

# ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL

THE COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER FOR THE CHILDREN

TEXT BY MARY MARSHALL    PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL



*St. Jude Children's Research Hospital strives daily to fulfill the dream of its founder, late entertainer Danny Thomas, "that no child should die in the dawn of life."*

St. Jude is the only funded National Cancer Institute devoted solely to children. For over 45 years, St. Jude has taken on many of the most difficult and underserved pediatric diseases. Offering hope to families in crisis, there is never a waiting list nor is any child ever turned away because of nationality, race, religion or the ability to pay. Not only does St. Jude pay for all medical care, but they also pay for lodging, food and travel for the patient and one parent.

Children come to St. Jude from all 50 states and around the world. They see more than 5,100 children annually while additional children are seen at St. Jude partner sites around the country. Discoveries made at St. Jude have completely changed how the world treats children with cancer and other catastrophic diseases. St. Jude was the first pediatric institution to place doctors, scientists and patients all under one roof, thereby creating a world wide model for "bench-to-bedside" research.

St. Jude is the leader in the research and treatment of cancer and catastrophic disease in this country with protocols that have helped push the survival rates for childhood cancers from less than 20 percent to more than 70 percent. In 1962 when St. Jude

opened, acute lymphoblastic leukemia, the most common form of childhood cancer, had a survival rate of 4 percent. Today, the survival rate is 94 percent. Hodgkin disease has gone from a 50 percent survival rate to 90 percent. The survival rate for a type of brain cancer called medulloblastoma has improved from 10 percent to 85 percent.

St. Jude strives to help children and their families better understand and cope with their disease, treatment and its side effects. Parents often comment that St. Jude doesn't look or seem like a hospital. Since St. Jude firmly believes that there is more to healing than medicine, their unsurpassed care extends far beyond addressing medical needs. The hospital is cheerful with colorful murals as well as paintings done by the children. There's child-size furniture, play rooms, a special room just for teens and patient rooms designed with parental input. Special activities are planned such as slumber parties, pizza parties and a prom for teens. The child's likes are addressed. When a patient was asked what she hoped to do again, she said she would like to swing. The next day the physical therapist had a swing hanging from the ceiling. They deal with the stress of being away from home and help guide patients

through spiritual and psychological problems that such a crisis can create.

The incredible support of its donors enables St. Jude to attract the world's best and brightest scientists and support their research thereby, freeing them from having to continually generate grant funding. It is the only pediatric research center in this country with a facility on site that researches, develops and produces highly specialized medicines and vaccines—prescriptions that pharmaceutical companies would not pursue because they are not commercially profitable. In addition, research findings are shared with doctors and scientists all over the world. Teams of doctors from every region of the world travel to St. Jude to study for months at a time so they can learn St. Jude's protocols and take them to their treatment centers.

## CHARLOTTE EMBRACES ST. JUDE

John Fox, head coach of the Carolina Panthers, and his wife, Robin, recently hosted several fundraising events to benefit St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The festive occasions featured silent and live auctions and a St. Jude video presentation. "Donors are as important to St. Jude as scientists and

# For Danny's Boys & Girls...

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doctors," says John Moses, Chief Executive Officer. "Without them, there are no scientists, no doctors, no cures. They are the heart of what happens at St. Jude. Patients are not just cancer survivors, but survivors of life. If we continue to work together, to pray together, we will reach the dream of Danny Thomas 'that no child should die in the dawn of life.'"

"It always feels good to tell our story to donors," says Kelly Solomon, spokesperson for St. Jude at one of the events, whose son, Jake, was treated for a brain tumor at St. Jude. "It's important for them to know that our son was able to get the best treatment and is alive today because of their support of St. Jude. Hearing a personal experience also makes donors appreciate the value of what they are doing and understand the many lives they touch."

Residents of Clemmons, NC, the Solomons' St. Jude experience began late on a Sunday night. "When we arrived at St. Jude, I had no idea what it would be like," says Solomon. "We walked through the door, and I was overcome with a feeling of hope."

When Jake was four years old he developed head aches. The doctor thought he was having migraines. But when they persisted and he began vomiting, Solomon knew something was wrong. She requested

a MRI and three days later learned he had a brain tumor. She and her husband, Rob, turned to St. Jude. "We wanted Jake to have the best care," says Solomon. "I was unaware of all that St. Jude does for the family until we got there. Jake's diagnosis was cranio-



John and Robin Fox with Jake Solomon

pharyngioma which has a survival rate of 80 percent. Three days after we arrived he had surgery.

We stayed at St. Jude for 10 days and then returned a month later for eight weeks of radiation treatment."

"St. Jude is like no other place," says Solomon. "I can't say enough good things about it. They have the best-of-the-best. They treat every aspect of the child's physical and emotional needs. We were well educated on his disease and the options for treatment. The doctors listened to our concerns and made us an integral part of the decision process. I had a hard time leaving St. Jude—it is so secure, so comfortable."

Solomon adds, "Many people donate to St. Jude. You don't know when it might come back to you. My mother, JoLynn Mokos, has been donating to St. Jude since they first opened their doors, never dreaming that someday a family member would need to go there. I'm a stronger person because of this experience. We faced it with the attitude that it happened for a reason, and we are going to make the best of it. God has a plan for our life. For some reason this is a part of it, and so is St. Jude. Now, it's our responsibility to help others."

Jake just completed the first grade. He plays soccer and loves to swim. His tumor, which is now the size of a raisin, is stable. He returns to St. Jude for testing every five months.





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— Kelly Salaman

#### ST. JUDE CHARITY SHOWHOUSE

Several years ago, Peter Leeke, President of Kingswood Custom Homes, Inc., was deeply touched when he heard a family share their St. Jude experience. "As I learned about the tremendous strides St. Jude has made in the survival rate of childhood cancers, as well as the fact that they treat all children regardless of race, creed, nationality or insurance status, I was inspired to get involved," says Leeke. "Building a charity show house seemed like an ideal way to raise more money for St. Jude."

In 2007, Kingswood built their first St. Jude Charity Showhouse, opening it for tours at \$10 a person and coordinating events in the house as fundraisers. They raised \$148,000. Plans for the 2008 Showhouse on Stephen Lane included the addition of more events. "I have a serious passion for this project," adds Leeke. "There is nothing worse than a child having something that inhibits their childhood. It's very easy to raise money when your heart is in it. Each year, we challenge ourselves to raise more money for St. Jude. We plan to do a house every year." This year's Showhouse, reminiscent of an old Miami home, features mosaic tiled

*continued on page 32*

The 2008 St. Jude Charity Showhouse built by Peter Leeke of Kingswood Homes and designed by Scott Carpenter and Louise Leeke.

# Ruth's Chris Wine Dinner

EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY BY RON DESHAIES

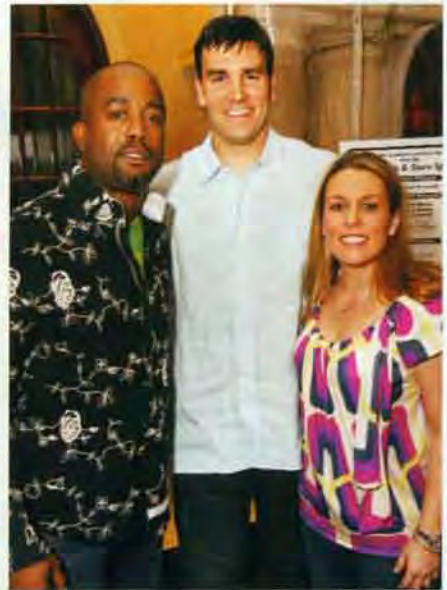
The 2008 St. Jude Charity Showhouse was unveiled at a wine dinner and auction given by Ruth's Chris Steak House for 200 guests to raise funds for St. Jude. Guests enjoyed a wonderful evening of fun, wine and delicious food along with a tour of the Showhouse before it opened to the public.





## Oceanaire Block Party

There was dancing in the street as Darius Rucker rocked the crowd with Country, Hootie and Rock 'n Roll. The Oceanaire Seafood Room provided a scrumptious New England Clam Bake for 500 guests.



LEFT PAGE (counterclockwise from top):

Peter Leeke and Scott Carpenter

Peter and Louise Leeke, Ian and  
Melissa Moncrieff, Larry and Belina Austin,  
Roy and Gabrielle Stewart

John Fox, Jeff Conway and Jim Cantaloupo

RIGHT PAGE (counterclockwise from top left):

Bill and Maura Tucker, John Fox, Stacy Jamil,  
Joanie Cantalupo and Louise Leeke

Shelley and Shawn Wilfong, Lynne and  
Charlie Dayton, Ryan and Natalie Kalil

Robin Fox, Chris Nelson and John Fox

Darius Rucker with Jake and Keri Delhomme

Darius Rucker

*"Donors are as important to St. Jude as scientists and doctors," says John Moses, Chief Executive Officer. "Without you, there are no scientists, no doctors, no cures."*

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 HUNTER DIXON  
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 JUICY COUTURE  
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stairs, textured walls and fabulous stone accents. Interior design is by Scott Carpenter. Special events at the house included a Ruth's Chris Wine Dinner and Auction and The Oceanaire Block Party, a traditional New England clam bake by the Oceanaire Seafood Room featuring the sounds of Darius Rucker of Hootie and the Blowfish. This year they raised \$213,000 for St. Jude.

#### DANNY'S DREAM

It was the great depression and Danny Thomas, a struggling young entertainer living in Detroit with a baby on the way, was down on his luck. He had no financial resources. In fact, he had only \$7 to his name. He had no job and his entertainment career seemed to be going nowhere. He was walking the streets when he happened upon his local parish, Church of St. Peter and Paul. He went in and sat down thinking about his problems. He picked up a pamphlet and began to read about St. Jude, the patron saint of the impossible, hopeless and difficult cases. What could be more hopeless than his? He dropped his \$7 into the prayer box and asked St. Jude to show him his way in life.

When he got home, there was a message asking him to do a radio commercial. The pay was \$75. Shortly after that Danny was offered his big break at the 5100 Club on Chicago's north side. And his career was launched. As a result of all these blessings, Danny promised to build a shrine to St. Jude. His dream was to build a children's research hospital dedicated to finding cures for children with catastrophic diseases through research and treatment. It would also be a hospital that would accept any child regardless of race, sex, religion, nationality or their parent's ability to pay. St. Jude would cover all the costs.

On February 4, 1962, a small star shaped hospital called St. Jude Children's Research Hospital opened its door. It was "the star of hope" for many children and families. From humble beginnings, St. Jude has grown to a 68 acre campus. The star shape building has been replaced by the Patient Care Center, a 60 bed hospital. Behind the PCC is a million square feet of space solely dedicated to research.

In 1999, St. Jude doubled its size, expanding their research into genetic and infectious diseases. They also built their GMP where they produce the drugs their patients can use. When a child is diagnosed, the

GMP can produce the drug in the right dosage for that child. Each child is treated on an individual basis.

The Chili's Research Tower opened in November 2007. This six-story, 340,000 square foot building is home to the hospital's Radiological Sciences department, an 18-bed bone marrow transplant inpatient unit and academic offices. In the Chili's Care Center, patient rooms and procedure areas are located in the same building as research labs. This configuration helps speed medical outcomes, positioning St. Jude as a leading institution that is changing boundaries in the world of research and patient care.

#### **ALSAC—THE AMERICAN LEBANESE SYRIAN ASSOCIATED CHARITIES**

ALSAC is the fundraising organization of St. Jude. It was founded by Danny Thomas and about 100 leaders of Arabic-speaking communities around the country in 1957. Thomas asked them to embrace St. Jude as a way of repaying America for the opportunities given to them and their families. ALSAC has grown to be America's second largest health-care charity raising \$590 million in fiscal year 2007. Daily operating costs at St. Jude are over \$1.2 million. During the past three years, 85.3 percent of every dollar received by St. Jude has gone to the current and future needs of the hospital. ALSAC coordinates the fundraising activities of over one million volunteers and five million donors who support the hospital each year. ALSAC and its volunteers complete more than 32,000 fundraising activities annually, which include Math-A-Thons, radiothons, direct mail and corporate solicitation campaigns, special television programming and special events.

#### **PARTNERS IN HOPE**

For just \$19 a month you can become a Partner in Hope. As a Partner in Hope, you will join a select group of committed donors who pay for the chemotherapy, radiation and surgeries St. Jude's patients desperately need. By giving \$19 a month—about 63 cents a day—you will help the children who are now being treated by St. Jude. As a Partner in Hope you will receive monthly stories and photos of the children you are helping, a "Portraits of Hope" photo album, quarterly newsletters featuring the latest St. Jude medical and research breakthroughs, an annual copy of the St. Jude calendar, and a holiday card you can sign and return with your own personal message of support for the St. Jude patients. \*

For more information call 1.800.822.6344 or go to [www.stjude.org](http://www.stjude.org) and access the Ways to Help link.

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