

# *Sean James Dolan Memorial Fund*

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May 9, 2005

*Greetings to Y'all Out There !!!*

Happy Belated Mother's Day to All of the Moms out there – Especially those of you who are Mothers to Angels!!! You've probably wondered what happened to us, if we were still collecting for Ronald McDonald House, thought we may have been absorbed into some type of space vortex or something. We apologize for not writing sooner, but our lives have been significantly altered over the past (almost) 8-months.

On September 19, 2004, the waters from Hurricane Ivan tore through our neighborhood, bringing almost 4' of water in our shed, 5' in our garage and 20" thru the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of our house! The good news was that there were no injuries or deaths, but there were hundreds of neighbors impacted. Our house is the one circled in the photo below. And the answer is, "Yes" - the river is actually 2 blocks into the neighborhood (the river is usually only on the left)!



Arial view of our house during Hurricane Ivan flood in September '04

We started out by ripping out the inside walls on the 1st floor - from the floor to 4' so we'd be able to re-insulate & put sheet rock up sideways. Then we ended up ripping out all floors, walls & ceilings in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, since they needed major repairs. My father-in-law's "Hi-Lo" camping trailer (complete w/heat, stove, etc.) was set up next to the garage for us to live in for a few months. My buddy Brian from up the street supplied us w/propane tanks to keep us warm in the camper. The only other heat (other than a few space heaters) was from the woodstove relocated to the basement (so the pipes wouldn't freeze during cold weather). That helped, but there were many "invigorating" winter mornings having to go from a

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warmer 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to the basement just to relight the fire. We primarily only have the upstairs of the house, including the bathroom & bedrooms.

Thanks So Much to Everyone for their thoughts, prayers, etc. We Really Appreciate It !!! The folks in Yardley Boro Were Pheonminal to us and our other neighbors! Shortly after our crisis, we had All Sorts of people, besides the American Red Cross, Salvation Army & others (from Church, schools, friends, etc.) knocking on our door asking how they could help. One day Pam said that she saw someone in the backyard & it turned out to be 2 teachers & kids from a local Elementary school. The kids had done a fund-raiser & were stopping by our houses to give us "gift cards" to Target, local food stores, etc. Folks in "South Yardley" had a benefit block party and collected clothing, furniture, etc. for families who lost much. For a few weeks there were people coming around on their lawn tractors & trailers filled w/cleaning supplies, food, beverages and All Sorts of Things!

We were able to save many precious items. My wife also got her wish for me to clean my office & she got to completely redesign/"repurpose" the entire 1<sup>st</sup> floor! Those of you who've been to "The Camp" will probably think someone literally swapped everything in the house! In 6-months time, we completely rebuilt the entire 1<sup>st</sup> floor interior with new inner-walls, floor supports, beams, etc. We had almost finished getting all of the sheet rock installed.

Then on the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in April, I had to cut a trip short to return home for yet another flood. Yeah, I know – We live in what's considered a "100-year flood zone" – People say I don't look too bad for being over 300 y/o!!! ;-). This time we had more notification it was coming and were able to prepare better. Ultimately, the expert's prediction was correct and the water level was ~2' higher than it had been in September!



View of our garage 2<sup>nd</sup> floor during the April '05 flood (~7' high water level)

Although the water was much higher, we really didn't fare as badly. We had enough time to remove/relocate/elevate many 1<sup>st</sup> floor items out of danger and therefore didn't lose as many items.

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Then again, since we had filled more than 2 garbage trucks with previous belongings, there wasn't a whole lot more to lose! ;-) In addition, our successful "p/re-planning" provided for our electric panel, main power switch to the garage, electric meter, cable & telephone hookups, and \*New\* 100amp Emergency Generator Transfer Switch to All be Above Water ! It literally took only a few hours for us to bail out the remaining water & switch to generator power using our "normal switches" as if there wasn't a power outage!

As our way to help our neighbors, our friend Sue from "Empowerment by Massage" set up shop on our front deck and for 4 days provided free chair massages to our neighborhood flood victims & helpers!

We are Truly Thankful to Everyone that have helped both us and our neighbors out during these tough times. Hopefully we'll be able to put walls back in, paint, "accessorize" with all sorts of new things, including furniture, etc.

On the "good side of things" – all of the tabs and toys we've collected this year were located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the garage and didn't get damaged!

Thanks to Everyone who continue to collect can tabs for us! I saw a woman named Sharon C., whom I've known at work for almost 10 years. She asked me to meet her out in the parking lot. In the passenger side of her car was a cat litter pail filled with tabs! Speaking of THANKS to folks at work - Big Thank You's go to Scott M., Bill H., Lee K., Suk Ye W., Sue H, Laura L., Frank St.-J., Robin G., Sue D., Theresa M., Lauren A., Liz G., Lee K., Jackie G., Bob A., Marianne H, and Marianne Y. !!! Thanks also to the Adesso Family - Their girls, classmates and friends contributed 4 large containers of tabs!

We've recently received a large bag of tabs in our house's Mud Room from Ken & our Friends at Krewson/Sweeney Oil Company.

We also have to recognize all of the flight attendants that have contributed (I ask for the tabs as I board almost every flight I'm on) from SouthWest Airlines, American Airlines, America West, USAir, Delta, etc.

In addition, Thanks to our friends at Modern Warrior ([www.mwarrior.com](http://www.mwarrior.com)) for their continued support. We had an opportunity months ago to drive out to Long Island to see them. Not only did we get a nice box of tabs from them, they also made a donation to Sean's Fund !

Thanks to all of the "Cousins" – including Lydia & her friend Michelle's aunt!

We'd also like to Thank Walt & Janet M. and our friends from HWIP ([www.hwip.org](http://www.hwip.org)) for the tabs we recently received from them. We've been working with HWIP this past summer in a number of ways. Thanks to Barbara B's family, Barbara L., Marie M., Lisa S., Phyllis T., Padma P., John R., and Donna M. for donating all of the garbage bags of clean, previously-owned toys that will go to kids in orphanages overseas. Walt from HWIP has already made a few pickups for some of these items that will be shipped to needy kids in foreign orphanages. We also hope & pray for Walt's speedy recovery from a recent health issue he recently encountered! ☺

Ultimately you can tell that our lives have been fairly busy & we didn't disappear off the face of the Earth! Hopefully with the help of our Incredible Contractor helpers – Eldon, Joe & Walter, we'll be able to button up the house and have everything in & running before the end of the summer! It'll Certainly be Great for Pam to once again have a Real Kitchen to play in! ;-)

We are planning to do our "Annual PRMH Trip" in the early part of June (which we know will be here too quickly!). Since all of the boxes of tabs are located among many of the other things that had to go to "higher ground" we'll probably have to start moving them soon! I know we found a few boxes after we did last year's Annual Trip. Although I don't know what our current balance in Sean's Fund to send

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sick kids to Ronald McDonald Camp, I have a strong feeling that we'll be sending at least one (hopefully Two!) more kids this Summer. One reason is Thanks to Linda V., she recycled her family's above-ground swimming pool last year and donated the money to Sean's Fund! This will bring our overall total to 14 sick kids over the past 7 years! Martha Z. also gave us a nice donation ! ☺

Well, gotta go for now. On behalf of the countless families of sick children from at Ronald McDonald Houses All Over the World, Thanks Again So Much To Each and Every Person, Group and Organization that has helped us in one way or another. I'm sorry that I Always forget to identify people that have helped us out. Please know that You Are All Truly Appreciated !!! ☺☺

I Never Dreamed that in 6 years, we'd be able to accomplish so much for so many people! We hope you Have a Safe and Happy Summer! Please visit Sean's Web site at [www.fysd.com/Sean](http://www.fysd.com/Sean) and 'e-sign' his Guest book! Go to [www.rmhc.com](http://www.rmhc.com) for more info about Ronald McDonald House Charities. **Thank you for helping to Make a Difference in the Lives of others!** ☺

One Final Item – May 15 – 21 is National Police Week. All United States flags are to be flown at half-staff on Sunday, May 15, on "Peace Officers Memorial Day." In 1994, the U.S. Congress and President Bill Clinton approved Public Law 103-322 authorizing the U.S. flag to be lowered to half-staff on May 15 as a special tribute honoring the thousands of American law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. This poignant and very rare tribute was part of the crime bill enacted into law that same year. The only other regularly scheduled time for flags to be lowered to half-staff occurs on Memorial Day, when we remember those killed in our armed services.

"Every 53 hours a law enforcement officer is killed in the line of duty. Since the first recorded law enforcement officer death in 1792, more than 17,000 law enforcement officers have made the ultimate sacrifice," reported Craig W. Floyd, NLEOMF ([www.nleomf.org](http://www.nleomf.org)) Chairman. "Lowering the flags on Peace Officers Memorial Day is an appropriate way to show our respect for those officers who made the ultimate sacrifice and to remember the family, friends, and colleagues left behind."

The names of the 153 law enforcement officers killed in 2004, as well as 262 others killed in prior years, will be formally dedicated at the 2005 National Candlelight Vigil on the evening of Friday, May 13 at the National Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Hug your Kids, God Bless You All & Keep Those Tabs Coming ! ☺

Chuck Dolan  
SJDMF Administrator  
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*"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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