

Elee's 1st Birthday

Happy Birthday Dear Elee, Happy Birthday to You!

Almost Home Kids loves celebrating birthdays. Ernestin "Elee" Corpuz's first birthday was an important day for staff, family, and friends to celebrate this September. Elee is a fighter and regardless of the clinical adversities she faced in her first year of life, she reached this exciting milestone. She had spent the first nine months in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. Born with a rare genetic condition, Elee survived and with the help of the medical staff at Lurie Children's; she gradually made progress. Elee's mother, Tessa, visited her every day and often stayed at the Ronald McDonald house near Lurie Children's. It was there she heard about Almost Home Kids and searched for more information. The staff told her about a suburban Almost



Elee on her first birthday with mom Tessa, AHK Social Worker Amy, and Mylene, Icing Smiles baker

Home Kids, much closer to her home. They encouraged her to take a tour, and see how Almost Home Kids are able to help families.

Tessa visited Almost Home Kids and was impressed by the level of care, compassion, and professionalism exhibited by



Elee playing with bubbles

the staff. She marveled at the home-like setting and the addition of outside grounds. Her impressions were positive. The nursing staff not only provided expert clinical care and training for families but also found the time to smile, play and laugh each day with the kids in their care.

When Elee first arrived at Almost Home Kids, Tessa was nervous about her being away from the doctors and specialists at the NICU, but her worries quickly subsided when Elee began to settle into the home-like environment at AHK. They are able to spend days together out in the community, going to the mall or visiting friends, something Tessa couldn't have imagined when Elee was first born. Tessa is now looking forward to transitioning Elee home very soon to be with her family and the next stage of their life.

Elee really enjoyed her first birthday and the addition of an amazing cake from the talented bakers from Icing Smiles, an organization that partners with health care facilities to provide lavish birthday cakes for kids who can't be home for their birthdays. Tessa made the occasion even more festive by arranging a lunch for the nursing and administration staff! One of the grandparents of another child whose family had become fast friends with Elee and her mom provided a delicious spread of Filipino food.

There truly is no place like Almost Home Kids.

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Our Supporters

Generous Neighbors

We are thrilled to announce that Northwestern Medicine is supporting Almost Home Kids to help children right here in our local community. Beginning this month, families residing in the following towns in DuPage and Kane counties will qualify for funding support for Respite Care, a critical service for children with complex medical needs.

Batavia	Glen Ellyn	St. Charles
Carol Stream	Kaneville	West Chicago
Elburn	Lisle	Wheaton
Geneva	Naperville	Winfield



Mackenzie being well cared for by our RN's and comforted by a volunteer

Families and caregivers in these communities can schedule temporary relief from 24/7 caregiving to rest, relieve stress or tend to other family member's needs. This is made possible through a \$25,000 grant from Northwestern Medicine to support the Almost Home Kids Respite Care Program.

Respite Care is the key to the long term stability for families with children with medical complexities. Parents often have many challenges and the respite care program offers their child a comfortable place to stay with access to medical and nursing support while their parents tend to personal issues. The overall purpose of the program is to improve health outcomes for children with special healthcare needs by providing safety net services in the community.



Chuy and his mom share a tender moment

“Northwestern Medicine is proud to support Almost Home Kids. We understand the pressures that families are under while their child is receiving care at Almost Home Kids. We hope this grant will help relieve a little of that pressure during this difficult time,”
Chris Hensley, Vice President, Northwestern Medicine.



For more information on accessing our Respite Care Program, please contact Layenie Anderson, Director of Case Management, at 630-271-9155 #2

Helping us through Workplace Giving

If your company is participating in annual workplace giving campaigns such as United Way, Combined Federal Campaign or others that your employer may administer, you can choose Almost Home Kids to receive a donation. Deductions taken from each pay period truly makes a significant impact at AHK.

To direct your annual workplace gift to Almost Home Kids, request a designation form from your employer, write in Almost Home Kids EIN #36-3822010. For the Combined Federal Campaign, which is offered to federal employees, our code is #79874.

For questions or more information, please contact Liza Larsen at elarsen@AlmostHomeKids.org or call 630-271-9155 ext 130.



Christian Burton during his Respite Care stay



Angeria with Karla (AHK CNA)



Adrianna during her transitional care stay

Support AHK and #ILGive on Giving Tuesday!

Mark your calendars! The internationally celebrated Giving Tuesday is on November 29, 2016, and all online gifts made to Almost Home Kids on this one day only will be matched dollar for dollar! Thanks to the generosity of the **Coleman Foundation** and **Jet Brite Car Wash**, in partnership with the #ILGive initiative, you can double your impact to the children and families of Almost Home Kids. The key to the success of Giving Tuesday is social sharing – sign up to participate in #ILGive Today at <https://www.ilgive.com/organizations/almost-home-kids> and spread the word!

Our Events

Share the Care Ball

Guests of the fifth annual Share the Care Ball at The Drake Hotel experienced an evening to remember from start to finish. The evening unfolded to the sounds of the Sirens welcoming guests to the event, and special guest James Sanden who entertained the crowd with his amazing magic tricks, as guests sipped Manhattans and perused the luxurious silent auction on display. Other highlights included the extraordinary young pianist Daniel Souvigny and the legendary Ken Arlen Evolution Orchestra with a surprise performance by the Jersey Boys who kept the crowd on their feet until the wee hours of the morning.



Committee members left to right: Karin Prangley, MaryBeth Smith, Terri Danko, Julia Chappell, Suzi Bramson Brooks, Carley Diedrich, Jen Horsley

The evening's Awardees, Jim English (Distinguished Donor) and Bill Neustadt (Share the Care Champion) inspired all in attendance with their dedication to the mission and children of AHK and their heartfelt sentiments of gratitude. But the true meaning of this momentous night was in the words of Michelle and Jon Freeman, parents of Peter and his four big brothers, who eloquently stated what Almost Home Kids means to their family.



Left to Right: Jim English, Debbie Grisko, Bill Neustadt and Josh Prangley



The Freeman Family

“Almost Home Kids was CRUCIAL to our transition home. We may have thought we were ready to leave the hospital and care for Peter at home...but seeing the care in a hospital setting versus actually partaking in all the care in a home setting was quite different—It was mentally and physically exhausting, but the beauty was...we had time. We had time to learn and the help of an amazing staff to support us until we weren’t exhausted by Peter’s care. Until we knew his care so well and were so comfortable doing it that we could ACTUALLY take him home confidently.”
Jon Freeman, Peter’s dad

Thank you to our many wonderful sponsors, volunteers and fabulous Share the Care Ball Committee for making such an impact for the children of AHK Chicago! Together with almost 350 attendees we raised over \$320,000 of much needed funds for Almost Home Kids

Organizations Paying it Forward

We all know how a good party, a meaningful project, or a healthy competition can engage and excite employees and help to develop camaraderie. Several businesses and associations have supported Almost Home Kids in a variety of ways this year, resulting in almost \$30,000 critically needed funds for the children and families of AHK. Here are just a few examples of the business community giving back to AHK:

Swoon Staffing hosted a stellar cocktail party and silent auction last winter benefitting Almost Home Kids. This one event raised an unprecedented \$13,000, and encouraged Michelle Baker (Swoon's CEO) to jump on board and join the AHK Summer Soirée committee!



Swoon and Nextgen Almost Home Kids benefit

Raymond James employees are committed to giving back, and were motivated to top last year's donation drive to benefit Almost Home Kids. So this year, they hosted a Bags Tournament and Charity Fundraiser and surpassed their fundraising from last year by raising nearly \$3,000!



Raymond James bags tournament

International Real Estate Management Association (IREM) selected Almost Home Kids as their charitable beneficiary for 2016. We were thrilled to be selected by this talented group of real estate professionals and contractors, who not only raised more than \$15,000 for AHK from their Golf Tournament and chapter meeting auctions, but also got their hands dirty for an extraordinary day of service at our Naperville home. Read more about IREM in the Our Community section.



IREM golf outing

Upcoming Events

Sunday, April 2, 2017

Team AHK for the Shamrock Shuffle

Friday, April 21, 2017

Boots & Bling a Western Fling at Esplanade lakes in Downers Grove

Friday, September 15, 2017

AHK Golf Marathon at Zigfield Troy

Almost Home Kids is always interested in developing new partnerships with businesses and associations in the Chicagoland area. To learn more, contact Judith McLean at jmclea@AlmostHomeKids.org.

Our Community

Volunteer of the Quarter

“The world is hugged by the faithful arms of volunteers.”
from Terri Guillemets

We are so fortunate at Almost Home Kids to have many volunteers who continually offer their faithful arms to share in the care of the children. Every volunteer is important to our success in attaining our mission but there are some volunteers who stand out, going above and beyond, and we are delighted to recognize them as Volunteer of the Quarter.

Ann Cussick is our Naperville Volunteer of the Quarter and has been a reliable volunteer for two and a half years! She is an art teacher in the Naperville school district and actually comes to volunteer with the children in-between teaching periods at school! Now that is dedication! In addition to the typical activities our Recreational Volunteers do with our children, Ann is also happy to engage the children through art projects which brightens their day. She also coordinated a holiday Donation Drive with her Bunco group to support our children. We were very grateful for her extra effort at the holidays. We look forward to having Ann volunteer for many more years.



Naperville Volunteer of the Quarter, Ann Cussick



Chicago Volunteer of the Quarter, Dee Levy

Our Chicago Volunteer of the Quarter is **Dee Levy**. Dee has been a remarkable Recreational Volunteer for one and a half years. During her 100+ hours of volunteering, she has made quite a difference on a weekly basis by enhancing the lives of the children in our care. The clinical staff can count on Dee to volunteer once a week for a couple of hours and she is happy to engage children who are in need of some extra TLC. Her compassion for our children, as well as her commitment to volunteer, is why we would like to acknowledge Dee this quarter. When chosen as Volunteer of the Quarter, she said it was a “privilege” for her to help out and said “our nurses are her idols and she is inspired and encouraged with each of her visits.” What an amazing spirit and person!

Almost Home Kids benefits every day from the contributions of all our volunteers who selflessly give their time. We are grateful to all of them and are happy to highlight Ann and Dee as volunteers who are an integral part of our success.

If you would like more information on volunteering at one of our sites; please visit our website www.AlmostHomeKids.org and click on ABOUT > HOW TO HELP > VOLUNTEER or email our Community Outreach Coordinator, Lisa Snow lsnow@AlmostHomeKids.org.

Corporate Highlight — IREM

It was a pleasure working with the team of fine people from IREM (International Real Estate Management Association) to coordinate their Service Day at our Naperville location this spring. They were eager to take on as many projects as possible and were willing to reach out to vendors to get all the supplies and additional skilled talent donated. We were very grateful for the organizational skills of Dale Showalter (Showalter Roofing) who assessed the projects on our wish list and secured the manpower for the projects. June McCory (The Missner Group) and Teri Lind (IREM) enthusiastically promoted the IREM Cares Volunteer Day with industry partners to ensure the day went smoothly. We are very grateful for the amount of expertise and labor this group contributed.

The day's project list included: installation of a new personalized mailbox; landscaping and gutter clean up, power washing our glider and walkways; installation of new awning and seat cushion for the glider and painting bedrooms and hallways. And, keep in mind they were able to provide all the materials for each project resulting in a very generous in-kind donation.

This truly was a labor of love by everyone involved. Dale summed up the compassion this group brought when during the planning process he told Lisa Snow, Community Outreach Coordinator, "We will have a great day of serving you and help the families who are being served by you."



IREM volunteering at Almost Home Kids, Naperville.

Children's Supplies Wish List: (items must be new please)

- » Baby wipes, unscented or for sensitive skin (we use about 1,000 boxes annually)
- » Johnson & Johnson Baby Lotion & Baby Wash
- » Baby bottles (non-breakable)
- » Night light toys (Glow worm, etc.)
- » Children's and Teen DVDs (G & PG rating)
- » Graco Pace Click Connect Stroller, 3-wheel design, 40"H x 19"W x 27"D (Approximately \$90)
- » 4moms MamaRoo Infant Seat - Grey Classic (Toys R Us, \$239)

House Supplies Wish List:

- » Gift cards in any denomination to help purchase supplies (Target, Walmart, Walgreens, Office Max, & Home Depot)
- » Paper towels (30-40 rolls are used monthly)
- » Laundry detergent - "ALL Ultra Free Clear Liquid" brand
- » Ivory Soap liquid detergent
- » Keurig K-Cup Coffee packs (for clinical staff, family members & guests)
- » Rubbermaid plastic Mixer-mate bottles, 2 quart size (to hold formula)
- » Boxes of Kleenex (30-40 boxes are used each month)
- » Colorful fitted crib sheets
- » Solid color fitted twin sheets and pillowcases
- » Hand sanitizer (8oz or 12oz)

Office Supplies Wish List:

- » File folders (1/3 cut)
- » Post-it notes
- » First Class postage stamps

AHK General Wish List:

- » Rigid 1 gallon 6.0 Peak Wet Dry Vac (Home Depot \$99)
- » Milwaukee Flow Back Solid Tire Hand Truck 600lb. capacity (Home Depot \$49)

Affiliated with



Ann & Robert H. Lurie
Children's Hospital of Chicago

7 South 721 Route 53
Naperville, IL 60540

Our mission at Almost Home Kids is to provide transitional care in a home-like setting to children with complicated health needs, training for their families and respite care.

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Writers, Editors and Key Contributors:

Liza Larsen, Liz Dodge-Lechko, Vita Lerman,
Raeann Olsen-Jackson, Judith McLean,
Lisa Snow, Shane Tritsch

Contact us at 630.271.9155 or visit our website at www.AlmostHomeKids.org



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