



Michelle O'Neill
FOUNDATION



Summer 2009 Newsletter



Saturday, 9/12/09*

9 AM to Sunset

Grand Avenue Beach

Long Beach, NY

*Rain Date 9/13/09



Schedule of Events Volleyball XIII

9 AM Check in Begins

10 AM Tournament Begins
12:30 Food Service Begins

Throughout the Day
Raffles & 50/50 Sales &
Prize Announcements
DJ, Kids Tent, Merchandise Tent
Best Team Name Contest
Winner Announced

Sunset

Awards Presentation to
1st Place Competitive Teams

www.monfoundation.org



A Letter from
Carol O'Neill,
President

In his experience organizing tournaments up and down the Eastern seaboard, Rich Heiles of East End Volleyball has acknowledged that the MON Volleyball Tournament is the single, largest volleyball tournament on the entire East Coast! Nick D'Arienzo, writer for the Queens Ledger, stated in the Best of the Best section on September 18, 2008 that the Michelle O'Neill Foundation "truly embodies what it means to be the Best of the Best... [he] felt compelled to draw attention to one of the most exemplary charity events [he's] ever attended, and one for perhaps the noblest of causes – children with cancer."

Both statements are wonderful testaments to our volleyball fundraiser, and on behalf of my family and the Foundation, I thank Rich and Nick for their kind words. I also thank all our sponsors and benefactors for their generosity and support. I am indebted to all our volunteers for their loyalty and hard work, and to the members of our community for their overwhelming enthusiasm and big, big hearts. But whether or not we're the largest and the best of the best doesn't matter nearly as much as whether we are successful in our mission to help children with cancer and special needs.

I believe the answer to that is yes!

Last year with your help we were able to assist the families of Arylis, Joseph, Stephanie, Maggie, Thomas, Yadira, Alexa Rae, Lucas, Sam, Matthew and Christian, among many others. We sponsored 12 year old Erin Barone from New Jersey on a 10 day camping experience in Bozeman, MT at Big Sky Kids Camp, a camp dedicated to children with cancer. We made financial distributions to Eagle Mount's Big Sky Kids, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Ronald McDonald House and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center,

four organizations that were life-lines to my family during Michelle's treatment & continue to offer recreation, housing and the best cancer care to countless others. In addition, we supported the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, Frances Pope Foundation, Making Headway, Parkinson's Unity Walk, Long Beach Breast Cancer Coalition, Voices Against Brain Cancer, Hawthorne Foundation and SNACK (Special Needs Activity Center for Kids), all not-for-profit organizations that benefit children with cancer and special needs.

"Tropical Storm Hanna was ripping through the Eastern seaboard ravaging baseball schedules, the US Open, and a whole host of weekend travel plans but they were able to put their rain date of September 7th in effect without barely a ripple," stated Nick D'Arienzo. Although we had to use our rain date for the first time in our Foundation's history, we raised over \$100,000 at our annual charity event -- there were 278 teams -- 64 competitive and 214 recreational -- playing across 48 nets -- and we had a wonderful time! The mounds of sand that were constructed by the City of Long Beach to serve as barriers and prevent potential flooding from "Hanna" were enjoyed by the children as they climbed up and boogie boarded down.

Special thanks to Joe Brand, Long Beach's Commissioner of Recreation, Jimmy Lorenzo and his DJ Anthony, who brought music to our event, Jimmy Tolfree, who provided the 100+ American flags, Deacon Tom Evard who opened our tournament with a blessing, and John Barnes, our affable and skilled Master of Ceremonies. Kudos to Scott McGurdy of Out-back Steakhouse and Glaceau for satisfying the needs of hundreds of participants and spectators with delicious hamburgers, chicken sandwiches & vitamin water. Much love and gratitude to our beautiful "Committee" which is comprised of Michelle's close friends & family who never fail to help carry out

Michelle's wish to "help others." I salute our littlest volunteers for their efforts in our Cans for Cancer project and to Nancy Moran, Maureen Llewellyn and PJ DeRosa for their guidance and stamina. Our hot dog stand gains popularity each year...thanks to Gerry Snell, Jane Finnegan and Jane Blackburn for their proficiency and good cheer in cooking thousands of hot dogs, and supervising a host of volunteers.

Congratulations to our first place winners -- Team Unprotected Sets, 4 person competitive, and Team Not Fair, 6 person recreational!!! Best Team Name Contest title was awarded to Team "Pulling Muscles for Michelle."

In these difficult economic times, we all must work a little harder to ensure that the most vulnerable people, our children, have the help they need to thrive and survive. My hope is that all of you will join us again for our 13th annual volleyball fundraiser on Saturday, September 12th to help benefit children with cancer and special needs -- and to celebrate life with peace, love and volleyball! XOXO Carol



Alexa Rae #1 with Carol O'Neill & Gerry Snell

High Kicks

The annual Drew Eidel Santa Claus Pub Crawl raised just under \$5,000 last December, and all proceeds were donated

for the sixth consecutive year to The Michelle O'Neill Foundation to benefit children with cancer. There were an estimated 200 Santa's and other Christmas characters who roamed the West End of Long Beach to collect donations and spread cheer, joy and love for the "kids."

This generous donation was raised due to the efforts of the participants and the kindness of the people of Long Beach. A special thanks to the owners of the Inn and the Saloon for their charitable offerings.



This event is in memory of our good friend, Drew Eidel, who passed away from brain cancer in December 2003 at the age of 40. Drew served his country in the Marines and was a registered nurse at

North Shore Hospital. He was a long-time resident of the West End of Long Beach. The Santa Pub Crawl takes place two Saturdays before Christmas. The 2009 event will be held on December 12th. For any further information, please email lbsantapubcrawl@verizon.net.

Bill Holtmeyer



Carol O'Neill, Grand Marshal AOH Division 17 St. Brendan's Day Parade 10/4/08 with grandson, Sean Niven



Cans for Cancer

There are many components that comprise our charity event to benefit children with cancer in addition to the volleyball games. There is a raffle of fabulous prizes and a 50/50, music is played throughout the day, hamburgers, chicken sandwiches & hot dogs are provided. There is a Kids' Tent for face painting & tattoos and a Merchandise Tent where "smiley wear" is sold. While all this is going on, there is another successful & rewarding element which we have named "Cans for Cancer." This project was started several years ago under the supervision of Maureen Llewlynn, Nancy Moran & PJ DeRosa. Originally, the mission of the project was to keep our beaches clean while generating funds to help children suffering from cancer. However, an added benefit has been derived which in my opinion is equally as important, and that is to provide a venue for the children in our area to perform community service and help those children less fortunate.

In September 2008 at Volleyball XII, **3,000** cans were collected, sorted and redeemed. A check for \$150 was donated to the Michelle O'Neill Foundation. That is an extraordinary amount of

cans which represents incredibly hard work and service to our community and the Foundation!!!

I congratulate and thank these children, Maureen, Nancy & PJ, and all the children who

have participated in this project at previous volleyball fundraisers. I sincerely believe that their acts of selflessness and willingness to help others will hold them in good stead throughout their lives.

They've helped a lot of children! Hopefully, they had some fun too!



On May 31, 2008, the Michelle O'Neill Foundation participated in Relay for Life, an event held at the Long Beach Middle School where the atmosphere was charged with enthusiasm and fun,

all in the name of helping others and raising funds for the American Cancer Society. Relay For Life is the American Cancer Society's signature activity. It offers everyone in a community an opportunity to participate in the fight against cancer. Teams of people camp out at a local high school, park, or fairground and take turns walking or running around a track or path. Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the event. Relays are an overnight event, up to 24 hours in



length. The theme for the event was Celebrate, Remember, Fight back. And that's exactly what we did! The Michelle O'Neill Foundation sponsored the Luminaria Ceremony when candles in honor or in memory of loved ones were lit and lined the track. Activities such as the Pajama Lap, Crazy Hat Lap and Clean Up Lap occurred throughout the night; contests such as Best Campsite, Limbo, Tug of War and Hula Hoop were held and enjoyed by all (who were awake). Special thanks go to the Hospitality Sponsors, such as Paninis and Bikinis, East End Pizza, The Inn, Max's Kosher Deli, Moe's South West Grill, Dunne's Deli, Associated Food Stores, Mulberry Street Pizza, Plaza Pizza, DiSalvo's, Bagel Café and Starbucks and to the Kiwanis Club and Steve Paul for running the Hospitality Tent. Our congratulations and thanks are extended to all the children and volunteers who participated in this Relay For Life and helped in the fight against cancer. For more information, please visit www.relayforlife.org.

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Meet Luke & Danny

Adjectives such as heroic, inspiring, courageous and adorable all describe (but not adequately) two of the children we have been able to help, with your help, through Michelle's Foundation. I'm sure you'll agree after reading the following articles written by their Mothers. My heart and prayers go out to the Mulveys and Rosatos, and I thank them for allowing us to share their sons with you.

My beautiful son, Luke is 9 years old (soon to be 10). Luke shares his birthday with his twin brother, James. Luke was diagnosed in July 2007 with Stage 4 Neuroblastoma cancer with mets to the bone. Luke has been through 5 rounds of high dose chemotherapy, 3 surgeries, 30 rounds of radiation, 3 cycles of acutane and 3F8 immunotherapy. Luke is currently on low dose chemotherapy every 3 weeks. He has been treated at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center since he was diagnosed almost 2 years ago.

Luke is a sweet, intelligent, determined boy who loves horses, unicorns and has a unique style of his own. He loves to read and possesses a wonderful imagination. He adores Miley Cyrus and knows every episode of Hannah Montana. He has a quiet strength that has been amazing, particularly through this grueling ordeal. Luke is head-

strong and brave which are attributes to be emulated. He is an inspiration to all of us.

Although Luke missed all of third grade because of this treatment, he has been in school 75% of the time this year. Over President's week, Luke even ice skated with James on a frozen lake in Pennsylvania! He has taken up playing the flute in band and is in an afternoon art class once a week. Luke has been spending time with friends and even fighting with his brother, James! I never thought I would say that I was happy that my children were fighting, but it means my life is a bit more "normal".



Luke and James have "twin" guinea pigs that they got as a gift last year from one of Luke's oncologists. They both love "Chocolate Chip" and "Cookie Crumb" very much.

My husband, Joe and I are fortunate to have a wonderful support system through this journey. Our community, coworkers, school and family have provided strength that is necessary to cope with all that is involved. We have met the most incredible people and have been recipients of wonderful kindnesses. MSKCC is an incredible place that has offered only hope and positive reinforcement to us. My father says, "If you have any doubts about the existence of saints in this world, stop in at the 9th floor Pediatric Day Hospital at Sloan-Kettering. There's a large cluster of them there, masquerading as nurses and doctors and aides and clerks."

I always believed in miracles, but I have truly witnessed my very own with my precious son, Luke getting better.

Megan Rosato



Danny was born with 2 diseases that made him predisposed to cancer. On May 11, 2001 at age 4 1/2 yrs old, Danny was diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia-JMML-juvenile myelomonocytic leukemia.



We brought him to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia because they were the only hospital in the tri-state area that had some success with JMML. In July 2001 Danny had a splenectomy. Danny was then treated with toxic chemo and full body radiation. After the radiation on Aug 24, 2001, Danny received his bone marrow from a man in North Carolina. The chance of Danny surviving the BMT was only 30% for the first 30 days. We stayed at the Ronald McDonald house for another month. For the next 3 years we traveled back and forth to Philly once a week.

All this time Danny suffered with Graft vs. Host disease. This caused him to be itchy 24/7. Then in August 2004, we were told Danny relapsed from his cancer and that he only had a month or two to live. We were told that there was nothing we could do for Danny but to just bring him home. We decided that his quality of life was more important than quantity so we took Danny home to live the rest of his life having fun. We had him make his First Holy Communion and Confirmation.



People ask me all the time, 'do you ever ask God why'. I tell them no, cause I feel God is using Danny as a messenger to spread His love and the power of prayer. I literally put every ounce of trust and faith into God. And let Him take the lead. And I feel by doing that, God has blessed Danny because it is March 2009 and Danny is still with us. He is in the 6th grade. He plays basketball with the town recreation league.

Danny is very patriotic. He was asked to write a speech on why he is so patriotic. Danny wrote his speech and read it in Albany where it was broadcasted to troops in Iraq, Germany & Afghanistan. He wrote how he was in CHOP having his bone marrow transplant when the Twin Towers were attacked. He went on to say how he wanted to be a soldier like them. He even told them how when his father said to Danny that he wanted to take Danny's cancer away from him and put it in his body, Danny replied, "No Daddy, I want to give it to Osama Bin Laden." Since the speech was being shown to the Troops via satellite, they all went hysterical laughing at Danny's statement of giving it to Bin Laden."

Maureen Mulvey



**Long Beach's
Best Event of the Summer!**



**Team Unprotected Sets
4-Man Competitive Winner**



**Team Not Fair
6-Man Recreational Winner**

*Benefit for Children with Cancer
& Special Needs*

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