

February 2007

SPOTLight



Mommy's Light Newsletter for Request Fulfillment Volunteers

Welcome to **SPOTLight**, our new newsletter for request fulfillment volunteers. This includes request grantors who visit families and request supporters who help prepare elements of the tradition packages. **SPOTLight** will be emailed periodically to let you know what is happening with Mommy's Light's request families and to **SPOTLight** request grantor and support ideas, reminders, stories, etc. We are excited to bring you this new newsletter and look forward to your participation and feedback! The children are the reason we all do what we do and our request grantors are the ones meeting and talking to the children, bringing Mommy's Light into their homes. Please tell us your stories, successes, tips and ideas. Send them to dale@mommyslight.org. Share the joy you experience in helping children, teens and their families continue their cherished traditions and simple pleasures.

WARM WELCOME TO NEW CHILDREN FROM DECEMBER 2006

It is a tremendous privilege to meet the mother of the children we will serve. We received a request for services from a dynamic woman, Luz. When we arrived for the interview, it was heartwarming to see her surrounded by family and friends who truly love and support her. She shared with us the love and life she shares with her four children.

There is **SASHA**, age 15, who shares her mother's love of roller coasters. She asked to continue their trips to Six Flags. The family always packs a cooler of favorite foods and drinks and spends the day on the rides.

All of Luz's children love to make homemade Christmas decorations for their tree and home. **AMANDA**, age 12, chose this as her request. Our volunteers loved seeing their home filled with years of mom's favorite decorations.

ASHLEY, age 10, loves their trips to the zoo. Mom packs a lunch and they all enjoy the way the world comes alive in the spring with the animals and flowers. To complete this family adventure, they dine at a local restaurant and talk about their favorite parts of the day.

Then there is the youngest, **MANUEL**, age 8. He chose a trip to the Franklin Institute. Once again, mom packs a cooler because they "aren't going to pay those prices for lunch." Again, stopping for dinner on the way home is a great way they connect and remember the day. Maureen and Mary Ann delivered Manuel's request on February 18 knowing that Luz would still be strong enough to go along with the family and hoping that she will attend many future outings.

This interview was completed within 5 days after Luz contacted Mommy's Light about requesting services. All requests from families with living moms turn around

quickly. Many thanks to Maureen and Mary Ann who accompanied Dale to this interview with only a "moment's notice."

DELIVERY NOTES

Send us your delivery stories!

Here is one from Tracey and Julie who delivered a Nutcracker ballet tradition in December -



I have to say that our visit last night was absolute magic. The house was gorgeous as always – Nutcrackers everywhere from Mom's collection. On the coffee table are their favorites, and the girls had placed the pointe shoes we had given to them 2 years ago into the display. Their Mommy's Light angel is displayed on a table next to the front door – along with an engraved crystal photo of their mom and the girls. The family photos from the beach are still over the fireplace, but a new photo was on the end table of a beautiful girl, who looks a lot like Alexis, but I knew it wasn't her. I asked about it during our visit and Alexis told me it was her mom's college portrait. It looked so much like her and I could tell that it made her very happy that we thought her mom was so pretty. The girls had set out cookies and Christmas napkins for us. We had brought along a word search that we had created using words from their tradition (Nutcracker, manicures, Hard Rock Café, etc) and we had so much fun watching them do the puzzle – the girls teased their dad for being too slow and kidded each other about cheating! They are really excited about the ballet this year. We included gift certificates for manicures and some "girly stuff" from Bath & Body works to help them get ready for their special night in the city. The cookies that St. Paul's Lutheran church had baked and donated were beautiful!

We are made to feel so welcome in this house. What I like the most of all is that it is still, and always will be, about their mom. The decorations are "Mom's Nutcrackers;" the photos are pictures of Mom. It really is not about us coming to bring the free tickets, it really, truly is about celebrating a wonderful tradition they share (not shared – past tense) with their mom.

Tracey

SPOTLight ON OUR VOLUNTEERS

Shine the **SPOTLight** on **BETTY** - check out this article on our website - <http://www.mommyslight.org/pc/2007%20coverage/campbellbettychristopher.pdf>. As a result of this article in Campbell Soup's employee newsletter, Mommy's Light will hold a volunteer training at Campbell Soup's headquarters in Camden, NJ. Betty has been serving children since November of 2002 and was a Volunteer of the Year in 2005. Thank you Betty for all that you do and for helping to get the word out about Mommy's Light!

Shine the **SPOTLight** on **KENDRA** - our first non-staff member to take two new trainees under her wing for a family interview and delivery. Many thanks for adding this to your other holiday deliveries.

Shine the **SPOTLight** on **KRIS** with a good idea for delivery presentation. Have the children discover their request items by completing a word search or crossword puzzle. The puzzles can easily be created by visiting www.puzzlemaker.com.

Shine the **SPOTLight** on **CAROL, SHELLY AND MARYANN** who visited their first families. Thank you to Carol for going beyond what was expected by making the family a dinner.

COMING SOON - UPDATED FORMS FOR REQUEST DELIVERIES

The forms used for a request delivery have recently been updated and streamlined. We hope that you find them easier and more convenient to use. In early March, all request granting volunteers currently serving families will receive a package containing the generic delivery forms and other items used in deliveries.

When it is time to deliver, the lead volunteer will be responsible for

- Publicity/Liability form
- Request Receipt form
- Family Evaluation form.

The lead will receive an email from Dale with information on how to fill out the fields on the Publicity/Liability form and the Request Receipt form. At the delivery, the lead will have the family sign the Publicity/Liability form and the Request Receipt. The lead will take the two signed forms with him/her. The Family Evaluation form and SASE will be left with the family. Note that we need to have the Publicity/Liability form signed at a minimum, once a year.

Both the lead and support volunteers will receive an email form from Dale on the day of the scheduled delivery. The reply to this email becomes Dale's notice that the delivery happened as planned and the volunteers' evaluations of the delivery. Please return this email form to Dale within 48 hours.

Post delivery, the lead volunteer will mail the signed Publicity/Liability Form, signed Request Receipt and his/her own Donations & Expenses Report to the Mommy's Light P.O. Box in the provided SASE. The support volunteer will mail his/her Donations & Expenses Report to the Mommy's Light P.O. Box in the provided SASE.

REMINDERS AND TIPS

- ❖ Please send us your ideas for tips in your volunteer evaluations.
- ❖ Donations & Expenses Report - Please complete them promptly. If you are donating the goods - please send a report stating what you donated and the value of the donation. It is important that we capture the true cost of serving our children. We also are required by law to send thank you letters to our donors. Most importantly, we love the opportunity to let vendors and volunteers know how grateful we are for their support!
- ❖ Target carries cute plastic red and white popcorn boxes for \$1 each that are great for movie requests.
- ❖ Fun baking presentation idea: Use a medieval theme and knight the bakers using a long wooden spoon. Their aprons and chef hats can be royal robes and crowns. Roll up the recipe into a scroll tied with ribbon and it becomes the royal decree. Long wooden spoons can be scepters and cookie sheets could be shields (decorate them the Mommy's Light coat of arms angel). Anyone who wishes to have a copy of an example Kitchen Dubbing Ceremony can request it from Milly@mommyslight.org.