



IN THE Spirit OF Christmas

Hospital tries to be 'home' for holidays

BY JOHN HANCOCK
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The room where Ruby Hancock sleeps seems too small, even for a 21-month-old child.

Her mother, Andrea, sits on a small couch alongside the high metal crib and waits for Ruby to wake up. Then, they get to go home.

And when you're in C. S. Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor less than 10 days before Christmas, going home takes on a whole new meaning.

"We're just hoping we won't have to be in," Andrea says, watching as her daughter sits. "It would be sad to have to be in on Christmas."

Chances are, Ruby will spend the holidays at home with her twin sister, Alice, and 3-year-old sister, Madeline. She is being treated for leukemia, but her prognosis is good.

Doctors make every effort to get their patients home for the holidays, whether it's a pass for the day or permanent discharge. Still, a small number of children and their families end up trying to cobble together a Christmas around the centerpiece of critical illness.

"It's hard right around the holidays, because as many as they can get out leave," says Child Life Specialist Theresa Foster. "The ones who are here are the sickest." Everyone on staff puts in long



Therapy: Renee Linley of Plymouth, 16, recovering from appendicitis, gets a visit from Kathy Mount and her poodle Bambi at Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor. Below, Mount and Bambi bring presents and good tidings to LaRonn Graham of Toledo, 8. At upper left, children who will spend Christmas in the hospital got to choose from a basket of stuffed puppies.

hours to ensure those kids have as enjoyable a Christmas as possible. Nurses on the midnight shift deliver a present Christmas morning, and Santa makes a visit with more presents later in the day.

But all who spend time at Mott during the month of December receive a little extra dose of holiday spirit—delivered by a cadre of dedicated, generous health professionals and volunteers who seem to love every child as one of their own.

One leader among the citizens' brigade is Kathy Mount, a Plymouth woman whose spirit and energy have driven donations valued at a quarter million dollars,

just this year. She credits her community, which has wholeheartedly supported her efforts.

But clearly, this is Mount's mission in life. On the afternoon of Dec. 20, she was preparing for one of several holiday parties held between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Hers will include gifts, high school careers and a visit from her pet, Bambi. The spry poodle carries on a legacy initiated by Mount's first poodle, Brandy, who started delighting patients at Mott Children's Hospital in 1977. When Brandy died at the age of 18, Mount became terribly depressed and was



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Richards happy with Novi interview

BY TOM SMITH
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Bill Richards

Bill Richards said he was happy with how his interview for the Novi city manager's job turned out.

But now, he'll have to "wait and see" if he is still in the picture for the job to be vacated in February by retiring Novi City Manager Ed Kriewall.

Richards, the veteran Farmington assistant city manager, is one of 27 candidates for the job.

"I'm very pleased with the season that I had with the (Novi) council," said Richards, referring to his Saturday, Dec. 18 interview. "I thought it went very well.... I gave it my best." According to Richards, the interview was characterized as "pretty standard fare" as far as such sessions go.

If Richards were to be hired for the Novi job, he would leave behind a city he has grown very fond of during the past five-plus years. He recently emphasized that he is not unhappy in his current position.

He is slated to earn about \$67,000 in 2000 as Farmington's assistant city manager. The Novi job carries a significantly larger salary.

Other current candidates include Riverview City Manager Robert Elliott, interim Howell City Manager D. Wayne O'Neal and Marc Ott, who is assistant to the mayor in Rochester Hills. The current field will later be whittled down to a round of finalists.

The 45-minute interview at Novi Civic Center was videotaped for airing on Novi Channel 13.

Winning from page A1

FARMINGTON HIGH

Featured during the assembly was a keynote speech by Detroit News sports writer Varian Kupelian. He urged students to be winners as people, recalling personal stories covering athletes Gordie Howe, Wayne Gretzky, Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson.

"I've been around world-class athletes for years and there's a common thread in all of them," Kupelian said.

The aforementioned superstars made an extra effort to make sure Kupelian could conduct interviews and write stories about them. Gretzky even arranged for the writer to golf at a private country club in Edmonton, Canada.

"It was their great secret, what makes them what they are," Kupelian said. "And we can learn from them.... (So) be measured not by what you have accomplished, but how you accomplish it."

Many earned awards

Winning Futures award winners are as follows:

Finalists: Raj Badi, Kate Bouchet, Alex Duncan, Yalson James, Lindsay Misch and Suchita Shah.

Awards of Excellence: Steve Bender, Alana Burton, Kurt Cornwall, Valentina Duhani, Katie Martin, Jeff Stanbury, Kelli Twig, Lindsey Venetia, Chris Vukonich and Greg Young.

Honorable mention: Amber Allison, James Arpi, Kyle Baldwin, Emily Baker, Brad Barone, Shannita Betha, Yelina Bohar, Sarah Botkin, Robert Buisson, Dave Buttsigle, Amy Caldwell, Candace Christopher, Thomas Close, Jennifer Dickey, Jacob Dillard, Danielle D'Orta, Tim Dupuis, Laura Eldridge, Corey Engel, Tom English, Tom Enzor, Kendall Fabian,

Brian Yorgue, Angelo Fratarcangeli, Justin Frechette, Heather Friedli, James Godre, Ben Goldberg, Nick Hippler, Paul Hoffman, Chris Holton, Carrie Howard, Alexis Johnson, Jon Kambouris, Kristin Katalis, Scott Kleinow, Amelia Koczara, Melissa Kousa, Robert Kubalko, David Lee, Adam Link, Benjamin Lukas, Steve Marone, Stephanie Marx, Patrick McLaughlin, Matt Mikel, Audrey Moises, Calvin Moore, Igor Muminovic, Mark Oatsch, Ian Pardonnet, Joe Pauley, Adam Perkins, Dave Peterson, Lauren Petrillo, Ashley Pope, Tiffany Rozenboom, Natalie Schaver, Kristal Stricker, Ryan Toth, Nick Traskel, Brian Tungel, Jennifer Weiland, C.J. Whitfield, Arion Williams and Chelsea Wooster.

Local children serenade sounds of season

Like the little drummer boy story, a group of local children donated their musical talents for the holidays.

Sixteen Suzuki violinists who range in age from 4 to 18 performed a holiday concert on Dec. 16 at the Farmington Hills Inn, a senior citizen residence.

The children are members of the Oakland Suzuki Violin Group led by sisters Ann and Mary Margaret Stolberg of Farmington Hills. One of the

group's other public performances was at the White House in 1996.

"We thought that serenading our own community would be a nice gesture for the holidays," said Ann Stolberg. "The kids have been working very hard to polish and memorize their music for the concert."

Selections included lively numbers like Deck the Halls, and We Wish You a Merry Christmas, as well as more somber numbers like Grant Us

Your Peace.

Four local high school students - Mami Ito, Tamara Quinteri, Kori Ann Smith, and Yating Liang - helped to coordinate the event as a community service project.

In addition to leading the violin group, the Stolberg sisters are both music instructors at William Tyndale College in Farmington Hills. The college hosts a community music program for children who play the violin.

CIVIC THEATRE UPDATE

"The Philadelphia Story," a 1940 movie classic featuring Cary Grant, Katherine Hepburn and Jimmy Stewart, is scheduled to be the vintage flick to be shown during the Saturday Jan. 6, 2000, "Civic Theatre Grand Re-Opening Gala."

Suzanne Paul, a spokeswoman for the big weekend, said "Philadelphia Story" was selected because it was released in 1940, the same year the Civic opened.

The movie is part of a \$50 package which 268 patrons will get to see. A ticket for the "gala" also includes unveiling of the Civic Theatre mural, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres next door at Wednesday, only about 30 of the tickets remained available, said Farmington Assistant City Manager Bill Richards.

Tickets are first-come, first served, and must be obtained (check or cash only) at Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty Street.

City offices will re-open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 27, through Wednesday, Dec. 29. Tickets are subject to availability.

Current theatrical releases will be shown both Friday and Sunday of the grand-reopening weekend. Patrons for those evenings will pay 1940 prices, 25 cents for adults; 10 cents for children age 12 and under.

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