

News & Updates

April 2023 | Volume 14 - Number 4

Upcoming Activities

April 30, 2023
Letters of Intent
MMCF/APHON
Research Grants
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Fundraiser &
Awareness Event
[Skate Night!](#)

May 21, 2023
14th Annual Walk
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About Us

Spreading Hope
Through
Psychosocial
Support SM

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Support

Help Make The
Miracles Possible

Awareness Support Research



Grants Wishes Carts

Walking for Miracles

Our 14th Awareness Walk is a Virtual event. Being virtual enables Mattie Miracle's psychosocial message to reach far beyond our National Capital Area. **The goal is to have participation from all 50 States and raise over \$100,000.** Our Virtual Awareness Walk helps us fund Mattie Miracle's psychosocial programs and initiatives. All Walk proceeds go to the cause and are not used for overhead costs.

Walk with us on **May 21st** (10am to noon, in your time zone) and help us turn your neighborhood **Mattie Miracle ORANGE!** Participating in our virtual walk is easy: All you have to do is **WALK, SNAP**, and **POST** from ANYWHERE!!!!

- **WALK** and track your steps (on May 21st, from midnight to noon in your time zone) using a step counter/activity tracker.
- **SNAP** photos and take videos showing your Mattie Miracle ORANGE spirit and share it on our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts. Be sure to use #MMCFWALK.
- **POST** a photo of you with your total step count by noon (in your time zone) to Mattie Miracle's social media accounts or [email us](#). Remember to use the hashtag #MMCFWALK.
- The top registered walkers with the greatest number of steps will win a prize.
- Rewards for participants who raise \$1,000 or more for the

Donate

Foundation.

CFC #59853

Giving



It's not just about
the medicine!SM

Top walkers have the chance to win:

- 1st Prize for kids/teens: \$100 gift card
- 1st Prize for adults: \$100 gift card
- 2nd Prize: \$75 gift card
- 3rd Prize: \$50 gift card

Register, purchase raffle tickets, and make a tax-deductible donation to the event, a walker, or a team.



REGISTER

Spreading Hope Through Psychosocial Support. SM



They Stand with Us

We are deeply grateful to **The US Senate Federal Credit Union** for being our **Presenting Walk Sponsor**. All of our sponsors enable us to get closer to our \$100,000 financial goal! A special thank you to our **17 community sponsors**. Together they have contributed **\$24,000** to our financial goal!

Child Life Corner

with Adina Levitan, CCLS



We welcome Child Life Corner to our newsletters. Each month you will hear from Mattie Miracle's Child Life Specialist, Adina Levitan. Adina will highlight topics, issues, and share stories from a child life professional's lens. Given the vital role child life plays in a child's medical and psychosocial journey, we are proud to feature this standing column.

~~~~~ Ringing the Bell

A common refrain I hear from friends and family when I share what I do for work is, "wow, that must be so hard." The role of a Child Life Specialist is often found in the strained silences, the hard times and the struggles to understand how something so terrible can happen like a pediatric cancer diagnosis.

I have found myself in the room when a parent hears the **four most terrible words**, "**Your child has cancer.**" I have been next to a terrified child during anesthesia induction for a procedure to confirm that terrible diagnosis. I have had to explain what chemotherapy does to the body, specifically hair loss, and the loss of identity that causes. I have shown children what a port needle looks like and described the steps of injecting that needle into the skin to administer chemotherapy.

When someone says, "that must be so hard," it isn't a false statement. It can be challenging to be with a family who has to hear these complicated medical terms and statistics. However, **with the incredible guidance and support of a well-trained and compassionate medical team, my patients have overcome their diagnosis, moved into remission, and completed treatment.** That is what I want to highlight in this issue.

In the last month, I have attended several bell ringing ceremonies. For those of you who do not know what a bell ringing ceremony is, I shall explain. At the conclusion of treatment, after days, weeks, months and sometimes years of treatment, **my patients ring a bell to signify all they have accomplished and overcome.** The ringing of the bell in front of their family and friends signals their triumph. It gives closure to the endless hours spent in the infusion rooms, the hundreds of pokes, thousands of medication dosages, the bumps in the road and everything in between. The doctor will read a poem:

Ring this bell
Three times well
Its toll to clearly say,
My treatment's done
This course is run
And I am on my way!
~ Irve Le Moyne

Patients will ring the bell three times to the sound of brightly colored clappers and cheers. It is honestly a pretty magnificent moment for all present. For the doctor who can breathe a sigh of relief at treating this child. For the primary nurse who administers chemotherapy and antibiotics and so much more. For the parents who have held their breaths for months. For the Child Life Specialist who watched the child bravely overcome so many challenges, and for the child who truly did it all. When someone says, "wow, that must be so

hard," I can easily counteract that with, "yes, it is, but it is also so much more than that." One thing that I love about bell ringing is opening up the conversation with the family to schedule the ceremony. **I want them to know that we are excited to celebrate this milestone that their child has achieved, because these moments of celebration in pediatric oncology are hard fought and to stand in awe of that incredibly strong child is not something to be taken lightly.**

One child brought their entire village of support, over 40 friends and family members, to a bell ringing ceremony. One child brought every bottle of medication she took and used them as the shakers that we all rattled as loudly as we could when the bell was ringing. One child came in matching shirts with all her family members to mark her accomplishments. These are the moments where I say, **"Yes, it can be hard, but it is also hard fought and a humbling experience to witness."**



Huge Success!

Thankful for You

Our 12th annual Item Drive, **in honor of Mattie's 21st birthday**, was a huge success. The Foundation is grateful to all our supporters who donated countless toiletry items to stock our **Snack & Item Carts** at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital (Washington, DC), Children's Hospital at Sinai (Baltimore, MD), and The Clinical Center at the National Institutes of Health (Bethesda, MD).

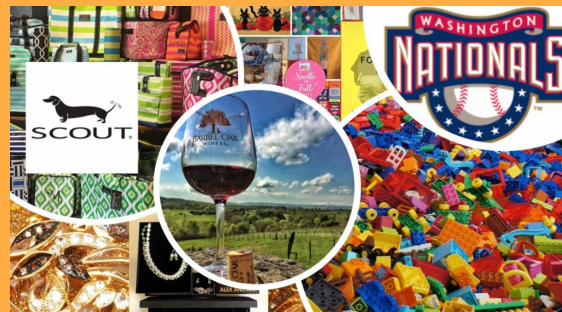
Our Carts offer **free items to over 2,500 families a year**. We are honored to be able to provide psychosocial comfort and care through our Snack & Item Carts, and we are grateful for the generosity of our supporters.

Our Upcoming Events

2nd Annual Skate Night



Raffle for the Cause



Mattie Miracle is grateful to have the support of teenagers who stand or SKATE behind our mission to meet the psychosocial needs of children with cancer and their families. **Susan Rotherham is a junior at Meridian High School in Falls Church, VA and has selected Mattie Miracle for her community service project two years in a row.** Susan is an ice hockey player at her school and is combining her passion for skating with raising funds for childhood cancer. Join her on **May 19th, 7:30-9:30pm**, in Reston, VA to skate for the miracles.

Susan shared this reflection with us:

I chose to host “Ice Skate Against Childhood Cancer” for the second year in a row to combine my love for ice hockey and to support the Mattie Miracle Cancer Foundation. Mattie Miracle not only focuses on the medical treatment of cancer patients, but also the psychosocial needs of the children and family which is something that has always resonated with me. Last year, the event was a huge success and raised awareness and funds for Mattie Miracle. Through this fundraiser everyone can play a role in improving the lives of those affected by childhood cancer.



Mattie Miracle's online raffle is open!

Tickets are only \$5. We are featuring eight wonderful items this year, each valued at over \$500. **All raffle proceeds go toward our fundraising goal**, with 100% of the proceeds supporting our programs and initiatives. Raffle winners will be announced on Mattie Miracle's Facebook page at 12:30pm EDT on May 21st. Items will be mailed to our winners.

Great prizes, benefiting a great cause!

1. Nats Tickets
2. Money Tree
3. Jazz it up with Jewelry
4. Apple iPad
5. Escape to Wine Country
6. Designer Quilt Creations
7. The Perfect Bag
8. For the Lego Lover



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