

Sean James Dolan Memorial Fund

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June 6, 2001

Greetings!

We hope all of you had a Wonderful Memorial Day Weekend and are enjoying your summer. This has certainly been a busy month for many of us, with many people sending us their aluminum can tabs and financial donations to the Sean James Dolan Memorial Fund (SJDMF).

This Saturday, will be our son, Sean's 2nd Birthday. Some time in the near future, we'll be bringing this year's collection of aluminum can tabs and other donated items to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House (PRMH). Last month, I reported that our current 'tab total' guess was slightly over the 400-Pound mark and that we were hoping to potentially double last year's collection of 210 pounds of tabs. I Am So Happy to say that All Because of People Like You, We Have Collected More Than 500 Pounds - One Quarter of a Ton of Tabs for this Year! We'd really enjoy receiving updates from those of you who are collecting tabs for your local Ronald McDonald House, so I can share them with others on this list.

Over the past 2 years, this whole program has provided quite a number of stories' to share.

- I've met countless people and gotten them involved. Sometimes it started by me simply asking them for their can tab or them seeing me pull tabs from cans in the trash.
- Parents have written to say how their young kids remind them to "Save the Tab." One mom said her 4-year-old overheard her talking about our tab collection and eagerly said, "I can do that!" Not only is he collecting, but he's recruited many of his friends too!
- Three weeks ago, Cub Scout Pack 230 presented us with 42 pounds of tabs. We are also really happy that they will be collecting again for us next year. In addition, their associated Elementary school's 'test' to collect tabs was so successful, they'll also be collecting for us next year.
- For a while, I thought I was the only one who did it, but so many people have told me that they can't walk by a can on the ground (and sometimes even in the trash!) without pulling the tab! Some people now bring plastic bags with them when they go on walks, to collect tabs (and the cans), ultimately helping to clean up the environment. Some of them even stop along the side of the road if they're driving - just to pick up cans others have thrown out. Some people have made it mutually lucrative by giving us the tabs & taking the cans to local recyclers, so they can use the money for other things like play Bingo!
- Some say, "I only have one soda a day." There's an 82-year-old shut-in who does that and adds about 1/4 pound of tabs a year. She told her sister, who told the man at the liquor store where she buys her husband a case of beer a week, and now both ladies and the liquor store are collecting! This week they gave me another bag with pound of tabs. It adds up quick!
- Others have said, "I don't drink from cans," and didn't realize we collect any type of aluminum can tab. One woman said, "You're kidding - I have 4 cats that each eat a can a day!"
- There's a special 10-year-old boy who lives near Harrisburg, Pa. who heard about our tab program from one of our local firefighting friends. A few weeks ago, he came to visit his friends at this firehouse with a gallon-size Ziplock bag filled with (~3 lbs. of) tabs for SJDMF. During his visit, they took him for a ride in one of the fire trucks and let him ride in the coveted "shotgun" (front passenger) seat. While they were driving down the road, the Truck's Chauffeur (driver) said to him, "See those foot pedals on the floor in front of you? I want you to Stand on them!" Little did the boy know those were for the siren & air horns! When the tremendous sounds bellowed from the truck as he stepped on them, the surprise made him jump back into his seat! The Chief looked at his wide-eyed face and said, "I thought you were told to stand on them?!" Needless to say, he didn't have to be told again! All this boy's talked about since then is how He ran the siren & horns on the fire truck as they drove down the road! This is something

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- that has certainly helped to lift his spirits. Although he's never been to a RMH, he knows what some of the kids who stay at RMH's live through - his leukemia was in remission for a year but is now back. Unfortunately now, doctors are doubtful that he'll live to see his 15th birthday.
- I've purchased 4 cases of "Ronald McDonald Tab Houses" (250/case) for people to collect tabs in. They're throughout the U.S., Canada, in addition to a few places in Europe and Israel. Almost each one has SJDMF info and a phone number hand-written on them. I originally put the P.O. box address on them, but stopped after people started mailing the filled boxes back to me. Now we have them call so we can arrange for a pickup.
 - Instead of some people sending us tabs through the U.S. Mail, we're glad they've started tab collection programs for their local RMHs. To the best of our knowledge that includes friends in California, Florida, Indiana, Minnesota, Texas and Virginia! If others of you were inspired to start collecting tabs because of us, please let us know - THANKS !
 - We've also received word of how appreciative parents of sick children are to people like you, who are helping us help others. People who've stayed in Philly and other RMHs that have heard of what we're doing have written to ask us to Thank Everyone for helping. Therefore, Thanks To All Of You From All of Them! ! !
 - In November, a woman at our company nominated me for the "SAIC Everyday Hero" Award, (a few hours before the entry deadline) for our accomplishments tab last year. The judges awarded me with the first listed "Honorable Mention" from 75 entries! I really didn't expect it!

Thanks also To Everyone who've sent financial "Birthday presents" to Sean, which go directly to SJDMF, committed to send critically-ill children to Ronald McDonald Camp (RMC). In light of this, SJDMF continues to grow and we are Truly Grateful for everyone's support. This year, we're Happy to make 3 RMH Kids Lives Special This Summer by sending them to RMC in Sean's memory! This will bring the total RMC scholarships from Sean, to 6 children over the past 3 years!

We're developing other creative ways to raise funds for our cause. Over the past year, people have donated items for us to sell - things that would have otherwise possibly been thrown out, including childrens' toys, a ladder-rack for a pickup truck and even church pews!

Hopefully, we'll obtain our Federal (501c(3)) tax-exempt status down the road, to make it more attractive for people and businesses to contribute (with a direct tax deduction). As always we Thank You and all the people you interact with for your continued support.

I still find it wonderfully amazing how there are so many people who have gotten involved in our campaign. This includes popping can tabs, donating money, time to help or "outgrown" items in good condition, or simply raising awareness in the world that anyone's child could get sick.

We always appreciate people sending us updates of their own. Folks have shared their "good" stories, as well as their hardships with us. We're all truly glad there are places like the Ronald McDonald House that open their doors and arms to families of sick kids.

Finally, the restoration of the Old Church of Saint Andrew in Newtown, PA has finished after almost 2 years of work. This Sunday afternoon, they'll be opening their doors to the public, from 2 - 4 p.m., to let everyone see how beautiful it is. If you have the time, we urge you to visit this "showcase." At the south side of the building is the Church cemetery. Closest to the Church is the "Angel Section" where little Sean is buried. His is the stone that has "An Angel With A Small Body, Giant Spirit" on the back.

From the Bottom of our Hearts, Thanks To All of You for thinking of and helping us help the families of sick kids at Ronald McDonald Houses All Over. You Are All Truly Appreciated ! :-)

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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Today our son would have been two.
If he'd lived, I wonder what he'd now be able to do.

Would he be walking and talking and climbing around
Would he make us laugh when we felt down?

Wondering what he'd be doing now, I can only speculate
But thinking about it too much can cause the pain in our hearts to be too great.

Alas our son is now held in God's hands.
For it was our Maker who for Sean, had other, more special plans.

Although his stay on Earth was not long.
His memory, spirit and inspiration continues on.

Sean's influence has continually grown,
As more people help us help Ronald McDonald's Home.

From sending kids to Camp to collecting can tabs.
We're helping sick kids and their moms and their dads.

Who would have thought this year's tabs would be more than a quarter of a Ton.
More than double received when he would have been one.

It's not just in Philly RMH that's being helped out.
Tabs are being collected for RMH's from all about!

Things that may have otherwise been trash
Are for others being turned into cash.

It's not easy wondering what our son would have done.
But it's good to have phenomenal support from everyone.

People ask my wife and me, "To go through such a loss, How can you do it?"
It's because we have **An Angel With A Small Body And A Giant Spirit**

An Angel With A Small Body, Giant Spirit

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