battling Burkitt’s leukemia/lymphoma, a form of cancer that attacks a patient’s lymph nodes, as well as bone marrow. It was stage 4, the highest stage.

“Burkitt’s lymphoma is a form of Non-Hodgkin lymphoma that’s relatively rare in children,” says Dr. Savelli. “Luke had a tumor in his paranasal sinuses, which is why he was having headaches. He also had enlarged lymph nodes in his neck and jaw region, as well as liver lesions. It’s a rapidly growing disease. It can double in size within 24 hours. We wanted to get started with treatment as soon as possible.”

The next day, Luke received his first dose of chemotherapy.

A rush to treatment

With the diagnosis and treatment happening within the span of 48 hours, the Ritchey family had much to cope with and process.

“The first two days were the hardest,” recalls Sharon. “But the hospital wrapped its arms around us. The doctors, nurses and support staff were unbelievable. Our door was revolving with people who wanted to help, and not just Luke, but our entire family.”

Throughout the next year, Luke underwent chemotherapy to combat the disease, undergoing rounds for one week and then having a break for three.

The Ritchey family sorts through cards Luke received from family and friends while in the hospital.
“Burkitt’s therapy is relatively short, but there’s nothing sweet about it,” explains Dr. Savelli. “It’s very intensive. The kids don’t feel well at first, and the particular chemotherapy agents have side effects that can cause them to end up in the hospital with fevers, low blood counts and more after their rounds of treatment.”

During Luke’s first three months of treatment, the family stayed at the hospital for extended periods of time after he experienced pneumonia, several infections and mouth sores.

“The hospital, of course, had Luke’s well-being at heart, but it’s truly family-centered,” says Sharon. “They paid attention to our entire family, even letting us bring in Luke’s dog for a visit.”

Sharon notes that the little things provided by donor support also made things more convenient and comforting, like a coffee machine for family members that’s only steps away from their children, or a bag of popcorn Luke received every night that he could enjoy while watching TV.

“I know some people may see these things as small or insignificant, but on the mornings when my son was feeling bad and I didn’t want to leave him for a second, just knowing that I could quickly go to the kitchenette and grab a coffee was a gentle relief,” says Sharon.

At the end of August 2014, Luke received his final round of chemotherapy. And he’s been in remission ever since. Today, Luke is a healthy 14 year old.

“We see Luke once a month to get blood counts and examine him, and every three months we do CT scans of the affected areas to ensure that everything looks okay,” says Dr. Savelli. “If Burkitt’s hasn’t reoccurred 18 months after therapy, there’s a likelihood it won’t occur again.”

While Luke’s been enjoying normal activities like playing video games and wrestling with his dogs, he’s also branching out and trying new ones like skiing, snowboarding and basketball.

“Looking at Luke now, we see our healthy boy that we knew a year ago, but also a boy who’s a little more adventurous and willing to take new risks,” Sharon says. “As rough as this last year was, we’re thankful for our family, our friends and the entire staff at Akron Children’s. We knew that Akron Children’s was the right place for Luke to be. We’re so fortunate to have that hospital in our backyard. They saved his life. They saved all of us.”

If you would like to help Luke and other children like him, consider making a gift to Akron Children’s Hospital. Visit akronchildrens.org/giving to donate today.
Happy anniversary!
Division of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology celebrates 50 years of hope and healing

For five decades, Akron Children’s Hospital has been working to treat and cure childhood cancer and blood disorders.

In 1965, the Beatles played Shea Stadium, Lyndon B. Johnson started his second term as president, “The Sound of Music” made its big-screen debut and the Division of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology was established at Akron Children’s.

Fifty years later, Akron Children’s Showers Family Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders has grown into one of the most robust in the country. It’s ranked as one of the best pediatric cancer programs in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, and we’re only one of five hospitals in Ohio that offers bone marrow transplants to children and adolescents.

As Jeffrey Hord, MD, director of Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders, and the rest of his staff prepare to celebrate the division’s 50th anniversary on April 22, they enjoy taking a look back at all that’s been accomplished throughout the division’s history.

“It’s a proud celebration for all of us,” says Dr. Hord. “So many advancements have been made in how we deliver care to our patients, which have been made possible through our participation in research activities. In 1965, the overall survival rate for childhood cancer was less than 10 percent. Today, we’re at more than 85 percent. In the next 50 years, I want to see that rate go up to 100 percent.”

Since the division’s founding, nearly 2,500 children have been diagnosed and treated for cancer, 96 have undergone bone marrow or stem cell transplantation, and more than 1,100 cases have been enrolled in Children’s Oncology Group research protocols.

While much has changed during the last 50 years, one thing remains: a steadfast commitment to our patients and the delivery of high-quality, subspecialty care.

“We’ve been able to help transform the hospital from a primary care pediatric healthcare facility to one that provides – among many other things – very subspecialized care to critically ill patients,” says Dr. Hord. “I’m proud of the accomplishment we’ve all achieved, and we look forward to the next 50.”
At a glance: 50 years of caring for children with childhood cancer and blood disorders

1965: Dr. Carl Krill Jr. joins Akron Children’s Hospital as the first director of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology.

1974: Hemostasis and Thrombosis Center (formerly the Hemophilia Treatment Center) is opened and designated by the Ohio Department of Health as a regional center.

1982: Camp CHOPS summer camp opens for hematology and oncology patients.

1984: Akron Children’s joins the Children’s Oncology Group (formerly the Children’s Cancer Study Group).

1986: Ohio Department of Health designates the hospital’s sickle cell program as a regional center.

1995: The first bone marrow transplant – the only type of transplant that’s done at Akron Children’s – is performed.

1999: Dr. Jeffrey Hord becomes the division’s second director.

2002: The family of David and Martha Showers announces a $3 million gift to support the new hematology/oncology unit.


2007: First pediatric hematology/oncology fellow begins.

2007: The division extends its services into the Mahoning Valley. The Basic Science Research lab also opens.

2011: Giant Eagle stores in Portage, Summit and Stark counties begin annual register campaign to raise funds for the Showers Family Center. To date, the campaign has raised more than $280,000.

2011: The nonprofit organization Project Ed Bear creates a $50,000 endowment fund for the Camp CHOPS summer camp, which officially becomes Camp Ed Bear.

2013: Pediatric Neuro-Oncology program begins.

2014: Phase 1 Research/Targeted Therapy program starts.

Our Camp Ed Bear summer camp, formerly Camp CHOPS, gives patients with cancer and blood disorders the chance to meet other children with similar diagnoses for fun and support. Created in 1982, the camp today is funded entirely through philanthropy.
A holiday tradition has raised high spirits and hope for families in the Mahoning Valley. During the annual Holiday Hopes and Wishes luncheon, more than 330 guests raised $19,100 for the newly established Mahoning Valley Palliative Care Fund.

Hosted by the Kids’ Crew of Akron Children’s Hospital Mahoning Valley, the event featured a basket raffle, a silent auction, holiday bake shoppe, special remarks by a palliative care patient family and more. Since its inception in 2009, the Holiday Hopes and Wishes event has raised more than $84,000 for Akron Children’s Hospital Mahoning Valley programs and services.

The Akron community kicked off the holiday season on Nov. 22 with the opening of the Holiday Tree Festival, featuring a winding forest of 157 decorated holiday trees, carols and choirs, a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, and more.

The generosity of its visitors matched the splendor of the festival. Through the sales of holiday trees, wreaths, decorations and more, a record-breaking $300,000 was raised to benefit hospital programs, services and research initiatives. For 33 years, the Holiday Tree Festival has been a free gift to the community from the volunteers of Akron Children’s, raising $5 million for our hospital.

The collective efforts of local firefighters, schools, students and community sponsors led to another successful year for Handel’s “Koins for Kids” campaign, with more than $32,000 raised for Akron Children’s Hospital Mahoning Valley.

It all kicked off with a firefighters boot drive on Nov. 1 at intersections throughout the Mahoning Valley. 31 schools and 16,400 students in Mahoning, Trumbull and Columbiana counties also raised funds by personalizing paper snowman ornaments. The schools raising the most money in each county were treated to an ice cream social and a DJ for a school dance.

Since 2009, the Mahoning Valley community has raised nearly $200,000 for our hospital through the Handel’s “Koins for Kids” campaign.
112th annual Charity Ball

*Dec. 27 • E.J. Thomas Hall in Akron*

E.J. Thomas Hall was humming with excitement as 36 debutantes were presented at the 112th Charity Ball in December, hosted by the Women’s Board of Akron Children’s Hospital.

With more than 750 guests attending, the evening paid homage to those who serve the Akron community, as the debutantes were selected based upon their parents’ and grandparents’ service to the community.

By the end of the evening, the event raised $100,000 to benefit patient-care programs at our hospital.

16th annual “Have a Heart, Do Your Part” Radiothon

*Feb. 12 – 14 • Akron campus*

When the last call came in and the final tally appeared on the tote board, a cheer rang out through Akron Children’s atrium. The annual “Have a Heart, Do Your Part” Radiothon raised nearly $500,000 for Akron Children’s Hospital.

Broadcast live on 98.1 WKDD, the entire listening area heard stories of hope and healing from patients and their families, including this issue’s featured patient, Luke Ritchey (see page 14 to read about Luke’s journey). This year’s success resulted from the collective effort of Change Bandits, community members, and local businesses and organizations who called in their pledges during the annual event.

Since 2000, the Akron community has raised more than $9.3 million for our hospital through Radiothon.

98.1 WKDD’s Keith Kennedy announces that the Akron Children’s community raised nearly $500,000 during the 2015 Radiothon.
Helping patients breathe easier

$104,000 grant supports Robert T. Stone, MD, Respiratory Center

A recent $104,000 grant from The Walter W. Born Foundation will help enhance patient care and services provided at Akron Children’s Robert T. Stone, MD, Respiratory Center.

A large portion of the funding will be used to purchase software that will optimize physicians’ diagnostic ability, improve workflow, and make it easier to review and interpret pulmonary function testing (PFT) studies – a form of testing that nearly every child treated in the center must undergo.

The remainder of the grant dollars will go toward purchasing:

- New equipment that will help more accurately diagnose and treat patients with sleep apnea.
- A patient lift that will give medical staff a safe and easily accessible way to weigh patients in wheel chairs.
- A new projector.

“The respiratory center is near and dear to us,” says Toby Blossom, vice president and trust advisor for FirstMerit Bank’s Charitable Advisory Group, which administers the trust. “We have an associate whose daughter has struggled with cystic fibrosis her entire life. She spent a lot of time in Akron Children’s respiratory center when she was growing up. She’s in her late 20s now and has surpassed the usual life expectancy of kids with the disease.”

Before his death in 1989, local contractor Walter Born established a trust through FirstMerit Bank that would support hospitals in Akron and its surrounding region. Mr. Born chose FirstMerit as the corporate fiduciary to oversee his gift and the bank’s trust officers have taken the fund to heart and become personally involved in Mr. Born’s mission. Since 2004, the trust has granted more than $1 million to Akron Children’s.

“I think Mr. Born knew that healthcare funding would be a challenge in the future,” says Leigh Gerstenberger, senior vice president of FirstMerit Bank. “And he wanted his estate to create a legacy, one that would help lighten this financial burden and improve healthcare throughout our community. We’re proud to oversee this legacy on their behalf.”

To learn how your gift can create a legacy for Akron Children’s Hospital, visit akronchildrens.org/giving.
Publications


Teresa Fletcher, MSN, CNP, Nurse Practitioner, Adolescent Medication, wrote “Pregnant Adolescents Admitted to an Inpatient Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Unit: An Eight Year Review,” with L. A. Markley, MD, D. Nelson, MN, CNS, S. S. Crane, MD, FACOG, MBA and J. J. Fitzgibbon, MD, Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology, Date TBD (accepted for publication but no date yet).


Presentations

Michael T. Bigham, MD, FCCM, Pediatric Intensive Care Physician, Medical Director – Transport Services, Department of Pediatrics, Division of Critical Care Medicine, presented “Optoacoustic Detection of Tracheal Tube Depth in the Pediatric ICU,” at the Society of Critical Care Medicine’s 44th Critical Care Congress, Phoenix, Ariz., Jan. 19, 2015.

Bruce Cohen, MD, Director, Pediatric Neurology, NeuroDevelopmental Science Center, presented “Pediatric Neurology with RVUs in the Hospital-Based Practice Setting,” at the Professors of Child Neurology Annual Meeting, Columbus, Ohio, Oct. 10, 2014; “The Last 50 Years of Healthcare, and the Next Five: Implications for Child Neurology Practice,” “RVUs in Child Neurology Practice,” “CPT E&M Coding for Child Neurologists,” “The Electronic Medical Record: How to Adapt Your Practice,” and “New Therapies for Mitochondrial Diseases,” at Children’s Hospital of New Orleans, Louisiana State University, New Orleans, La., Nov. 17-18, 2014; “Nutritional Interventions in Pediatric Mitochondrial Diseases; Which Ones are Used and for What Purpose,” and “Nutritional Interventions in Primary Mitochondrial Disorders: Developing an Evidence Base,” at the National Institutes of Health, Rockville, Md., Dec. 2, 2014.


John Duby, MD, Director, Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, NeuroDevelopmental Science Center, presented “The Case for Pediatric Leadership,” at the American Academy of Pediatrics, Columbus, Ohio, Nov. 8, 2014; “Quality Improvement to Advance Care Delivery: How is Ohio Moving the Needle?” on the Behavioral Health Quality Improvement to Advance Care Delivery Panel as part of the Ohio MEDTAPP Summit, Transforming Healthcare Through State-University Partnerships, Columbus, Ohio, Sept. 23, 2014; “Billing and Coding for Mental Health” webinar for the American Academy of Pediatrics, Ohio Chapter, Dec. 9, 2014.


Steven Kuerbitz, MD, Director, Bone Marrow Transplant Program, Director, Divisional Research and Stem Cell Transplantation, presented “Hematopoietic Cell Transplant for Autoimmune Lymphoproliferative Syndrome: A Single Center Experience,” with S. Chandrakasan and J. Bleesing at the European Society for Immunodeficiencies Biennial Meeting, Prague, Czech Republic, Oct. 2014.


Elena Rossi, MD, MMM, FAAP, Associate Chair, Department of Pediatrics Mahoning Valley, Staff Neonatologist, presented the poster titled “Preventing Premature Birth Recurrence: A Provider Survey of Progesterone Knowledge,” at the 2014 Ohio Infant Mortality Summit, Columbus, Ohio, Dec. 4, 2014; “Preventing Premature Birth Recurrence: A Provider Survey of Progesterone Knowledge” and “The Effect of Standardized Feeding Practices on Very Low Birth Weight Infants,” at the Vermont Oxford Network 2014 Annual Quality Congress, Chicago, Ill., Nov. 1, 2014.

Stephanie Savelli, MD, Director, Cancer Survivorship Program, Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Fellowship Program and Divisional Education, presented “There’s an App for That: Utilizing Technology to Enhance Patient Education,” at the Nationwide Children’s Hospital Research Conference, Columbus, Ohio, Nov. 2014.

Awards and Honors

Michael T. Bigham, MD, FCCM, Pediatric Intensive Care Physician, Medical Director – Transport Services, Department of Pediatrics, Division of Critical Care Medicine, has co-founded the Ground and Air Medical Transport qUality Transport (GAMUT) database. The database is a free resource for transport teams to track, report and analyze their performance on transport-specific quality metrics by comparing it to other programs. Ninety critical care transport programs have registered, tracking over 100,000 patient contacts.

Elena Rossi, MD, MMM, FAAP, Associate Chair, Department of Pediatrics Mahoning Valley, Staff Neonatologist, received the Department of Pediatrics Legendary Service Award on Nov. 1, 2014. Dr. Rossi also served as an etiquette coach at the NEOMED Business Etiquette Dinner and Professional Fashion Show, Nov. 19, 2014.
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Gifts received Sept. 1, 2014 – Dec. 31, 2014

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**calendar of events**

**march**

March 8 – April 25  
Rite Aid Campaign  
At participating locations

**april**

April 1 – July 31  
Petitti Garden Center Campaign  
Boardman and Tallmadge locations

April 10 – May 1  
Circle K Campaign  
At participating locations

Saturday, April 25  
Kent State University Flash-a-Thon  
KSU Recreation and Wellness Center  
12 p.m. to 12 a.m.

Sunday, April 26  
Community Open House  
Kay Jewelers Pavilion, Akron campus  
1 to 4 p.m.

**may**

May 4 – June 14  
Walmart and Sam’s Club Campaign  
At participating locations

Tuesday, May 12  
Champions for our Valley’s Children  
The Lake Club, Poland  
5:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 14  
Diamond Classic for Kids  
Canal Park, Akron  
6:35 p.m.

Friday, May 15  
Courage for Carina Wine Tasting  
SkyView Lodge, Medina  
6:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 16  
The Color Blaze  
Canfield Fairgrounds  
Time TBD

May 28 – June 24  
Giant Eagle Campaign  
Summit and Stark County locations

Saturday, May 30  
Celebrate the Plate  
Locations Vary  
6:00 p.m.

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For more information about these events or how you can become a special event coordinator, contact: JoAnn Stock, director of development at Akron Children’s Hospital Mahoning Valley at 330-746-9122, or Brittany Costa, associate coordinator for special projects at Akron Children’s Hospital, at 330-543-0325.  
For a complete listing of all Akron Children’s Hospital Events, visit akronchildrens.org/events.