

Angela's HOUSE

(631) 979-2620

NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2009 EDITION

Visit our website and blog
www.angelashouse.org

Angela's House helps to coordinate the complex array of services needed to support families so that they may care for their medically frail children at home. **Angela's House** offers a home-away-from-home option for medically frail children when they cannot live at home. We understand the day-to-day, year-to-year support is very important for the well being of the children and their families.

Andrew

I try not to think back to the summer of 07, which was by far the worst summer of my life. I try not to think about it because it brings back such terrible memories of raw emotions that I felt. After I learned of my son's condition, I literally thought I was going to die. I felt like the life was sucked out of me. The doctors told us that Andrew had several brain malformations called microcephaly/absent corpus collosom and simple gyral pattern. They said he would not develop normally, that he would not walk or talk, and would be severely retarded. They told me he had cerebral palsy and increased muscle tone. I tried to deny it. Andrew looked a lot like the other babies in nursery. He was wrapped up tight in a receiving blanket and looked like a pea in a pod. He drank from a bottle, although he needed some help, and he slept. But he also had seizures, slow heart beats and reflux. I did not want to hear or know of this. I just wanted him home. I could take care of him- I was a nurse for over 10 years and I had seen a lot. I was sure I could handle a 5 pounder! So in my denial state I refused home care nurses on discharge from the hospital. I could do it. I could do it all. My husband very reluctantly agreed.

Well, I was home 3 weeks with Andy when I couldn't take it any more. He trembled so badly from his spasticity. I had a hard time positioning and comforting him. I could barely get his medications in and it was getting harder and harder to feed him. We decided to take him to Schneider's Children's Hospital for a second opinion on his treatment plan. They admitted him right away when they saw the condition he was in. The nurses immediately referred us to social work. I was inconsolable and helpless. I felt like a failure and I didn't know what to do. This was the first time I heard about Angela's House. The social worker was discussing the possibility of us placing Andrew in a 24 hr nursing care facility. I gasped at the thought. How could a mother do that to her child? I decided I was not ready for that yet but she advised me to keep the name in a safe spot. At this point, we used hospice services for support until the Care at Home Program kicked in. During this time, I got the courage to call Angela's House and spoke with a compassionate person named Laurie, who gathered information about my case. Before I knew it, Andrew stabilized and "graduated" from hospice. We realized he would still require ongoing help which the Care at Home Program would offer. We requested Angela's House to assist us with case management. I was introduced to my caseworker Sharon and her supervisor Bonnie. It was at this time I was able to meet with the founder of Angela's House, Bob Policastro. I had heard such awesome things about how his organization had helped so many people. He was so genuine and offered to reimburse respite expenses until I found steady nurses. He understood how our situation effected us financially. He offered to help reimbursed us for some of Andrew's expenses until I was able to return to work as I had before all of this began. Once Angela's house helped us get into the Care at Home Program, my case manager immediately helped us secure nursing services which we so desperately needed.

I was beginning to accept how Andrew's life was going to be, and I gathered up the courage to actually go to Angela's House and see what it was like. Bob met me there and I immediately felt comfortable there. He explained how life for the children was there and about the continual family involvement. He was very empathetic towards my feelings of guilt and sadness. We passed from room to room and I saw pictures of families-parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. All of these people had similar circumstances and had experienced many of the things we had. Suddenly I didn't feel so alone. The people of Angela's House just want to make it better for your family and will help in any way they can. Words can not express my gratitude to them. I know that in the coming days and months, we will have our "family" at Angela's House to support us and help us during hard times and tough decisions.

I call my Andrew my angel of love. He reminds me to be strong, live one day at a time, live simply, help others, but most of all to love unconditionally.



Message from the Executive Director

Bob PolICASTRO

Angela's House is our official name now. The legal work is complete and we will now be known as Angela's House for both the two homes we have that care for medically fragile children and the families we work with that care for their children at home.



We hit a new milestone this past year. We helped 400 children with special health care needs that are medically fragile, chronically ill or living with a life threatening illness. Helping this many kids would not be possible without the support we get from the community. This support is very important because when insurance will not cover items, we look to use fund raised money to help cover it. We also use fund raised money to help the new families that are referred to us. It can take weeks, if not months, to coordinate programs and services to assist new families and during this waiting time we can use donations to help support families.

The economy has really taken a tough turn and we have seen the impact on both donations and the increasing difficulties we see families are going through. We feel confident we will continue to see support coming in to help our families.

This past year had many exciting moments. We increased our program to be able to help more new families. We had many schools and organizations reach out to us in an effort to help. The highlight of the year was the completion of our project of bringing the Angel of Hope statue to Long Island. This statue honors all children that have passed away, regardless of age. Our volunteer construction crew was led by Pat Cassetta and Angelo Ciotta. The volunteer workers included members from both Locals 66 and 138. We also had help from Napolitano Brothers with our brick work.

The Angel of Hope Comes to Long Island



The opening ceremony was amazing. Over 200 people came to celebrate the the unveiling and candlelight ceremony for the Angel of Hope statue.



The Angel of Hope statue sits with flowers around it after the candlelight ceremony.

Thanks to Our Supporters



The Ancient Order of Hibernians Division 3 presents a donation



Island Trees Middle School National Jr. Honor Society did a candy sale



Nick volunteered with yard work and bulk mailings



Kevin helped with office work and bulk mailings



A Touch of Wellness Therapeutic Spa makes a donation to Angela's House at the Smithtown 5K "Running of the Bull"



Walmart makes a donation



Allstate Craig Bingham Agency presents a donation



Words could not describe the spiritual feeling that consumed the night. One of the most beautiful sites was to see everyone waiting in line to leave a flower with the Angel after the candlelight ceremony.

Angela's House Spring Gala

The 2009 Spring Gala was held on March 26 at the Watermill in Smithtown. It was attended by our largest crowd of 250 people. Thanks to all that came to support our work with medically fragile children and The Angel of Hope statue.



During the cocktail hour, the room was full of prize baskets for the Chinese auction



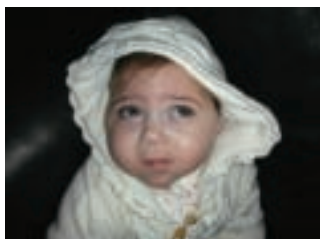
Parents & friends of the Gala Committee



The volunteers are honored for helping to bring the Angel of Hope to Long Island

Your Gifts Make a Difference

Angela's House uses public programs, grants and donations to assist families caring for their children with special health care needs that are medically fragile, chronically ill or living with a life threatening illness. Your donations and assistance with fund raising allows us to ease the financial burdens our families experience with the day-to-day care needed to support these children. These funds are very important especially for children first identified to us that need help right away but often must wait months to get assistance through public programs. We use these funds to purchase medical supplies, medical care, therapeutic equipment, and other items not covered by insurance. Below are a few of the families and children we have helped.



Abigail



Halloween for Adriana

Donations can be sent to:

Angela's House
PO Box 5052
Hauppauge, NY 11788

Angela's House is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization; your gift is tax deductible to the full extent of the law.



Jacob



Wesley

Donations In lieu of Flowers

In a time of grieving, this family displayed great generosity by requesting donations to us in lieu of flowers. We were honored by this gesture.

Josephine Cecere

Donations in Honor or in Memory of

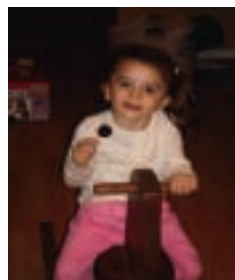
Vincent Dominick
 Leon Ezra
 Laura Fazio
 Kelly Ficken
 Taylor Gladd
 Ms Chris Hand
 Jackson Iallonardi
 Abigail Kieser
 Walter Kieser
 Nicole Kowitz
 Anthony Krazewski
 Brandon LeMaire
 Thomas McGrath
 Nicholas Mogavero
 Dominick Pace
 Abigail Peymen
 Angela Policastro
 Paulie Polosky
 Cpl Robert Pope
 Steven Przystawski
 Madison Reynolds
 Patrick Steimel
 Keira Sweeney
 Barbara & John Wolkewicz



Shaun with his dog



Kiera



Tyler



The Sayville Pilot Club helps Angela's House



A Night for a Cure

Was an Enchanting evening held at
Oheka Castle

On November 13, 2008



This event helped to bring about awareness and raise money for nineteen childhood diseases and

illnesses. Oheka Castle generously provided a venue for an enchanted evening. Our student volunteers did an exceptional job playing music, escorting guests, selling raffles, serving food and a beautiful presentation. The food was spectacular with local restaurants donating their favorite dishes for a delectable cocktail hour and dinner. The donated baskets that filled the grand ball room were amazing. The guests enjoyed themselves as they felt the love and effort that went into having this special evening.

**Angela's
HOUSE**

P.O. Box 5052
Hauppauge, NY 11788
www.AngelasHouse.org

NonProfit Organization
US Postage Paid
Smithtown, NY 11787
Permit # 120

SAVE THESE DATES

7th Annual
Golf Outing
June 1, 2009
St George's Golf & Country
Club

For additional information
or to register online visit
www.angelashouse.org

3rd Annual
Fishing Fundraiser

July 21th at 4pm

Sailing from Captree State Park
includes
Fishing and Dinner

6th Annual
**William J. Pace
Memorial Golf Outing**
Benefiting
Angela's House
September 21, 2009
At
Nissequogue Golf Club

Information and sponsorships for these events can be found at
www.angelashouse.org or by calling 631 979- 2620