

# Team A.S.K.

*Run in such a way as to get the prize!* 1 Cor. 9:24

## TEAM A.S.K. TAKES ON NEW ADVENTURES THIS SEASON

For the past few years, Team A.S.K. (Athletes for Special Kids) has been a significantly large fundraiser for Special Kids. In January the team took on a new adventure and headed to Orlando, Florida.

The weekend of January 6th, 25 runners set off for a magical adventure to run with Mickey Mouse and the entire Disney family in the Walt Disney World Marathon and Half Marathon. From their hard work they raised over \$45,000 for Special Kids.

This year marked the first time that Team A.S.K. participated in the Disney Marathon and Half-Marathon. To prepare for this event each runner endured five months of intense training with marathon training coach, Rick Canada and fundraising coach, Bill Lowe.

"I cannot say enough great things about Rick Canada and Bill Lowe," states a first time Team A.S.K runner, Jeff Spires. "Rick stood out and was an excellent trainer and Bill was the silent hero that inspired me."



Jeff Spires is a Murfreesboro Investment Representative for Edward Jones and he competed in the Disney half marathon for Special Kids. He has been involved with Special Kids for years but this was his first time to be involved in Team A.S.K.

"If someone wants to do something more than just write a check, I highly recommend getting involved in Team A.S.K.," Spires says. "It's for a good cause and the companionship you get from the folks on the team is incomparable."

When the training gets tough, the motivation to keep going comes from the child partners. Each Team A.S.K. member is partnered with a child at Special Kids and they run in honor of that child.

"As a runner for many years," Brian Elrod, Team A.S.K. Disney participant remarks, "it brought me great fulfillment not only to be doing what I love but to know that I am running to help a child at Special Kids receive medical care."

"My child partner," begins Spires, "was one of the biggest inspirations during the latter part of the race as I was really getting tired. The wrist band was more than enough to get me to the finish."

Currently, Special Kids Team A.S.K. is gearing up for the 2006 Country Music Marathon held in Nashville April 29, 2006. So far, about 65 runners have agreed to run and help raise money for Special Kids. Most participants sent out letters as their primary means of fundraising. The letters included a photo of the child being sponsored, and detailed information about the services provided at Special Kids.

"I never thought in a million years that I would participate in a marathon," states Julie Kniss a physical therapist at Special Kids and a first time competitor. "But the extra time and effort spent in training is so little compared to the benefit it provides for the children of Special Kids."

On January 12th, the Country Music Marathon Team A.S.K competitors gathered at the Discovery Center for pizza and a chance to meet their child partners.

Jackie Burt, an athlete training with Team A.S.K. really enjoyed meeting her child partner and family. She had the chance to visit with the child's mother and she was amazed by the strength of this woman.



"It was inspirational to meet not only Tonya but also her mother," Burt Explains. "She works so hard and cares for someone at all times. I can't imagine the stress she must go through. Meeting the family makes everything more personal for me."

The Child Partner night helped the athletes have a chance to meet the children they're running in honor of at the Country Music Marathon. Children were laughing and parents were chasing after them most of the night. Everyone had a great time. Pizza donated by the local Little Caesars and volunteers from Oakland High school's DECA club made the night a success.

As the team continues to train for the Country Music Marathon in April, please remember them in your prayers. This team is invaluable to Special Kids. If you are interested in sponsoring a runner please, contact Stephanie Folkmann at [sfolkmann@specialkidstn.com](mailto:sfolkmann@specialkidstn.com).

## ART THERAPY BENEFITS CHILDREN IN RECREATIONAL THERAPY

Jan 17th marked the first day Special Kids implemented the new Art Therapy program. This program is made possible through two grants given by the Jennings and Rebecca Jones Foundation and the Henry Bull Foundation.

These grants gave Special Kids the opportunity to add a new employee, Kayla Mangrum, an art specialist. She prepares a lesson for the children in concurrence with the weekly curriculum theme. She begins by pre-testing the children to see what they can do with a crayon or marker. When she is able to assess what level they are at, she proceeds with special lessons incorporating what they are already learning with colors and drawing.



"Circles are what children start out with," Mangrum says. "They start out with a round scribble and as they gain more control they will make the circles smaller and smaller."

Ms. Mangrum used toy frogs to help get the children's attention. Then she proceeded to have them color a frog on a page and after that they were ready to try drawing curved lines from a frog on the page to the lily pads. She explained that as children begin to control their circles and make curved lines they can begin to draw all kinds of shapes.

The children truly enjoyed their experience and are excited for their next lesson. They were able to learn more about the letter "L" and use different mediums and activities to reinforce the theme and express themselves artistically.

"It is so wonderful to have someone who has been blessed with a talent from God to be able to touch and influence the children," says Alexis Ramsey, Special Kids recreational therapist. We are all looking forward to seeing the development and progress the children are going to experience with this program.

## SPECIAL KIDS IMPLEMENTS NEW FEEDING GROUP PROGRAM

On November 22, 2005 Bank of America presented a check of \$2,500 to Special Kids in support of our new feeding program. The Feeding Group program offers parents an alternative to stressful mealtimes.

Special Kids Occupational and Speech therapists realize there is a need for education and activities to help improve home mealtimes. Beginning in early February, the Feeding Group program will fill this need. The purpose of this group is to educate parents and teach children different feeding methods. Parents are required to stay and watch the Feeding Group sessions so they can learn techniques to try at home.

Many children with special needs struggle eating foods with various textures and smells. Commonly children don't have the oral control needed to chew and swallow. Mealtime is not fun for children with these difficulties. In fact, mealtime is commonly stressful for families with special needs. Some children get to the point where they will only eat one or two foods or hardly anything at all. Our feeding group program will help parents and children reach the goal of a structured family mealtime.

The therapists will use games to help children progress from a simple interest to an actual willingness to eat foods with various textures. The first goal of the therapist is to get the children to merely interact with food by touching it. It usually takes several sessions for a child to actually eat the food. For example, Speech Therapist Jessica Hogue will set goldfish and yogurt out and tell the child that the yogurt is the "water." Eventually, the child may interact with the food and have fun eating it! She also says that foods are presented by how they are related, such as grouping them by color, texture, or shape. Each session is ended with something sweet to reward the child for their hard work.

The target age for this program is 12 to 36 months but as the program expands it will involve children of various ages and skill levels. Hogue states that being in a group setting really helps the children learn better eating habits. The younger ones see that an older child is eating something different, and the younger one wants to try it too.



## WHOSE WILL IS IT ANYWAY?

*"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts!" Haggai 2:8*

God owns everything! We are mistaken in believing we are owners of property. The truth is the Lord has loaned these possessions to us, and the time will come when we will no longer control it.

Our mission is to make the best use of this wealth while they are in our possession.

It is God who has given prosperity to us to safeguard and to use for His glory. A good steward does not take credit for the something placed into their hands. Nor should we.

Christian stewardship encompasses three ingredients:

- \* God is the owner; I am His steward.
- \* God is responsible for my guardianship of these assets.
- \* God holds me responsible for what I do with His property.

As people who seek to be Christ-like, we want to have our faith reflected in our management of His material goods. Should our faith reflect in our estate planning as well? I think so. Will we as God's stewards consume what God has placed in our hands or will we use it for His Glory?

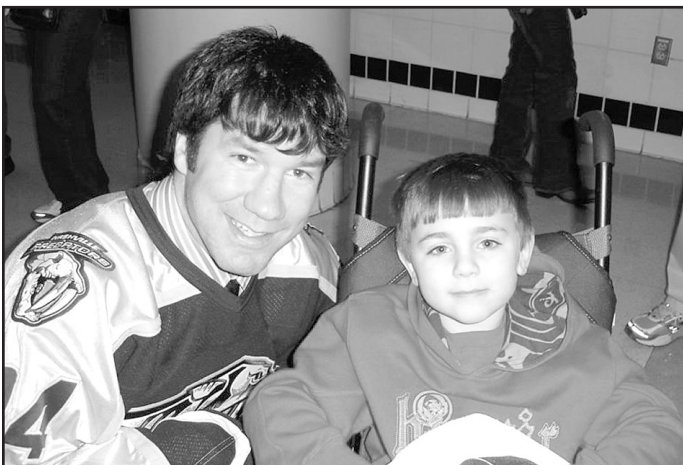
A Christian's last will and testament should include three areas of consideration:

1. Our will should provide for our loved ones. (How much can I pass to my children without hurting them? Should I let God place into their hands what He wants them to manage?)
2. Our will should provide for people in need. (Where can I use God's wealth to make a significant difference?)
3. Our will should include God's will for His assets. (How would God want me to use His material possessions to further His causes?)

We are given the opportunity to use God's assets to His Glory during our lives, but also through our estate planning. As you prepare your will ask yourself this powerful question. Whose will is it? A good steward will answer this profound question honestly and will be moved to ensure that His will is drafted before it is too late. After all, we will pass into eternity before our will is even probated.

Are your estate plans in order? If not, begin today the process of glorifying God through your estate plan! Special Kids has begun a relationship with Thompson & Associates, one of the top charitable estate planning firms in the country. We offer their services to you, free of charge and without any commitment, as a thank you for your support of Special Kids. Thompson & Associates has no products to sell you and the meetings are confidential. Please contact Len Weddle at Special Kids at [lweddle@specialkidstn.com](mailto:lweddle@specialkidstn.com) to set up an informational meeting.

## NASHVILLE PREDATORS RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH SPECIAL KIDS



In line with the New Year, the Nashville Predators hockey team sold autographed calendars along with tickets and held a meet-and-greet. All of the money was donated to support Special Kids, Inc. Special Kids is a Christian not for profit care facility for children with special needs serving the Middle Tennessee area in Rehabilitative Therapy, Family Services, and Skilled Nursing.

The Nashville Predators Foundation was created as a charity organization devoted to funneling the excitement of professional sports towards the needs of this community. Since its establishment, the Nashville Predators Foundation has indeed made a significant impact on the Middle Tennessee community.

Through the support of you, the fans, at various fundraising events held throughout the year, the Foundation is able to award several hundred thousands of dollars in grants to Nashville and Middle Tennessee area charities and community service organizations.

The Predators Foundation is committed to lending a helping hand to the community and they did just that for Special Kids this month. For the first two weeks in January the autographed calendars were sold for \$250 to raise a total donation of \$2,750 for Special Kids.

During these games the predators invited some children from Special Kids to come and enjoy the excitement. After the last game Special Kids was invited to the meet and greet with coach Barry Trotz, David Legwand, Tomas Vokoun, and Darcy Hordichuck.

Jamison, Special Kid's 2006 Torch Bearer is 5 years old and loves hockey. On Jan 10th he sat close behind the Predators goal tender, nearly on the ice. Jamison jumped back every time the players hit the glass.

"I had as much fun watching Jamison's reaction to the game as I did watching the game myself," states Len Weddle Director of Resource Development at Special Kids.

Last year, Jamison was nervous around large groups and exciting activities, but this time he enjoyed every bit of the game. Special Kids is thankful to the Predators foundation for this unique opportunity and all of their help.

Special Kids is Currently Offering the Option of an Online Newsletter

If you would like to receive the newsletter online by PDF format please send an email to Stephanie Folkmann, Director of Public Relations at [sfolkmann@specialkidstn.com](mailto:sfolkmann@specialkidstn.com).

## SPECIAL KIDS 7TH ANNUAL FRIENDRAISER BANQUET FEATURING FORMER BUFFALO BILLS QUARTERBACK JIM KELLY

"Through a Road Less Traveled 'Love Endures,'" the theme to the 7th Annual Friendraiser Banquet for Special Kids indicates the uniqueness of the road traveled by families with special needs children.

On Monday, March 6th at 6pm friends and supporters of Special Kids are invited to enjoy dinner, music and a special appearance by Jim Kelly, a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame in the James Union Building on Middle Tennessee State University campus.

Special Kids is here to glorify Christ and meet the needs of everyone we touch - one child, one family, one community at a time. We have been helping the future generation of Middle Tennessee walk stronger, speak louder, and function better in society since 1998. Our mission is close to the heart of professional football player Jim Kelly.

Jim and Jill Kelly will appear for a special meet and greet before the banquet and then he and his wife will share their family story and the road of faith that his family has traveled. After learning to aggressively love and care for their own son with special needs, the hearts of Jim and Jill Kelly continued to grow.



The Kelly's life long commitment is to increase public awareness of leukodystrophies as well as to increase the likelihood of early detection and treatment. Their ultimate goal is to raise money to fund research efforts to identify new treatments, therapies, and a cure for Krabbe and other leukodystrophies. They established a foundation with this mission called Hunter's Hope, in honor of their son Hunter.

At this event you will also learn about Jamison's story, a child greatly impacted by the care of Special Kids. Jamison is Special Kids' 2006 Torch Bearer and his story of triumph is a perfect example of the miracles that go on at Special Kids.

Special Kids' Friendraiser banquet has been a hit for the past 6 years. The great food, special message, and silent auction attract friends from all over Middle Tennessee area to MTSU campus every spring.

Through sponsoring a table, you are helping Special Kids reach the goal of raising \$75,000 from this event. Remember seating is limited and will go fast. For more information, or to buy a table please contact Stephanie Folkmann, Director of Public Relations at 615-890-1003 or by email at [sfolkmann@specialkidstn.com](mailto:sfolkmann@specialkidstn.com).



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## HOLD YOUR PEACE

There they were . . . staring at the impassable Red Sea. Looking behind them, the Egyptians were pursuing them, intent upon inflicting harm. What was their response to the circumstances that surrounded them? Complete despair! Exodus 14:10-12 (NIV) reveals the following:

*They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. 11 They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? 12 Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians?' It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"*

Is this how you face the circumstances in your life? Is this how we face the TennCare situation at Special Kids? It is tempting to only see our circumstances and forget that Jesus will protect us and provide for every need that we have. Hebrews 12:2 exhorts us to keep our focused on Jesus Christ. When we look at our circumstances, we can easily begin to believe the lie that satan is speaking to us: the deficit is too big; you can never recover from this; this call is too hard; God can not help you through this; did Jesus really tell you to do this?

Once we see our circumstances through that light, doubt quickly moves in and the questions of God's Sovereignty enter in. God may be working something out of you that is preventing you from growing closer to Him. He wants your total devotion and adoration. On the other hand, satan will try to magnify our circumstances to deter our obedience and trust in our loving Savior and Lord.

The Israelites totally forgot about God's provision, love, and promise to take them to the Promised Land. Notice their question again. "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die?" The Lord's plan was to give them life. They bought into the deception that they would die due to their circumstances. Are your present circumstances greater than God in your eyes? Maybe a fresh perspective is what we all need.

Consider how Moses responded in v. 13 - 14 (KJV). And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more forever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

I can hear the comments and grumbings. Did he say that we will not see the Egyptians anymore? I am looking at them right now. Are they going to disappear or something? Moses did not reveal HOW God would deliver them, he only said, "The Lord shall fight for you." Why do we always have to know HOW God will provide or HOW He is going to deliver us from the circumstances we are encountering? It does not matter. We do not have to know that. We should all listen to what Moses was telling the Israelites. He said, "Hold your peace." Watch what the Lord is going to do in your life. He will provide a miracle. His Provision is there, and He is going to release it. You are to "Hold Your Peace".

Chris Truelove

