

Wesley



Spring 2005

Success IN Progress

News and Views About Working Wonders at Wesley

Wesley's Gala 2005: A Record-Setting Event Celebrating Wesley's Kids



Held on March 12 at the Hilton Garden Inn, the 2005 Gala, "Celebrating Children," raised over \$85,000, a record amount of money for Wesley's kids. The Gala was the most successful event in Wesley's 40 year history.

With auction items ranging from dining certificates to diamond earrings to a SeaDream Yacht Club trip to the Caribbean, there was something for everyone at the Gala—and nearly everything went! Guests opened up their hearts and pocketbooks to donate over \$5,000 to the new "Building the Future Fund," a scholarship program designed to provide special opportunities for Wesley's kids.

Odyssey Award winners, Wilma McNeese and John, Jane and Susan Pillar, had the audience on the edge of their seats as they accepted their awards and spoke of the many ways that they have been touched by Wesley.

Students from the Wesley Academy wowed the crowd with a preview of their spring musical, "Bye-Bye Birdie." Guests enjoyed a spectacular dinner, as well as a champagne fountain sponsored by Mellon.

The Gala also kicked off the Wesley Institute's 40th Anniversary of building a stronger future: child by child.

Over 40 volunteers helped to make the evening a great success, and all funds raised at the Gala will benefit Wesley's programs and the very special kids that we serve.

Special thanks to Mylan Laboratories, ESB Bank and Sherpa Software for their generous sponsorships.



During Wesley's Gala, Larry Richert presents John LeBlond and George Bond with a citation from the Honorable John A Maher. The House of Representatives of Pennsylvania congratulated the Wesley Institute upon the momentous occasion of its 40th anniversary and saluted Wesley as it recommits itself to the ideals and standards which have sustained it for 40 years.

Wilma McNeese Receives the Odyssey Volunteer Award.



Dan Findley presented Susan Pillar with the Odyssey Alumni Award, and John and Susan Pillar with the Odyssey Family Award.

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Our Mission

Our mission is to create an environment in which children and youth are able to build the lifelong skills essential to becoming independent, responsible, contributing and caring members of our community.

From the desk of... Douglas W. Muetzel, CEO

40 years and what celebration it is! The Wesley Institute continues to be blessed beyond what we could ever ask or imagine. Since January, so much has happened in this celebration year. Here are just a few examples:

- January 29 was the Employee Recognition Dinner kicking off the 40th anniversary year long celebration with great success.
- In the first quarter, Wesley received a license for a private, academic special needs pre school to be part of Wesley's Family and Child Development Center, providing services to children with autism and other developmental disabilities.
- The governing boards of The Wesley Institute and Spectrum Family Network announced the beginning of the due diligence phase to determine if a merger of the two organizations would significantly benefit children and families.
- Wesley's Gala on March 12 was the single most successful fundraising event in Wesley's 40 year history netting more than \$85,000!
- Wesley received a \$100,000 donation from Libby Dodson.....one of the largest gifts from an individual in Wesley's history.

The momentum in this 40th year has never been greater nor has our focus and resolve ever been stronger to create an environment in which children and youth build lifelong skills essential to becoming independent, responsible, caring and contributing members of our community.

The possibilities to better and more effectively serve children and families are energizing. As we look to the end of September 2005 for the governing boards to make their final decision to merge or not to merge, we will continue to collaborate to enhance the services both organizations currently provide.

The early indicators suggest that a merger with Spectrum Family Network would sustain the great and life changing work of the organizations. Our expectations are crystal clear. The due diligence phases must strengthen our confidence in attaining two fundamental goals:

#1 The merger would create more services to more children and more families that are more effective as a combined organization than if the organizations were to remain separate.

#2 The merger would create the "fastest and most efficient" back office operation in our industry in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Yes, these mandates are bold! And, they should be. This is nothing new for Wesley. As I shared at the Gala, I would like to close with a quote that has and will continue to set the course for this organization from past board president (1969-1970) Ernest (Ernie) O.Wood...

We did not always succeed. If organizations like The Wesley Institute, with daring and sometimes dangerous dreams, do not have failures then the organization's dreams are too mild, too safe, too moderate and too acceptable.

For the kids,

Douglas W. Muetzel
Chief Executive Officer

The Wesley Institute and Spectrum Family Network Merger Opportunity

The Boards of Wesley Institute and Spectrum Family Network are pleased to announce that they have begun to explore the possibility of a merger or other form of affiliation in order to achieve the following:

- Blended expansion of quality services to a greater number of children and families.
- Increased efficiency and financial stability to enable us to support and increase our commitment to children and families.

While it is too early to predict the outcome of this process, a positive working relationship has been established, and a committee, representing both organizations, is working diligently on the many issues involved. We anticipate that this process will take approximately six months before any official action results, ranging from formalized collaboration to merger.

THE WESLEY INSTITUTE

The Wesley Institute is a community of caring individuals who provide services in diverse developmental, educational, and therapeutic settings that promote the well-being of children, youth, and their families. This year Wesley will serve over 900 kids from more than 57 regional school districts spanning seven counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania through the following range of services:

- Private academic school for children at risk of school failure
- Approved private school and a school-based partial psychiatric hospital for children
- Specialized therapeutic in-home and center-based services for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities
- Acute partial hospitalization for children and adolescents
- Direct delivery of therapeutic services to children attending public schools and other organizations
- School-based partial psychiatric hospital services for children and adolescents who have recently experienced a severe mental health crisis, which prevents their immediate return to public school

SPECTRUM FAMILY NETWORK

Spectrum Family Network is committed to being a leading provider of therapeutic community and family-based services for children and their families. In 2004, Spectrum Family Network, with the support of the Spectrum Family Network Foundation, served over 2,000 children in need and more than 6,800 of their family members throughout five counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania. They provide the following range of resources and licensed services:

- In-home family therapy and support
- Shelter care
- Community-based residential care
- Adoption assistance
- Foster care
- Transportation and visitation
- Family-based mental health
- School-based truancy/delinquency prevention
- Psychiatric outpatient care for children and adults
- Drug and alcohol assessment and counseling
- Services to clients who are mentally ill and have a substance abuse diagnosis (MISA)

The Wesley Academy Repertory Presents:

Bye Bye Birdie

Location

Canon McMillan Middle School

Date/Time

May 20th @ 7:30pm May 21st @ 4:00pm

Director

Doreen McIntyre

Musical Director

Walter Sposkoski, III

You are invited to support the Wesley Academy students as they perform one of the most captivating musicals of our time. Please join us for a performance, and/or show your support by purchasing a space in the program booklet.

Advertisements, business coupons, and statements of support for a friend or relative are currently being sold for the keepsake program booklet.

Call the Academy at 412-833-6444 for ticket and advertising information.



The Wesley Invitational Monday, June 6, 2005 10:30 am Laurel Valley Golf Club

Laurel Valley is an outstanding championship course and Wesley's 40th Anniversary golf outing is an outstanding way to entertain clients, employees or friends, while supporting children with special needs.

A foursome, including lunch and dinner is \$3,000. In conjunction with Wesley's 40th anniversary celebrations, The Wesley Invitational Committee is also excited to offer a special addition to our foursome package:

The New Offer:

A **\$4,000 foursome**: includes lunch, dinner and an Arnold Palmer signed green pin flag for each golfer. Greens pin flags, used for the 66th Senior PGA Championship at Laurel Valley Golf Club (played a week before Wesley's event) will be provided to golfers playing in a \$4,000 foursome. The signed flag would be a tremendous addition to any memorabilia collection.

To reserve your spot, call Paula Huffman at 412-831-9390.

Visit www.wesleyinstitute.org for sponsorship and advertising opportunities. The field is filling fast, so act now!

Put on Your Walking Shoes

The Wesley Institute will have a walking team for both the (Aboard) Walk for a Healthy Community, sponsored by Highmark, and the Walk FAR for NAAR. Join us in supporting two great organizations dedicated to the fight against autism and other related disorders.



Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community

5K Run, One-Mile Fun Walk

Saturday, May 21, 2005

Station Square Amphitheatre, Pittsburgh, PA

For more information, contact

Carrie Harrision at 412-347-3180 x233

Walk FAR for NAAR

Three miles

Saturday, June 4, 2005

Heinz Field, Pittsburgh, PA

For more information, contact

Gina Pfeifer at 724-443-8900

The Newly Updated Wesley Institute Web Site

This site is a resource for parents, kids, administrators and teachers, community leaders, volunteers and donors.

Learn how Wesley is helping to repair and strengthen families, improve the fabric of our communities, and create new, bright futures.

The Wesley Institute web site will also provide donors with a convenient way to **donate online** with a **Visa or MasterCard**.



www.wesleyinstitute.org

**New Information is
Constantly Being
Added**

Wesley Folks



Pat Cosgrove

Clinical Supervisor, Wesley Highland Services

Pat Cosgrove joined The Wesley Institute 26 years ago as a Mental Health Therapist at Wesley Highland Services. She then moved into the Clinical Coordinator position in the Elementary unit, and has been in her current position as a Clinical Supervisor for approximately seven years.

Pat resides in Mt. Lebanon with her husband Mike and their three dogs. When asked what she enjoys most about working at Wesley, Pat responded, "The opportunity to make a difference in kids' lives."

As a Supervisor in the Elementary Unit, Pat has played an integral role in working with Dr. Joseph Strayhorn on a research project designed to improve reading skills and increase self control skills with students.

Since the project's beginning in May 2004, approximately 15 children in the elementary unit have been involved in the research protocol with their parents' consent. The students in the treatment group spend about 45 minutes each day in special reading tutoring. As the child is able to read kindergarten level material, he starts to read illustrated stories and non-illustrated readings that model psychological skills including kindness, respectful talk, non-violence, and self discipline.

The research project also includes "telephone tutoring," where a tutor calls and works with each student over the phone. "After a summer of telephone tutoring, the teachers at Highland saw an improvement in many of the kid's reading levels."

When Pat isn't working at Wesley Highland Services to enhance and advance Wesley's mission, she concentrates on her great passion for stained glass and mosaic work. Pat's artwork can be found throughout local stores and also as an auction item in Wesley's Gala. "It is my therapy," said Pat.

Thank You!

Wesley Acknowledges Tribute Gifts

In Memory of: Mrs. Nancy T. Conover "Nana"

From her grandchildren:

Ryan Bentley
Gregory Larder
Bethany Larder

In Memory of: Polly R. Hawkins

Mr. and Mrs. S. G. Clark
David and Allison Luptak

In Memory of: Michael Holycross

Mr. and Mrs. Daniel N. Kiser

In Honor of: Bill Schwenk

Mr. and Mrs. Allan C. Schwenk

A Special Thank You to:

*John Krugh at The Framesmith,
5209 Library Rd. Bethel Park
and Michaels at the Waterfront
for your generous donation of
framing Wesley's kids artwork for
silent auction items at our
Gala- "Celebrating Children."*

The Wesley Institute Receives a \$100,000 Donation from Elizabeth (Libby) Kara Dodson

"Libby's gift is energizing and humbling at the same time. A gift of this size is extraordinary, but so is Libby's generosity," said Douglas Muetzel, Chief Executive Officer of the Wesley Institute. "Libby's desire is for this gift to positively impact the children we serve. And that we will do.

Wesley is putting together a small work group to look at the best way to utilize the donation to meet the needs of Wesley's kids, while also remembering Libby's passions such as nursing, the arts and horses.

In great gratitude of the gift, we would like to tell you a bit about Ms. Dodson:

Elizabeth (Libby) Kara Dodson was born in Pricedale, PA to Hungarian Immigrant parents. Her mother and father ran a neighborhood grocery store, and though they were not college graduates, they instilled in their children the belief that college was a necessity.

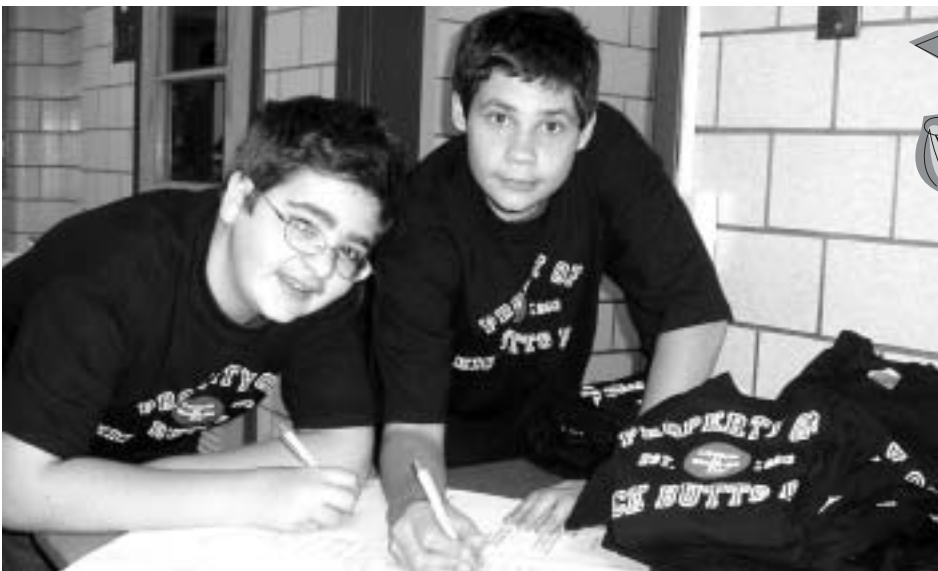
Libby attended nursing school at St. Francis Hospital in Pittsburgh, and went on to Catholic University in Washington, DC to earn a nursing degree.

She began her career in the public health service, and at one time was the personal nurse of former Supreme Court Associate Justice Louis Brandeis. After marrying Harry Dodson, they settled in the city, where they were employed by the Veterans Administration. Harry was an attorney, working Capitol Hill and Libby was the Chief Nurse.

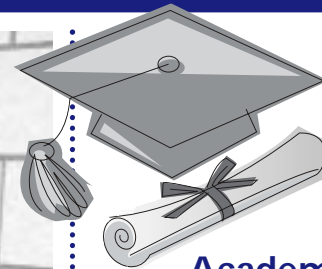
In 1992, Harry became very ill and passed away. After his death, Libby continued to participate in charities in Florida and in Pennsylvania. She donated funds to the Boca Raton Hospital to build a Cardiac Rehab Center and to California of Pennsylvania State University to erect an alumni building in honor of her mother and father, Julia and Michael Kara. In addition, Libby has been very involved with the Red Cross, and she underwrote the annual ball for many years.

Libby's life characterizes the values of Wesley. Her great kindness and generosity will help the special children and adolescents in Wesley's programs to become independent, responsible, contributing and caring members of our community.

More Wesley News...



As part of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, "Kick Butts Day", an annual celebration of youth leadership and activism in the fight against tobacco use, Wesley Academy students sign a letter to Representative Maher asking for his endorsement of the PA Clean Indoor Air Workplace Act. Smokers and non smokers alike were eligible to sign and receive a "Kick Butts" T-shirt.



Last Day of School and Graduation Dates for Wesley's Academic Programs

Wesley Academy

Last Day of School: June 15, 2005
Graduation: June 9, 2005

Wesley Highland School

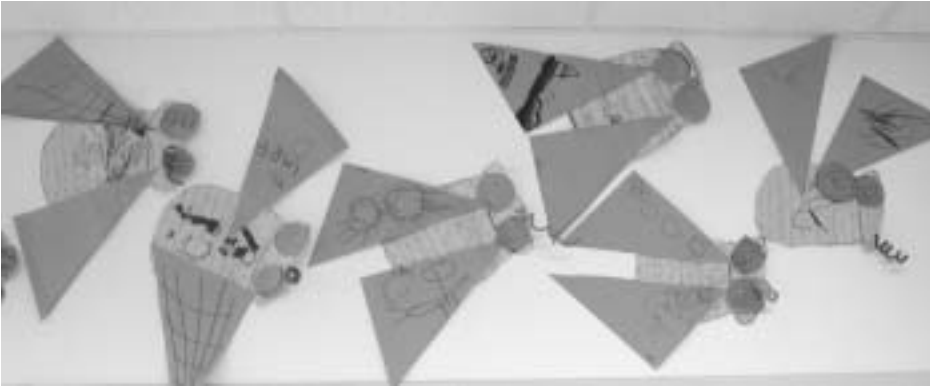
Last Day of School: June 13, 2005
Graduation: June 8, 2005

Wesley Institute School

Last Day of School: June 3, 2005

**Congratulations to all
Wesley's graduating seniors**

Wesley's Programs



Students in the South Hills Wesley Wonder Kids Club decorate the halls with "bugs."

Wesley Institute School/ Wesley Acute Partial Hospitalization Program

The psychiatric nurses at The Acute Partial Hospital are using creative methods to help children and adolescents learn more about their medications. The "Med-Ed" classes look a little different than the standard medication counseling classes.

The younger kids in the program can be seen doing a scavenger hunt to find index cards with matching descriptions of medications that they are currently prescribed. The kids are also rewarded with candy and small prizes.

Teenage girls that often do not like to discuss their medications, can get their nails painted, or have their hair done if they will spend some time talking about the medications.

"Younger kids often have very little interest in their medications and it can be difficult to get the older kids to talk about their medications," said Maureen Huelsenbeck, psychiatric nurse at the Wesley Institute School and Wesley Acute Partial Hospitalization Program. "The kids really respond to the new activities that we have incorporated into their medication education. The positive reinforcement really motivates them."

The need for additional medication education was noted in the 2004 Outcomes that showed when children in the Acute program were asked to rate the explanation of their medicine, 10% of the kids gave below average ratings. The program responded by adding the additional "Med-Ed" classes, and hopes to decrease the number of below average responses by taking a more creative approach to educating the children and adolescents.

Wesley Institute Family and Child Development Center

The Wesley Institute Family and Child Development Center is excited to announce that we have received a pre-school license. We are currently taking registration for the preschool class that will start in September. For further information contact 724-443-8900.

The following is a story shared by a mother of a child in the Wesley Institute Family and Child Development Center:

Two years ago, my son Aaron* was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome. At that time, he was a different kid. His daycare tried to have him removed because of his anxiety and aggression.

We entered him in Wesley's wraparound program, where they taught him social skills, helped him to deal with his anxiety and showed him positive ways to express his feelings.

Today, he is mainstreamed in public school in a second grade classroom, with his TSS and only 2 hours a week of mobile therapy.

He can interact appropriately with his peers. And, for the first time, he is invited to birthday parties and social events.

I'm excited to watch Aaron's progress and am so thankful to everyone at Wesley that has helped him make friends and utilize coping skills.

Wish List

Wesley Academy

Play Station 2

Wesley Institute Family and Child Development Center

flash cards

picture cards

stickers

sensory toys

educational books and videos

Wesley Highland Services

household/kitchenware items for the Bridge program

Wesley Institute School and Acute Partial Hospitalization Program

televisions

couches

cabinets

shelves

games: K-nex, Operation, Connect Four

Nintendo and Play station games

Play Station/Game Boy

toys

X-box

craft supplies

felt posters

If you are interested in donating any of the above items contact Paula Huffman at 412-831-9390 x219.

Wesley's Programs

Wesley Highland Services

Wesley's Penn Residence House Provides a New Place to Teach Life Skills to Students in the Wesley Highland Bridge Program

The Wesley Highland Bridge Program helps young adults reach their own highest level of independence to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives. The program is a "bridge" between adolescence and young adulthood for older high school students with an emotional disturbance (ED) and a psychiatric diagnosis.

The Bridge Program stresses that all people have the capacity to change and improve their quality of life if they are provided with real life opportunities to realize their potential.

In the Penn Residence House, Bridge students will have the opportunity to learn life skills such as: cooking, cleaning and budgeting for groceries.

"Wesley had a vacant house and we have program where we teach kids life skills," said Bill Alexy, Director of Wesley Highland School. "It is a perfect match and will enable the students to practice essential skills."

The program focuses on each young adult's strengths, hopes, interests, relationships, and capabilities beyond their status as a "special education or special needs student."

The Bridge program and its new location exemplify Wesley's mission to create an environment in which children and youth can gain life long skills essential to becoming independent, responsible, contributing and caring members of the community.

Special thanks to all who helped make the kitchen renovations at Penn Residence possible.



Wesley Academy

Advancing Wesley's mission at the Wesley Academy

Students at the Wesley Academy learn first hand how to become caring and contributing members of the community by participating in the Pennies for Patients Program. The funds, collected during a three-week period, benefit The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Students participated by selling raffle tickets and food such as ice cream sundaes, root beer floats, nachos and pancakes to raise over \$2,280.

Apangea Math

Wesley Academy students have begun using the Apangea Math program as a supplement to the traditional math courses. Apangea Math, an online tutorial, is designed to help students develop structured math problem solving processes. The program provides live tutor help and immediate feedback to the student.

Students use the program in the computer lab, and can also use it anywhere they have Internet access, including at home. All problems are word problems, engaging students to read a paragraph and pull out the important information.

"The kids are starting to really catch onto the program, and their skills are progressing," said Marcus Kelly, Academy teacher. "The program also sends me an instant report on the student's scores, and I can look for red flags showing a student needs extra help in specific areas."

Special thanks to the The First Data Western Union Foundation for awarding The Wesley Academy with the Apangea grant.



A student enjoys his lunch at Wesley Highland School.

CARNIVAL DAY AT WESLEY

Saturday, July 16, 2005
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Johnston Road Building

All kids, staff, friends and family of Wesley are invited to celebrate Wesley's 40th anniversary with a day of food, fun and entertainment. The carnival will include activities such as a petting zoo, pony rides, face painting and carnival games. Music will be provided by the band Psalter.

Admission is free and a donation is accepted. Join the Wesley Institute as we celebrate 40 years of building a stronger future: child by child.

The Wesley Institute
40th Anniversary

The Wesley Institute, Inc. is a community of caring people providing services in diverse developmental, educational and therapeutic settings that promote the well being of children, youth and their families.



The Wesley Institute, Inc.
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