



## *Little Friends Electric Parade Rings in the Holidays in Downtown Naperville*



Thousands of area residents helped to kick off the holiday season in downtown Naperville by attending the eighth annual Friends of Little Friends Electric Parade on Friday, November 27. Generously sponsored by McKeown Classic Homes, the parade featured more than 40 illuminated entries and Santa's big arrival in preparation for the festive holiday season.

Held each year as part of the Hometown Holidays celebration in downtown Naperville, this electrifying holiday event features a spectacular collaboration of lighted and musical floats. CBS Meteorologist Mary Kay Kleist and 95.9 The River's Morning Host Scott Mackay served as emcees, providing commentary for the crowd and NCTV-17's live broadcast. Parade-goers also enjoyed performances by several area musical and dance groups, including the Naperville Municipal Band's Light Guard Band, the School of the Performing Arts and our very own Krejci Academy DRUMS program. Several of Chicagoland's most popular mascots were also on hand, including Benny the Bull and Southpaw, and paradegoers were treated to a special appearance by Santa and Mrs. Claus and a host of his helpers- including two of his most trusted reindeer.



Also joining in on the festivities was 2009 Parade Grand Marshal, Peter Kobs. Since first



***A Grand Affair:** Peter Kobs, pictured here with his son Pete and wife Joan, served as the Grand Marshal for this year's Friends of Little Friends Electric Parade.*

getting involved with Little Friends more than five years ago, Peter has volunteered at numerous fundraising events, and was instrumental in the success of the agency's inaugural Step Up for Autism walk, serving as the captain of the top fundraising team. Kobs' team, Friends of Danny, raised more than \$11,000 for the 2009 walk. Kobs was joined in the parade by his wife Joan, his son Peter, and nearly 75 members of his amazing walk team.

Two true American heroes were also on hand for the parade, Major Tracey Collins and Sgt. Matthew Askren. *Cont. on Page 4*

## *34th Annual Bids for Kids Benefit Auction Slated for March 6*

Mark your calendar and plan to join us for the 34th Annual Bids for Kids Benefit Auction on Saturday, March 6, at the Hilton Lisle-Naperville. Festivities will get underway at 6 p.m.

This year's auction theme will celebrate the glitz and glamour of Tinseltown. Guests will stroll along the red carpet and toast the Academy Awards while gazing into the stars above the Hollywood hills, all while raising funds for children and adults served by Little Friends, Inc.

Festivities will include cocktails, dinner, silent auction and a rousing live auction led by Auctioneer Greg Dellinger. Guests

will also enjoy dancing and entertainment courtesy of Pal Joey Entertainment. Premiere seating tickets, which include a prominent table location for dinner and auction activities, are available for \$125. Dinner and auction tickets are available for \$100, and auction-only tickets can be purchased for \$75.

Cash raffle tickets for the 34th Annual Auction are also on sale now. Tickets are available for \$25 each, 2 tickets for \$40 or 5 tickets for \$100, and can be purchased online by visiting [www.littlefriendsinc.org](http://www.littlefriendsinc.org) or by contacting Little Friends at (630) 355-6533. The

Grand Prize winner will receive \$5,000 and will be announced during the evening of the Bids for Kids Benefit Auction in March. Only 800 tickets will be sold, and the winner need not be present. *Cont. on Page 4*

### *In this issue...*

- Zaidi's Cocktail Party .....2
- SUEA Pendants On Sale Now .....3
- Family Council Outing .....4

[www.littlefriendsinc.org](http://www.littlefriendsinc.org)

## Save the Date

Travel the Globe Without  
Leaving Naperville



**zaidi's**  
steak | sushi | seafood

Experience the distinctive flavors of the East and the West when you join Little

Friends for a unique cocktail party from 6-9 p.m. on Thursday, January 28, at Zaidi's Steak Sushi Seafood, 1975 Springbrook Square Drive in Naperville. This exceptional dining experience will make your taste buds come alive as you enjoy Zaidi's signature creations from across the globe, including Spanish Cuisine with a touch of Mediterranean flair, Latin Oceanier Tapas, Wild Fire Sushi and the finest French desserts.

Tickets are \$99 per person. Proceeds from the evening will benefit the programs of Little Friends, Inc. Seating is limited, so advanced reservations are required. Special thanks to Zaidi's Steak Sushi Seafood and *Glancer Magazine* for generously sponsoring this exciting event. To learn more about this event or to secure your reservations today, please contact Little Friends at (630) 281-1826.

## Follow Little Friends on Facebook

**facebook**

**BECOME A  
FAN TODAY!**

Little Friends is now posting updates about agency programs, services and fundraising events on Facebook. Log on today- invite your friends- and become a fan of Little Friends, Inc., the Step Up for Autism walk, the Bids for Kids Benefit Auction, the Little Friends Center for Autism and ColorBurst Screen Printing.

## News & Notes FROM AROUND LITTLE FRIENDS, INC.

**Family Picnic Set for September 11**  
The seventh annual Family Council Picnic will be held on Saturday, September 11, at the Little Friends administrative building, located at 140 N. Wright Street in Naperville. Clients and their families are invited to be our guests at this end-of-summer celebration. Festivities include a picnic lunch, entertainment, games for the kids and much more. We hope you will join us for this fun-filled afternoon.

**Building Renovations Underway**  
The Little Friends Maintenance team has been busy this new year tackling renovations on the third floor of the agency's Administrative Building. This 100 percent grant- and gift-funded renovation project will transform the space previously occupied by the Little Friends Center for Autism into an expanded training facility for agency and LFCA trainings. Once completed, the new training space will have

capacity for up to 55 people and feature new carpeting, state-of-the-art technology and a ceiling-mounted projector. Once additional funding has been secured, the existing bathrooms will also be renovated to accommodate the large crowds that will be visiting the building for trainings throughout the year. Renovations on the new training space should be complete by month's end.

### ColorBurst Awarded a Service Grant from the Taproot Foundation

Every year, the Taproot Foundation's award-winning Service Grant program provides millions of dollars worth of pro bono marketing, HR, IT, and strategy management consulting services to non-profits across the country. Over the next several months, the Taproot team will be working with staff and clients at ColorBurst to develop a new database/customer relationship management system. Watch for details in the next issue of *Focus*.

### Little Friends Phonathon Raises Nearly \$20,000



Volunteers from across the agency and the community graciously donated their time and reached out to members of the Little Friends family during Phonathon on November 3. As a direct result of your continued generosity, our volunteers collected more than \$18,000 in pledges during this one-night event.

Your membership gift will directly benefit the children and adults that we serve within our programs each and every day. From our family to yours, thank you!

### Lemont H.S. Donates Rocking Chairs to Krejci Academy



**Generous Donation:** Students in the high school's woods, art and interior design classes built the rocking chairs.

Students at Lemont High School collaborated over the fall semester to design, build and decorate eight wooden rocking chairs that have found a permanent home at our very own Krejci Academy. Each colorful chair was hand painted and features an original design and a fabric cushion. Special thanks to the staff and students at Lemont High School for this generous donation.


## Hundreds of Holiday Wishes Granted

Nearly 20 businesses throughout the western suburbs participated in the agency's 2009 Giving Tree Program, helping to fulfill the holiday wishes of members of the Little Friends family. As part of the program, more than 700 holiday gifts were donated by members of the community, which helped to make the season a little brighter for hundreds of clients across the agency.

Our sincerest gratitude to the dedicated BP Volunteers, without whose help this project would not be possible. Special thanks to the following area businesses who graciously hosted Giving Trees: Airtastic Playland, BP North America, Broe Real Estate Services, C.B. Richard Ellis, Café Buonaro's, The Canterbury Shoppe, Casey's Foods, Hawthorne Credit Union, Jones Lang LaSalle, Little Friends, Inc., Maercker Elementary



**Volunteer Spirit: Special thanks to BP Volunteers (L-R) Dave and Edythe Johnson and Agnes Dolan for donating their time this holiday season.**

School, McDonalds Corporation, Nalco Company, NorthStar Credit Union, Quest Software, Ryan Companies, School of the Performing Arts, SXC Health Solutions and Vericlaim, Inc. 

## ColorBurst Hosts Holiday T-Shirt Design Contest



**Top Artist: Heyoka, pictured here with ColorBurst Production Manager Cathy Van Hecke, chose garment and ink colors for her winning design.**

ColorBurst Screen Printing invited clients from across the agency to participate in a Holiday T-Shirt Design Contest this past November. Voting took

place over three days on ColorBurst's Facebook fan page, [www.facebook.com/ColorBurst](http://www.facebook.com/ColorBurst). Congratulations goes out to this year's winning artist, Bridge High School student Heyoka.

As the winning artist, Heyoka had the opportunity to work with ColorBurst staff to learn about the screen printing process and to choose garment and ink colors for her award-winning design. Throughout the month of December, ColorBurst sold a variety of items that featured Heyoka's design, including t-shirts, hooded sweatshirts and blankets.


Special thanks to Heyoka for sharing her artistic talents with us and making our holiday season a little brighter! 

## Step Up for Autism Pendants Available at Baubles by Maclyn

Little Friends is teaming up with Baubles by Maclyn to offer a stunning Step Up for Autism pendant. This custom-designed, sterling silver pendant is a replica of the logo for the Step Up for Autism Walk and is available with a blue hand enameled inlay or a brushed finish. A three-color Autism Bauble can be added, for \$6, for whimsy.

For more details or to purchase yours today, visit [www.baublesbymaclyn.com](http://www.baublesbymaclyn.com) or




stop by Baubles by Maclyn's downtown Naperville location, 26 W. Jefferson Avenue. A portion of all proceeds will benefit Little Friends. 

## Save the Date

### Proceeds from Naperpalooza 3 to Benefit Little Friends

The Rotary Club of Naperville, Sunrise, will host Naperpalooza 3 from 6 p.m. until midnight on Saturday, February 20, at Jackson Moving and Storage. Proceeds from this event will benefit Little Friends, Inc., Turning Pointe Autism Foundation and other Rotary initiatives.

All-inclusive tickets to this beach party themed bash are \$140 per person in advance, and include gourmet food from area restaurants and caterers, drinks and live music from headlining band, *Heartache Tonight*. Advance reservations can be made by February 1 by visiting [www.naperpalooza.com](http://www.naperpalooza.com). Organizers are expecting another sold-out event, so be sure to reserve your tickets early. For more details and to secure your tickets for Naperpalooza 3, please visit [www.naperpalooza.com](http://www.naperpalooza.com). 

## WISHES GRANTED...



Thank you to the following organizations for their generous support:


- ◆ *CVS/Caremark Community Grant* - \$1,500 to support therapy and evaluation assistance at the Little Friends Center for Autism.
- ◆ *St. Margaret Mary Parish* - \$750 to support the lunch program at Krejci Academy.
- ◆ *Coleman Foundation* - \$30,000 to support general agency operations. Funding will be used to complete the Little Friends Center for Autism's training facility renovation and to fund trainings.

## Family Council to Host Bowling Extravaganza



Join the Little Friends Family Council at Fox Bowl in Wheaton for an afternoon of bowling on Sunday, February 21. Open to all clients and their families, this year's Family Council Bowling Extravaganza promises to be an afternoon of fun for the entire family.

Festivities will get underway at noon with pizza and soda, and we will take to the lanes for two hours of bowling beginning at 12:45 p.m. Tickets are \$15 and include bowling, shoe rental, pizza and soda.

To register for the Family Council's Bowling Extravaganza, please contact Cally Edwards at (630) 281-1882 or via e-mail at credwards@lilfriends.com by Friday, February 12. 

## Bridge High School Students Benefit from Community Partnerships

Each year, staff at the agency's Bridge High School seek new and exciting employment opportunities for students participating in the school's vocational program. As part of the curriculum at the Downers Grove high school, students work at a variety of jobs at the school and at companies throughout the western suburbs.

One employer that has risen above the rest over the past several years is Kin-Ko Ace Hardware. A valuable partner since 2006, the Downers Grove-based retailer currently serves as an evaluation site for the school's vocational program. Kin-Ko's Operations Manager Jim Sarama and Store Manager Matt Flentge have proven to be invaluable corporate citizens while spearheading this ongoing partnership.

Over the years, the staff at Kin-Ko has opened their doors and their hearts to countless Bridge High School students. Always willing to adapt job responsibilities for each individual student, the staff at Kin-Ko provides constructive feedback and works with the students and vocational advisors to ensure the evaluation experience is a success. While working at the store, students acquire social, communication and customer service skills that help them to continue to grow and achieve personal and career goals.

If your company is interested in learning more about becoming an evaluation site for the Bridge High School's vocational program, please contact Nuncia Medina at (630) 964-1722 or e-mail [jhinkemeyer@lilfriends.com](mailto:jhinkemeyer@lilfriends.com). 

## Little Friends Electric Parade

Major Collins, a 10-year Naperville resident, has served in the Illinois National Guard for 17 years and recently returned home after a 12-month deployment to Afghanistan with the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. A 2004 Neuqua Valley High School graduate, Sgt. Askren has served in the Marine

Corps for nearly six years. He was awarded the Bronze Star and Combat Action Ribbon after his last tour of duty in Afghanistan.

Thank you to all of the parade participants, loyal volunteers and the Little Friends Board of Directors for making our 2009 Electric Parade a smashing success. 




Save the Date

SUNDAY, JUNE 27  
10 a.m.  
Downtown  
Naperville

## Bids for Kids Benefit Auction

Tickets for the Bids for Kids Benefit Auction are on sale now! This year's auction is expected to sell out, so be sure to purchase your tickets early! For more information about the Bids for Kids

Benefit Auction, please contact Special Events and Volunteer Manager Cally Edwards at (630) 281-1882 or visit [www.littlefriendsinc.org](http://www.littlefriendsinc.org). 

## Little Friends, Inc.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ronald Biegun	John T. Miller
William Cordes	Steve Monteith
Mary Esser	John F. Slade
Matt Johanson	Clark Smith
Mike Krol	Kathleen West
Mark Lee	Zaidi Syed

PRESIDENT & CEO - Jack Ryan

*Focus* is published every two months. It is designed to keep our families, volunteers and donors informed about Little Friends programs and events.

Editor - Carolyn Hamilton  
Address All Correspondence To:  
Newsletter Editor, Little Friends  
140 N. Wright Street  
Naperville, Illinois 60540  
[chamilton@lilfriends.com](mailto:chamilton@lilfriends.com)

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Naperville, IL  
60540  
Permit # 241

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Little Friends, Inc.  
140 N. Wright Street  
Naperville, Illinois 60540  
(630) 355-6533

