Mary Frey is no stranger to PACER Center. As a member of PACER’s advisory board for six years, Benefit co-chair for four years, and Silent Auction co-chair for two years, her contributions are evident everywhere. You can even see them on a conference room wall, where the quilt she sewed for PACER’s 25th anniversary hangs on display.

When asked why she is so dedicated to helping children with disabilities, the conversation begins with a patchwork of ideas—the story of an aunt; academic experiences; previous jobs; an impressive list of service to the community. It is evident that each experience is a special piece in a rich quilt of personal, professional, and service commitment to the economically disadvantaged, to children, and to PACER.

A childhood memory is among the central pieces that helped shape her compassion and commitment for people with disabilities. “My aunt had Down syndrome,” Mary explains. “She learned to read at a fourth-grade level, but she left elementary school after being teased repeatedly. No one from school came to offer help.” Seeing PACER’s new bullying prevention Web site, with its special emphasis on children with disabilities, confirms to her that this is an organization doing important work.

**Dedicated to a Vision**

Her professional efforts further stitch her closely to PACER’s mission. As an oncology nurse 20 years ago, she cared for the terminally ill and facilitated groups for children who had lost a parent. With a deepened interest in mental health and child advocacy, she eventually earned master’s and doctorate degrees in psychology and has devoted her career to children and families in crisis. “I learned that when you help the child and the parent, you more effectively help the whole family,” she says.

“I’m a systems thinker,” she adds. That fact is evident in the breadth and depth of her commitment to service. In addition to her work at PACER, she is a founding member of a new initiative, Women of Courage, a member-driven grant-making organization that also educates women about philanthropy. She serves on boards of directors for a foundation and three social service and mental health organizations.

**Family Support for the Future**

Her husband Jim Frey, an attorney, supports PACER as well. “I became a PACER supporter financially because I felt strongly the organization was doing good work and it did exactly what it said it was going to do. I was impressed with the way it was run. It also offers programs that really make a difference,” he says.

“People with disabilities can operate well given enough tools, coping skills, mentoring, empathetic teachers, and volunteers,” Jim adds. “PACER helps people do that. Through the Simon Technology Center, for example, the skills they’re teaching help kids to communicate more freely. Through Project KITE, they’ve opened the eyes of many educators to what’s possible.

“Looking at it personally as a donor and professionally as a business, it’s worthy of support,” he adds. “It has a tremendous impact for our future.”

For Mary, contributing to PACER is an opportunity to give back and have an impact. “I enjoy doing it,” she says. Like the anniversary quilt hanging on the wall, her work at PACER stitches together diverse pieces of experience, expertise, and commitment into something greater than the sum of its parts. “PACER is such a team effort,” she says. “It epitomizes collaboration, supportive teamwork, and the collective impact that a well-run and very committed organization can have on so many.”
Join the Club!
Be a Kid Against Bullying!

It’s here! PACER’s long-awaited, much-touted, cooler-than-cool Kids Against Bullying Web site is now launched! Log on to www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org and meet the Club Crew, watch videos, play fun games, and learn how you can become a “kid against bullying.” (Be sure to click on the “top secret” trunk on the home page!)

The project is funded in part by the Robins, Kaplan, Miller and Ciresi LLP Foundation for Education, Public Health and Social Justice, a supporting organization of The Minneapolis Foundation, F.R. Bigelow Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation Minnesota, Beverly Foundation, and many individuals who met the challenge grant.

Meet Pip and the rest of the Club Crew at www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org

Tired of Your Old Car? Donate It!
PACER is accepting donations of cars, boats, trucks, and more! It’s easy to do!
1. Just gather your keys, vehicle title and lien release (if applicable).
2. Call PACER at (952) 838-9000 to arrange a time to deliver or pick up your vehicle.
3. After the vehicle has been sold, PACER will provide written acknowledgement of the final value of donation. Please keep the letter with your other tax records, as all donations are tax deductible.

“Many people may be tired of spending too much on repairs, unhappy with the trade-in value offered, or simply looking for an opportunity to help,” said Mary Schrock, PACER director of development.

“By donating a vehicle to PACER, you are making a tremendous difference in the lives of children with disabilities.”

Michael Bolton
Saturday, May 6, 2006
Minneapolis Convention Center
24th Annual PACER Benefit

Pacer Benefit Events
Gourmet Dinner 5 PM
Tickets sold separately.
Silent Auction 6 PM
Items vary from fine art to spectacular getaways.
Live Auction 8 PM
Offers additional once-in-a-lifetime opportunities.
Raffle 8 PM
Features dazzling custom jewelry.
Benefit Performance 8 PM
Patron Party*
After the performance.

Ticket Prices
$55 | $85
$140* | $200* | $275* | $550*
*Tickets include Patron Party.

Ticket Reservations
952.838.9000
www.pacer.org
Orion Soars with KITE

By Willa Hathaway

When Orion Lidbom, 7-year-old son of Terra Lidbom, had to have his tonsils out, he was frightened. Adding a degree of challenge to an already stressful situation is the fact that Orion has multiple disabilities and is nonverbal. It is difficult for him to communicate feelings and needs in a strange environment.

Orion and his mother have been involved in PACER’s Project KITE (Kids Involved in Technology are Enriched) Program at his school. Through Project KITE, Terra had recently been introduced to a system of communication symbols. She made a page of about 40 symbols to use at the hospital. Then she explained the situation and showed Orion’s doctors how to use the symbols to communicate with him.

Using the symbols, the doctors and the anesthesiologist were able to explain to Orion about his tonsils, the surgery, the anesthetic, that he should let them know what he was feeling, and how to let them know if he needed anything. Even though Orion had never initiated communication using the symbols himself, everyone felt more comfortable that they were able to explain what was happening to him.

Orion Lidbom uses communication symbols to “talk” with friends and family. The symbols have opened many doors of interaction for him.

As soon as Orion was out of surgery he pointed to the symbol for “hurt,” using the device to communicate for the first time on his own. Now fully recovered, he continues to use the symbols at home and in school.

A busy first grader, Orion likes sledding, reading, watching “Maisy,” a cartoon mouse, and videos. He also likes to play with his 5-year-old sister, Marda, and 15-year-old brother, Lucas.

Terra and her teacher have noticed a big difference in Orion’s behavior and learning since he started using the communication symbols. He will repeat words now and bring the symbol sheet to his mother and teacher to communicate with them.

In addition to PACER’s Project KITE program, Terra has attended PACER Center workshops and she says she appreciates the ideas and help she has received.

For more information on Project KITE, call PACER at (952) 838-9000.
PACER’s HOT Party Sizzles!

PACER’s 3rd Annual HOT Party, Cool Cause continued its tradition of packing the dance floor, with more than 500 guests attending this year’s boogie bash on Feb. 4. Presented by Target, HOT featured local “musicos y djs” Tambuca and soul masters The Good, the Bad, and the Funky. Proceeds from the evening benefit the 30 programs of PACER Center.

The cocktail hour sponsored by The Koch Miller Group at Smith Barney set the mood for partygoers. The festivities continued with a tantalizing array of hors d’oeuvres from Rudolphs Bar-B-Que, a prize drawing, and a program featuring Brett Nelson and Leslie Fish, two young adults who have received support from PACER Center.

Held at The Loft at BarFly, HOT delighted the senses with a showcase of lights, logos, plasma screens, and projections. Of particular interest was the interactive PlayMotion technology which enticed guests to dance with radiating colors, play contact games with virtual projections, and create their own special effects.

“Now in its third year, HOT has surpassed its goal of introducing a new, young audience to PACER Center. It has become an event people look forward to every year!” said Michele Heimes, co-chair. “Everyone has a fabulous time, and in the end, they recognize how much PACER provides to families of children with disabilities.”

2006 HOT Party Sponsors

Presenting Sponsor
Target

Cocktail Hour Sponsor
The Koch Miller Group at Smith Barney

Major Sponsors
EckoFx Studios
Rudolphs Bar-B-Que
Space150

Contributing Sponsors
89.3 The Current
Graybow Communications
Minnesota Twins
PlayMotion!
Thomas C. and Lois L. Sando Foundation
Star Exhibits & Environments

Patron Sponsors
Dougherty and Company, LLC
Tom Nelson and Martha Dayton
Schall, Lyman & Carlson, Inc.
TUBS, Inc.

Friend Sponsors

2006 HOT Party Co-Chairs:
Michele Heimes
Dana Morrison
Melissa Sigel
Evie Simon

2006 HOT Party Committee:
Michael Corrigan
Anne Cramer
Breia Euteneuer
Laura Fryberger
Ava Hamilton
Anne Hughes
Sarah Johnson
Lisa Miller
Liz Montgomery
Allison Munsell
Steve Nickelson
Jackie Olson
Norman Orstad
Jodi Petrich
Emily Pye
Sara Russick
Noelle Sheehan
Nick Tietz
Above: 2006 HOT Party co-chairs (left to right) Michele Heimes, Melissa Sigel, and Dana Morrison along with Mary Schrock, PACER Development Director, and Paula Goldberg, PACER Executive Director, were recognized on the Target stage by emcee Tony Strong for their HOT Party success.

Above: Guest speaker Brett Nelson attended with girlfriend, Leslie Fish. As a youth served by PACER, Brett spoke about success in his job, in sports, and his relationship with Leslie.

Above: Jackie and Geoffrey Olson posed with a life-sized cut-out of their son, Andrew, donated by Star Exhibits. Built-in wireless technology features were donated by Wireless Ronin.

Left: Chef Woody of Rudolphs Bar-B-Que presented a fabulous feast. Rudolphs was a Major Sponsor.

Right: The Koch-Miller Group at Smith Barney were Cocktail Hour Sponsors of the HOT Party. From left to right: Don and Lisa Miller, and Michele and Paul Koch.

Space 150, a digital marketing agency, was a Major Sponsor of HOT.

Playmotion featured interactive visual projections and contact games for HOT guests to enjoy.
The companies listed have generously donated their time and services to many of PACER’s recent events, including PACER Family Field Day and, just recently, the 2006 HOT Party, Cool Cause. Their support results in greater funds and contributions directed to PACER’s programs for children and young adults with all disabilities.

If you find yourself looking for a new place to dine out with friends, fun new toys for children, or even a referral for one of your colleagues, please consider contacting one of these service providers.

By mentioning PACER, you magnify our thanks to the community that supports PACER’s work and the families it serves.

*Partners of PACER* is a directory produced by PACER Center. It features donors who have contributed to PACER events between July 1, 2005, and Feb. 4, 2006.

Please look in the next issue of *PACER Partners* for the companies who will have supported our upcoming 24th Annual Benefit on Saturday, May 6.
NVENT Designs
2635 Brighton Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55418

Orstad Design
Graphic design studio
3758 Orchard Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55422
612.805.3662
www.orstad.com

PlayMotion!
Innovative toy design
4555 Mansell Road, Suite 300
Alpharetta, GA 30022
404.593.2901
www.playmotion.com

Space150
Digital marketing agency
212 3rd Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN
612.332.6458
www.space150.com

Star Exhibits & Environments
Trade and retail show exhibit firm
6920 93rd Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55445
763.561.4655
www.starexhibits.com

The First Impression Group
Creating Print Solutions
2700 Blue Water Road, Suite 450
Eagan, MN 55121-1429
651.683.1125
www.firstimpressiongroup.com

Wireless Ronin Technologies, Inc.
Software company
14700 Martin Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
952.224.8110
www.wirelesstronin.com

FAMILIES/FOUNDATIONS
Thomas C. and Lois L. Sando Foundation
Tom Nelson and Martha Dayton

MOVERS
Harco Moving & Storage, Inc.
Professional moving service
11365 Xeon Street
Coon Rapids, MN 55448
763.571.6227
www.harcomoving.com

RETAILERS
Creative Kidstuff
Specialty toy store
4313 Upton Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55410
[612] 929-2431
www.creativekidstuff.com

Discovery Toys
Educational toy consultants
Laura Ronay
Ironay@mn rr.com
612.799.3118
Julia Copeland
juliacopeland@mindspring.com
612.821.1515

Run N Fun
Running and walking store
6405 City West Pkwy
Eden Prairie, MN 55344-7833
952.944.RFUN
www.runfunfun.us

Smart Candle
Portable lighting options
9429 Syndicate Avenue South
Bloomington, MN 55420
www.smartcandle.com

Target
National discount retailer
1000 Nicollet Mall, TPS-3080
Minneapolis, MN 55402
1-800-440-0680
www.Target.com

Toy World
Children’s toy store
7525 France Ave. South
Centennial Plaza
Edina, MN 55435
952.831.5031
www.toyworldtoo.com

U-Trau
Wholesale clothing distributors
11720 East 49th Avenue
Denver, CO 80239
303.375.9620
www.utrau.com

RESTAURANTS
Dairy Queen
International fast food chain
7505 Metro Boulevard
Minneapolis, MN 55439-0286
952.830.0200
www.dairyqueen.com

Panera Bread
Bakery cafes
24 Minnesota locations
www.panera-minnesota.com

Rudolphs Bar-B-Que
Restaurant and catering
1933 Lyndale Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612.871.8969
www.rudolphsribs.com

SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT
89.3 The Current
MPR – local radio station
45 East 7th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
651.989.4893
http://minnesota.publicradio.org

Minnesota Twins
MLB baseball team
34 Kirby Puckett Place
Minneapolis, MN 55415
612.375.1366
http://minnesota.twins.mlb.com

STORAGE
TUBS, Inc.
Waste management services
411 Washington Avenue North, Suite 202
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612.825.8827
www.tubsinc.com
Family Field Day—A Fun-Filled Success!

The calls started coming in on Monday morning. “This is the first time I’ve taken my two sons with autism out in public and felt comfortable about how they’d behave. Thank you PACER for having Family Field Day!”

After all of the parachutes and toys were collected and all the children were brandishing medals and bandanas, PACER volunteers and staff pronounced the first Family Field Day a success. PACER sponsored the event on Sunday, Oct. 16, at the Lindbergh Center in Minnetonka. The event brought together families of children with and without disabilities for an afternoon of fun and games.

Following lunch provided by Panera Bread, the emcee Michael Keller, executive vice president of marketing for Dairy Queen and PACER volunteer (complete with a neon blue spandex costume and matching hair), led participants in the opening ceremony and parade. All families received brightly colored bandanas, donated by U-Trau, Inc., to distinguish teams from one another.

The games came next, as families followed team leaders through different activity stations such as “Sock-Throw,” “Simon Says,” “Dance Off,” and others.

A parent of a child without disabilities remarked, “I was watching my usually rambunctious son watch how the children with disabilities in our team were able to participate in the activity. There was definitely learning going on there.”

After the games, a closing ceremony wrapped up the day. Each team was presented a unique award, such as “Biggest Smiles” and “Rockinest Dancers.” All children received prize bags as well as a medal for “outstanding participation.” As they left Family Field Day, families could choose to top off the day with Dilly Bars, donated by Dairy Queen.

Discovery Toys, Toy World, and Run N Fun donated toys for prize bags. Other sponsors included Archetype Design and Target. Additional private donations sponsored families who would otherwise not have been able to attend.

Many families have requested that PACER sponsor the successful event again. One parent wrote, “My kids had a great time. We’ll be back next year!”

The Friends of PACER Advisory Board organized the event. Committee members included Sarah Johnson as chair, Michael Keller, Laura Keller, Noelle Sheehan, and Sara Russick.

“It was a fantastic day for families,” said Paula Goldberg, PACER’s executive director. “The support of Friends of PACER Advisory Board, the committee, and generous donors made it happen. We at PACER appreciate their wonderful energy and generosity.”
Michael Bolton—A Night You Won’t Forget! PACER’s 24th Annual Benefit

Anticipation and excitement are building for PACER’s 24th Annual Benefit on Saturday, May 6. Headliner Michael Bolton will take the stage following the extraordinary Silent Auction and spectacular Live Auction full of unique items and once-in-a-lifetime experiences that are not available anywhere else.

The Benefit Committee, co-chaired by Mary Frey, Danna Mirviss, and Colleen McGough Wood, started working last summer to create an event that promises to be a memorable and exciting evening while raising very important funds for PACER’s programs. The Silent Auction committee, headed by co-chairs Patrice Alkire, Lisa Miller, and Joan Valente, has found items and services from new donors to add to PACER’s stellar auction.

Creative Kids–PACER Partners

Creative Kids is the brainchild of artist Anthony R. Whelihan and will also be its own section at the auction. Whelihan, who has been involved as PACER’s artist for over 10 years, wants to create an art program for children with disabilities at PACER. Children of all ages and abilities were invited to two Saturday art workshops at PACER. Working with Whelihan and other visiting artists the children created art around themes such as “kids at play,” “a self-portrait,” and “kids dreams for the future.” Ten works of art will be on display and for sale at the Silent Auction.

Custom Jewelry for the Raffle

Also new to this year’s Benefit is Jeffrey Jewelry, the exclusive 2006 Raffle Sponsor. Dana Silver Youman and Jeffrey Silver have generously donated a stunning pair of diamond earrings valued at $5,900 and a diamond line bracelet valued at $2,600. Raffle tickets are $20 each. The tickets are available now and can also be purchased at the event. You need not be present to win.

2006 Benefit Ticket Information

PACER’s 24th Annual Benefit at the Minneapolis Convention Center is the place to be on Saturday, May 6! You may order tickets by calling (952) 838-9000 or online at www.pacer.org. Tickets to the event begin at $55. A pre-concert gourmet dinner in the Seasons Rotunda, beginning at 5 p.m., is available for a limited number of guests and is ticketed separately at $85 per person.

Sports Memorabilia

Each year the committee adds a new twist to the evening to keep the event fresh. This year we are adding two new sections to the Silent Auction. Sports Memorabilia will have a category of its own thanks to Gail and Ira Sklader, who generously donated their collection of autographed sports magazines.

These magazines are handsomely framed with UV glass and bear the autograph of the sports figure on the cover of the magazine. Ranging from the first edition of Sport magazine (1946) with Joe Dimaggio’s photo and autograph, to the 1953 Time magazine with Mickey Mantle, to a 1978 Time magazine featuring Muhammad Ali, this collection is a fantastic opportunity for all sports fans and collectors. Approximately 20 of the framed magazines from the collection will be offered at the Silent Auction during this year’s Benefit.

Ira and Gail Sklader (center) present framed magazines to Mary Schrock, PACER Director of Development (far left) and Paula Goldberg, PACER Executive Director (far right). The magazines are part of a sports memorabilia collection donated to PACER.

Dear PACER Center,

We chose to support PACER not only because we have two children with autism and mental illnesses, but also because of the help we have received from a PACER advocate. Her generous support, guidance, and expertise has been an integral part of our dealings with our local school districts for the past 4+ years.

She has been a tremendous source of information in educational rights and has provided useful suggestions and insight about effectively advocating for our children within the school systems. She supported us by attending IEP meetings, facilitated IEP meetings, and a due process hearing. We are so appreciative of her help, and PACER Center.

Thank you, PACER, for your continuing service to the community.

Sincerely,
A family helped by PACER

---

Creative Kidstuff and PACER: Partners in Play

If you have recently visited Creative Kidstuff, a specialty toy store, you are sure to have heard the buzz about PACER being named as their Charity Partner for 2006. Already this year, PACER Center and Creative Kidstuff have collaborated on two exciting projects and various activities.

In January, PACER presented the new Bullying Prevention Web site (www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org) as part of a panel on “Raising Healthy Kids,” sponsored by Creative Kidstuff at the Bakken Library in Minneapolis. Beginning in February, Creative Kidstuff sold coupon books at each of their six Twin Cities store locations to benefit PACER. The proceeds will be donated to PACER Center to help provide services and resources to parents of children with all disabilities at no charge.

In addition, Creative Kidstuff donated Magic Mics as gift bag items to guests of the 2006 HOT Party, Cool Cause. As one HOT Party-goer noted, “Some toys are ageless. The toy microphones are wild and wacky—and endless fun for everybody.”

Coming soon, Creative Kidstuff will feature toys that have been evaluated by PACER staff as suitable for children with various disabilities. For more information on this, and on the PACER–Creative Kidstuff partnership, visit www.pacer.org, and www.creativekidstuff.com.

---

Thanks, PACER…

Throughout the year, PACER receives many thank you letters from parents and professionals. We would like to share one with you.

Dear PACER Center,

We chose to support PACER not only because we have two children with autism and mental illnesses, but also because of the help we have received from a PACER advocate. Her generous support, guidance, and expertise has been an integral part of our dealings with our local school districts for the past 4+ years.

She has been a tremendous source of information in educational rights and has provided useful suggestions and insight about effectively advocating for our children within the school systems. She has supported us by attending IEP meetings, facilitated IEP meetings, and a due process hearing. We are so appreciative of her help, and PACER Center.

Thank you, PACER, for your continuing service to the community.

Sincerely,
A family helped by PACER

---

Creative Kids Workshops: Art with the Pros

During February and March children of all ages and abilities attended two Saturday art workshops at PACER led by artist Anthony R. Whelihan. Children were encouraged to create artistic expressions through paints, pastels, clay, among many other fun mediums. Supplies for the workshops were donated by Creative Kidstuff as part of their Charity Partnership with PACER for 2006.

Creating the art is just the first step. The children are encouraged to submit their art to PACER’s Art Contest where everyone is a winner. Children may submit art that they create at home. They are not required to attend a workshop. Please visit PACER’s Web site, www.pacer.org for more information about Creative Kids.

Ten finalists will be selected from several categories, and these artistic creations will be offered for sale at the Silent Auction during the Benefit. The winning art will then become the art for a PACER card that will be sold throughout the year. Watch for this innovative new section at the Silent Auction!
No Limits to Fun—Indoors and Out!

On Oct. 1, 2005, PACER’s Simon Technology Center offered an Access to Recreation Expo. This showcase of indoor and outdoor activities was designed for children and adults with disabilities, and included demonstrations from local and national businesses. Families and professionals had the opportunity to try recreational activities and equipment, such as adaptive outdoor clothing and equipment, accessible camping gear, specialized games, and adapted sporting activities. Youth and adults of all ages had an exciting time!

For more information on adaptive technology, please contact PACER’s Simon Technology Center at (952) 838-9000.

Planning for PACER with a Simple Bequest

A simple statement in your will or living trust is all it takes to make a powerful gift. Gifts by bequest may be made in cash, securities, real estate, or tangible personal property and may be fully deductible in determining estate taxes.

Any provision should state PACER’s legal name:

PACER Center, Inc., a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit corporation in Minnesota.

Please call Mary Schrock, PACER Development Director, at (952) 838-9000 with questions or for additional information.

Please notify PACER Center of your bequest so that you can be acknowledged and thanked, in addition to providing information that will help PACER plan for the future.

Friends of PACER who make their planned gifts known become members of the PACESETTER Circle and serve as beacons of hope and role models in providing for children with disabilities in the future.

Thank you to those who have already provided for PACER in their planning. We encourage others to consider naming PACER Center in their will.

“Nothing comes close to PACER in getting the job done for a family with a child who has special needs. That is why we feel so strongly about including PACER in our will.”

–Rosemary and Marvin Fish, PACER friends
We continue to be Panera Bread’s Operation Dough-nation® partner. Visit Panera Bread and support PACER by making contributions at participating cashier stations. Panera matches all contributions collected throughout the year and donates the proceeds to PACER programs.

Creative Kidstuff selected PACER as its Charity Partner for 2006. Coupon books are being sold at all store locations, with all proceeds benefiting PACER. See the article on page 10 for more details about this innovative partnership.

Supporting PACER
We welcome your support of time, talent and resources. Please call (952) 838-9000 and ask for the Development Department to become involved with PACER!