



FUND NEWS

Making a Difference.

December 2013 • 6th Issue

The Forrest Spence Fund is a 501c3 non-profit organization based out of Memphis, Tennessee. Our mission is to meet the non-medical needs of critically or chronically ill children and their families throughout the Mid-South. The Forrest Spence Fund is a community of staff and dedicated volunteers offering empathy, compassion and hope to families in need.

www.forrestspencefund.org



It has been another wonderful year at the Forrest Spence Fund. We have been blown away by the generosity of our donors and volunteers, the gratitude and courage of the families in our care, and the steadfast dedication of the medical teams that fight for ill children in our community. Below, friends, volunteers, and donors share the “why” of their involvement with the Fund...

Why DO WE GIVE?

Before we became parents ourselves, we gave to the Forrest Spence Fund. When we saw the list of what was included in the support baskets, it was the roll of quarters that did it. At first we did not realize why the quarter roll was included, and then it hit us... When your child is in the hospital, you cannot bear to leave their side, even to eat. A snack from the vending machine might be all those parents can manage at that time. We felt compelled to give and could not imagine being in that position... until one day we were.

Our son Byrnes was diagnosed with epilepsy at five months old and we were admitted to the Epilepsy Monitoring Unit at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital when he was eight months old. We

were there to get his seizures under control but found out that they were caused by a brain malformation. Not only did the Fund send person after person at Le Bonheur to come check on us, the Forrest Spence Fund sent us a bag. It was filled with so many thoughtful things - a blanket, a prayer book, a book that we knew our 3 year old daughter Helen would love, some socks and toys for Byrnes - it was for the whole family. At the bottom of the bag was the roll of quarters that had gripped our hearts years before. We both started crying. I cannot describe what we were feeling, except to say that we felt so held. So supported. So loved. We connected with this means of support years before, and here it was again... for us.

When something is wrong with your child, you are in a terribly vulnerable situation and need lots of help. You forget about any needs of your own, only thinking about those of your child. The Forrest Spence Fund is there in those times and offers wonderful support to those who may not even realize they need it. They hold those who are holding their own. Thankfully, Byrnes’ seizures are under control now. We do not know what the future holds for him, but we will always be so thankful for our friends at Le Bonheur and The Forrest Spence Fund. There is no doubt that we would have continued to support the Fund regardless, but after being on the receiving end of their generosity, their mission has truly become ours. - Dr. and Mrs. Nick Rachel

Why DO I VOLUNTEER?

When I was 16 years old a good friend of mine was in a devastating car accident, and spent many weeks in the hospital. My friend’s recovery was long, and we were by her family’s side the whole time providing meals, sitting with them in the Intensive Care Unit, and offering diversions to daily life in the hospital. Her mother recently told me how much our acts of kindness meant to her and she wondered aloud why we did it. My reply was, “Isn’t that what you do for friends?”

This is the reason the Forrest Spence Fund exists. The Spence family experienced first-hand the difference **(Continued inside)**

a little support makes in an excruciating time, and now the Fund exists to show the same love and kindness to others.

I started volunteering with the Forrest Spence Fund by helping out at the monthly dinners, and I now also help assemble baskets for area hospitals and write thank you notes. It fills me with joy to do this with the Fund because I really enjoy giving people special gifts, and have been putting similar baskets together for years for my friends and family! This year, for my special milestone birthday, I asked my friends and family to help support the Forrest Spence Fund in lieu of giving me cards or presents and I was overwhelmed by their generosity. Some donated cash while others collected baby blankets, Chap Stick, lotions, rolls of quarters, burp cloths, socks, notepads and cards, ink pens, and baby toys! All I had to do was ask, and what the Fund received in return brought me more joy than any other gift I could imagine. Why do I come back month after month? As a nurse I know that support systems vary. Not every child or family has a local support system in place. I see firsthand how the Forrest Spence Fund fills in that gap for people, and provides a lifeline. The mission of the Fund is an extension of the lessons I learned from my parents about helping friends in need, and giving a couple hours each month to volunteer is a decision I will never regret.

-Neysa Rhoads

Why DO WE HELP?

We are blessed to have a happy, healthy son, Harry. But we understand that not everyone does, and the Forrest Spence Fund is in existence to relieve some of the stress that comes along

with having a seriously ill child. The Fund provides great encouragement and support for families in life's darkest and most confusing time, and we are gripped by this mission of love and hope. So much so, that we choose to focus on the Fund for our son's birthday each year.

Rather than gifts for Harry, we request that party guests bring items like books and games to donate to the Forrest Spence Fund. In doing this, we hope to instill in our son the value of helping others and also increase awareness for the Fund's important work in our community. Harry is beginning to understand the importance of helping others, and we are thankful to be a small part of the Forrest Spence Fund's ministry to those in need. -Anna Kathryn and Hank Word



2013 in Review: We've Heard Why Here's the Why Not...

Members of the Forrest Spence Fund family have addressed the "why" of various aspects of the Fund. Over the course of 2013, we have thoughtfully asked ourselves a similar question time and time again... "Why not?" This crucial question has directed us to offer family-centered care in unprecedented ways over the course of the year. We have considered each family as only one, and asked ourselves the crucial question... "Why not?" This formula has allowed us to most effectively meet the specific needs of individual families we encounter, like purchasing special diapers for a baby with a rare skin condition and providing unique gift baskets for families with multiples. While we cannot meet every need, we strive to meet more and more each year by asking ourselves that critical question.

We are so thankful for the growth we have seen this year in our donor and volunteer bases. The list of those in our care has grown in response, and we have been able to be a consistent presence where families are hurting. Three years ago we assembled a team of volunteers and provided a free meal for families at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital. We offered a well-balanced, delicious, free dinner in a comfortable and private dining room at the hospital. Our volunteers stayed busy filling plates and glasses, sitting down to talk when invited, and sometimes filling up "to-go" boxes for parents who could not spare time away from their ill child. Our hope was to ease the burden of being at the hospital without time or money for nutritious food. The need was clearly great, and we have now expanded this meal

service program to once per month at both Le Bonheur and the FedExFamilyHouse.

Our Unit Adoption program has also operated on a monthly basis this year, and in 2013 we completed our first cycle of delivery to every unit at Le Bonheur hospital. We provided goodie bags for each person, including a Forrest Spence Fund "click pen" that was specifically requested to make work-life more convenient. We are thrilled to be able to encourage the teams of men and women who are on the front lines of childhood illness, and their partnership is crucial for our mission. The tags used in our November Unit Appreciation bags were created by the sophomore class at St. Agnes Academy. We are always excited to have community partnership in our mission, and the tags they created were truly little masterpieces.

The ongoing services we provide continue to be the steady beat of our mission. It all started with providing care baskets, and we are now able to fulfill hospital wish lists, offer need-based grants and other resources to struggling families, and cover 100% of counseling costs for bereaved families on a regular basis. In addition, the Forrest Sibling Playroom at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital is up and running and staffed with a reliable childcare worker. We cannot meet every need that is presented to us, but we hope to reach more families in 2014. None of this is possible without the support of our donors and volunteers. THANK YOU! We simply could not accomplish our mission without you.

—2013—



THE 6TH ANNUAL FS5K



We are thrilled to report that at the annual Forrest Spence 5K this year there were 1,344 participants, with approximately \$69,000 raised! On August 24th, Overton Park was buzzing with excitement as people ran through the finish line, enjoyed delicious food, won door prizes, and heard first-hand testimonials from families served by the Fund. Children enjoyed races of their own, along with giant inflatables and games.

The 5K provides the bulk of our operating budget for the year, and we appreciate our faithful partners who make it possible. THANK YOU to our corporate sponsors, hard-working volunteers, and the many runners and participants who made this year a success.

The 2014 Forrest Spence 5K will be held on August 23rd at Overton Park in Memphis. Please consider joining us as a runner or a “ghost runner,” if you cannot attend in person. As always, we need sponsors to make it a success! If your business or organization would like to join our family of sponsors, or would simply like more information about the benefits of sponsorship, please send us an email. 5K sponsorship inquiries: info@forrestspencefund.com



5K SPONSORS 2013

DIAMOND LEVEL (\$5000 donation)

The Chris Galjour Family

PLATINUM LEVEL (\$2000 donation)

Campbell Clinic

The Center for Orthotics & Prosthetics

Harris Madden Powell

Joyce Signs

LSI

Olympic Industries

747R10

Walnut Grove Animal Clinic

GOLD LEVEL (\$1000 donation)

The Colton Cockrum Family

East Memphis Pet Hospital

Fleet Feet

Mark Loft, UBS

Lucas Orthodontics

SILVER LEVEL (\$500 donation)

- The Grady Coleman Family
- Friends of Johnny Fred
- Patsy and Witt Smith
- The Fred Stukenborg Family
- The Weatherly Family
- The John Wittber Family
- Brown Dog Lodge
- Central Printing
- Delta Marketing Services
- Farm Truck Organics & Groceries
- Fleming Associates and Architects
- Fraze Investment Consulting
- Independent Presbyterian Church
- Dr. & Mrs. J Andrew Jackson
- Maximum Hospitality
- Laura McKay - State Farm
- Memphis Children's Clinic
- Nexair
- Parker Rhett - State Farm
- Pediatric Consultants
- Pediatric Dental
- Ritter Communications
- SportsTurf
- Stauf USA
- Triumph Bank
- Westminster Academy

BRONZE LEVEL (\$250 donation)

- Hagwood, Adelman & Tipton
- Jims Place Grille
- Pediatrics East
- Elizabeth Wiggs Photography

HOW TO GIVE *to the* FORREST SPENCE FUND?

There are two easy ways to make a financial donation. The fastest and most secure way is to visit our website donation page listed below, and contribute via PayPal. This method allows donors to select specific uses for the donation, like bereavement counseling or care baskets. You may also simply mail a check in the enclosed envelope to the address listed below. Regular monthly donations are always welcome and may be stopped at any time. Please contact us for more information, or fill out the enclosed donation card to get started. To donate your time or talents, please contact us using the information listed below. Our website and Facebook page are often updated with special events and activities open to everyone willing to serve. There are many quick and easy ways to be involved, such as helping us serve a meal or spending an hour assembling baskets and gift bags. We welcome your involvement and ideas, and appreciate any amount of time you can offer.

THANK YOU to our incredible family of donors and volunteers who have loved and supported families in need this year. We are incredibly grateful for your donations of all kinds, and in any amount.

To give online, visit: www.forrestspencefund.org/donate

Please mail checks to: **Forrest Spence Fund**
PO Box 770478, Memphis, TN 38177

For more information or to set-up
an ongoing monthly donation, email:
info@forrestspencefund.com



www.forrestspencefund.org

A unique way to support the Fund while also supporting Memphis area businesses is to participate in **Dinners Out for the Fund**. Restaurants in our community agree to donate a percentage of their profits from customers who mention the Forrest Spence Fund on those special nights. Check the website for the next date.

FSF GRANT PROGRAM

We are excited to announce the addition of the **Gracie Jane Liddell Memorial Award** to our current Grant Program. This award will be given annually to a family who demonstrates need and is confronted by childhood illness while separated from their home support network. This award is given in honor of Gracie Jane, who inspired many with her courage and strength before losing her battle with a devastating childhood condition. The Liddell family endured many long months away from their Mid-South home, friends, and family as they sought treatment for their daughter in Minneapolis and Toronto. Like the Liddells, hundreds of families are admitted to Le Bonheur and St. Jude Children's Hospital each year that do not live in Memphis or have a support network in the area. To learn more about this award or the Forrest Spence Fund Grant Program contact: info@forrestspencefund.com

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