

Sean James Dolan Memorial Fund

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May 2003

Greetings Everyone!

We first would like to extend a heartfelt "Happy Mothers Day" to all of you Moms out there - Especially all of you who have lost one or more children. For some bereaved moms, this is as difficult a day as the deceased child's birthday, anniversary & other special occasion(s). Perhaps all of you moms who have living children may want to take an extra moment on Sunday and give your children extra hugs in appreciation of what you have been blessed with. Think of those Moms who can no longer hold their children. Please also note the Dedication to Moms on the last pages, sent to us by our friend Larry out in San Diego.

Our continued Big "Hello & Thanks for All You Do!" to all of our Servicepeople who've been away from their families for so long! We're Glad our troops are starting to return home.

If "April showers bring May flowers" then it may look like a jungle by June! It was amazing how Old Man Winter just didn't want to let go this year - Did he have some sort of disagreement with Mother Nature or something?!?!?! We rarely have snow in April and the beginning of the month felt more like December and more snow than we had during the 2001-2002 winter!

After sending out our last "SJDMF Update" I got a great e-mail from our friend Greg B. who wrote: *Last weekend, I took my father, my brother and his wife and kids out to breakfast. My brother has two children, Taylor, who is seven, and Timmy, almost five. Timmy only recently learned to talk, and for a while, my brother and sister-in-law thought he had speech problems, but he's since become quite the chatterbox. Timmy has a broad, open face with the biggest, brightest blue eyes you've ever seen. I think the lack of verbal skills early in life helped him to develop facial expressions as an alternate means of communicating, so his face is very expressive. Timmy is your typical 5-year-old boy, climbing on the furniture, leaping into your lap when you least expect it, and constantly tormenting his older sister.*

On the way out of my brother's house, Timmy saw an empty soda can on the patio furniture, a can with a tab on it. He ran to it, pulled the tab off and handed it to me, saying "Here, Unca Greg." I put the tab in my pocket. After breakfast, when I pulled the car keys out of my pocket, the tab must have stuck to the keys and fell to the floor without my noticing. As I left the restaurant, Timmy ran up to me and grabbed my coat. Looking at me with those bright blue eyes, he held the tab up to me and said with alarm, "You dropped this!" and made sure I put it back into my coat where it belonged.

For Timmy, the can tab is a thing of immense value, about equal to those round things his parents give him to put in the gumball machine or the video game at the mall. If every family raised a Timmy in the same way, think about how many tabs we could accumulate over a lifetime, and how many lives we could change, all for the cost of a little piece of aluminum...

--gregb

It is truly inspirational with how many small kids get involved with our tab collections! It really catches on because (unlike many other things) they're 'big enough' to be able to participate!

An Angel With A Small Body, Giant Spirit

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Thanks to All of our friends at Telcordia Technologies who've helped to fill up another copy paper box full of tabs! In addition, we'd like to say "Hello" & Thanks to our Friends at the "Use of Force Conference" hosted last month in Chicago by the National Criminal Justice Training Center (www.ncjtc.org). We got many tabs from the conference participants. We're also sure that when they have the conference next year, which will be hosted by International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainers Association (www.ileeta.org), we'll be able to get even more tabs!

I have to digress briefly to mention something else that happened at that Conference. This past January, I had traveled out to Ontario, Ca. for the American Society of Law Enforcement Trainers (www.aslet.org) Conference. On the last night I was there, I happened to notice a woman sitting in the lobby drinking a soda out of an aluminum can. Naturally, I stopped and asked if I could have her tab for the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. We started talking and I found out that her husband was also attending the Conference and that she was a pediatric nurse at a Hospital in Michigan. She became interested in what we were doing to help families near us and gave me her e-mail address to add to this distribution list. Well, while I was out at the NCJTC Conference, I saw my friend Arron from Second Chance Body Armor (www.secondchance.com). We were chatting about a few things and I asked him what the best way would be to contact him. He then said, "Well you've been e-mailing my wife for months now!" I hadn't even realized that it was his wife that I'd spoken with in back in January!!! Therefore, A "Big Hello & THANKS!" to our Friends in Michigan!

We also have to Thanks the U.S. Airways flight crews to/from Philadelphia & Chicago. Every time I now board a commercial aircraft, I always stop and ask the flight attendants if I can have the tabs from the passengers' soda cans. They have always been supportive and end up giving us a cup with tabs in it.

We also received support from our new friends at the Edison First Aid Squad No. 2, in Edison, NJ, who not only collected tabs for us during their car show last weekend, they even gave us half of the empty cans! From what I understand, the show was a tremendous success. Judging by the number of tabs we got from them, the participants were also very thirsty.

Clarification - Last month I spoke about how the Brennan's gave us a shopping bag filled with tabs - from family, friends and members of their Church. I made a mistake - They attend the Trinitarian Congregational Church of Wayland, Ma. Thanks again for their support!

On a sad note, a legend was lost on April 15th of this year when Leonard Tose, a former Philadelphia Eagles owner, passed away. Mr. Tose was one of the driving forces behind the Ronald McDonald House program who through Eagles' player Fred Hill had heard about a need for a place for families of sick kids while their kids were in the hospital. It's amazing to think that from their cumulative efforts, there are now over 220 Ronald McDonald Houses World-wide, helping families of critically-ill children.

We are now in the "Final Stretch" for this year's tab collections and financial donations, since we will be bringing our collection to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House (www.philarmh.org) in early June, in memory of Sean's birthday. It's hard to believe that in one month from now, Sean would already be 4-years old.

I've attached a letter from our friends at Ronald McDonald Camp, who are planning on having an even larger group than they did last year. Our intention is to hopefully send a total of 2 seriously-ill children (instead of only one) to Ronald McDonald Camp this year, but unfortunately we are still a little short on funds. We're hoping that in our month-to-go, we'll be able to fulfill our goal! We'd like to Thank you in advance if you'd like to help us to reach this goal! Checks can be mailed to the address above on this stationary. We are Extremely Happy to be able to let someone's (sick) kid(s) be able to "be a Kid at Camp First and Sick Second!" It's unfortunate to think that it may be one of the only good things in their lives and it doesn't cost them (or their parents) a single penny!

Before I close, I want to ask for your thoughts and prayers for Michael, Heather and their little daughter Isabella, whom some mutual friends told me about. Isabella is only six months old and about 3 months ago she was diagnosed with one of the worst kinds of leukemia. It wasn't long before they determined that all the treatments to help make her better failed. Last week, doctors only gave her 2 to 8 days to live. Right now, Isabella is getting a lot of visitors, and trying to stay as active as possible (daily tours out of the hospital). Thanks for thinking of them.

Thanks Again To All of You and Everyone Who Helps You, for thinking of and helping us to help the families of sick children from All Over the World at Ronald McDonald Houses All Over! You Are All Truly Appreciated !!! ☺ ☺ We hope you have a prosperous Spring & Summer! Please visit Sean's Web site at www.fysd.com/Sean and 'e-sign' his Guest book!

God Bless You All & Keep Those Tabs Coming ! ☺

Chuck Dolan
SJDMF Administrator

*"A Hundred Years from Now . . .
it will not matter what my bank account was,
the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove . . .
But the World Might Be Different Because I Was Important
In the Life of a Child . . . "*

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A program of the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House

Mr. Charles J. Dolan
Dolan (Sean James) Memorial Fund
PO Box 406
Yardley, PA 19067

April 25, 2003

Dear Mr. ^{Chuck} Dolan:

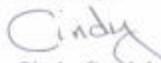
With your help, the Ronald McDonald Camp is breaking all records for camper enrollment. Last year, generous support from friends like you provided 190 special children with adventures and memories that will last a lifetime. *Here's how your dollars helped:*

- *At Camp Timber Tops, we were able to encourage independence and meet the needs of children with cancer.*
- *A team of oncology doctors, nurses and social workers provided careful monitoring and support 24 hours a day.*
- *Both traditional and innovative programming was included daily by experienced staff.*
- *All campers—patients and siblings—had the chance to develop lasting friendships with other kids who are coping with childhood cancer.*

We sincerely hope that you will consider joining our Adopt-A-Camper Program once again. With a donation of \$400 or more, you make it possible for a young cancer patient to go to camp free of charge. Their siblings can attend at a nominal fee.

Please feel free to call my associate, Elaine Roy, with any questions at (215) 387-8406. Everyone at the Ronald McDonald Camp is committed to creating an atmosphere where imagination and determination are *always* welcomed.

Sincerely,


Cindy Candela-Ryan
Camp Director

Mother's Day

After 21 years of marriage, I discovered a new way of keeping alive the spark of love. A little while ago I started to go out with another woman. It was really my wife's idea.

"I know that you love her," she said one day, taking me by surprise. "But I love YOU," I protested. "I know, but you also love her."

The other woman that my wife wanted me to visit was my mother, who has been a widow for 19 years. The demands of my work and my three children had made it possible to visit her only occasionally. That night I called to invite her to go out for dinner and a movie.

"What's wrong, are you okay?" she asked. My mother is the type of woman who suspects that a late night call or a surprise invitation is a sign of bad news. "I thought that it would be nice to spend some time with you," I responded. "Just the two of us?" She thought about it for a moment, then said, "I would like that very much."

That Friday after work, as I drove over to pick her up I was a bit nervous. When I arrived at her house, I noticed that she, too, seemed to be nervous about our "date". She waited in the door with her coat on. She had curled her hair and was wearing the dress that she had worn to celebrate her last wedding anniversary. She smiled from a face that was as radiant as an angel's.

"I told my friends that I was going to go out with my son, and they were impressed," she said, as she got into the car. "They can't wait to hear about our meeting."

We went to a restaurant that, although not elegant, was very nice and cozy. My mother took my arm as if she were the First Lady.

After we sat down, I had to read the menu. Her eyes could only read large print. Half way through the entrees, I lifted my eyes and saw Mom sitting there staring at me. A nostalgic smile was on her lips. "It was I who used to have to read the menu when you were small," she said. "Then it's time that you relax and let me return the favor," I responded.

During the dinner we had an agreeable conversation - nothing extraordinary - but catching up on recent events of each other's life. We talked so much that we missed the movie. As we arrived at her house later, she said, "I'll go out with you again, but only if you let me invite you." I agreed.

"How was your dinner date?" asked my wife when I got home. "Very nice. Much more so than I could have imagined," I answered.

A few days later my mother died of a massive heart attack. It happened so suddenly that I didn't have a chance to do anything for her. Some time later I received an envelope with a copy of a restaurant receipt from the same place my mother and I had dined. An attached note read: "Son, I paid this bill in advance. I was almost sure that I couldn't be there but, nevertheless, I paid for two plates - one for you and the other for your wife. You will never know what that night meant for me. I love you."

At that moment I understood the importance of saying, in time: "I LOVE YOU" and to give our loved ones the time that they deserve.

Nothing in life is more important than your family. Give them the time they deserve, because these things cannot be put off till "some other time."

Somebody said it takes about six weeks to get back to normal after you've had a baby ... somebody doesn't know that once you're a mother, "Normal," is history.

Somebody said you learn how to be a mother by instinct ... somebody never took a three-year-old shopping.

Somebody said being a mother is boring ... somebody never rode in a car driven by a teenager with a driver's permit.

Somebody said if you're a "good" mother, your child will "turn out good" ... somebody thinks a child comes with directions and a guarantee..

Somebody said "good" mothers never raise their voices ... somebody never came out the back door just in time to see her child hit a golf ball through the neighbor's kitchen window.

Somebody said you don't need an education to be a mother ... somebody never helped a fourth grader with his math.

Somebody said you can't love the fifth child as much as you love the first ... somebody doesn't have five children.

Somebody said a mother can find all the answers to her child-rearing questions in the books ... somebody never had a child stuff beans up his nose or in his ears.

Somebody said the hardest part of being a mother is labor and delivery ... somebody never watched her "baby" get on the bus for the first day of kindergarten ... or on a plane headed for military "boot camp."

Somebody said a mother can do her job with her eye closed and one hand tied behind her back ... somebody never organized seven giggling Brownies to sell cookies.

Somebody said a mother can stop worrying after her child gets married ... somebody doesn't know that marriage adds a new son or daughter-in-law to a mother's heartstrings.

Somebody said a mother's job is done when her last child leaves home ... somebody never had grandchildren.

Somebody said your mother knows you love her, so you don't need to tell her ... somebody isn't a mother.

Pass this along to all the "mothers" in your life.

Happy Mother's Day !

An Angel With A Small Body, Giant Spirit

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