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THE CRYSTAL BALL
Venetian Masquerade

UNMASK A CURE FOR MD & ALS

February 7, 2009
Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront
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THE CRYSTAL BALL

A Venetian Masquerade

Unmask A Cure
For MD and ALS
February 7, 2009

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February 2009

Dear Crystal Ball Supporters,

Welcome to the 8th annual Crystal Ball! I want to thank all of our supporters and committee members who have made this event possible. Your generosity and caring to make a difference in the lives of children and adults dealing with neuromuscular disease means the world to me, my family and friends, the MDA and most importantly... all the people with MD and ALS. Every year I am continually amazed at the kindness and generosity of our sponsors, underwriters, advertisers, donors and attendees. Thank you for sharing my passion – searching for a cure for MD and ALS.

As you know, we are working hard to find a cure for the over 43 different types of neuromuscular diseases that are considered Muscular Dystrophy, which includes ALS. For so many children and adults, it truly is a race against time, because if a cure is not found in the near future, they will not survive. Research is very expensive, costing over $82 per minute. In many cases, research is on hold due to lack of funding, In the past 7 years we have raised over $1,350,000 (NET), which is incredible, but we still have work to do.

On February 7th, I ask you to open up your hearts as well as your wallets. Our goal for this year’s Crystal Ball is to raise “one dollar more” (as Jerry Lewis says) than the $213,500 raised at last year’s Crystal Ball. All of the Crystal Ball monies go 100% to research, so you can feel confident your money is going where it is intended – TO HELP FIND A CURE FOR MD AND ALS.

I hope you have a wonderful time at the Crystal Ball 2009 - A Venetian Masquerade - where we are looking to “Unmask a Cure for MD and ALS”. Take this opportunity to celebrate with the people you care about. I thank you for making The Crystal Ball one of your “chosen” charities.

Linda Fox-Jarvis
Chairman, The Crystal Ball

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Thanks to Brian Jarvis for the Power Point Presentation
Your day. Your way.
In a setting no one will ever forget.

Pasquale Giovani
Accomplished host/interviewer and naval veteran, Pasquale Giovani has been hosting and producing talk shows for nearly seventeen years. In addition, he interviews and interacts with a variety of CEOs, politicos, and people on the go. A Farm Fresh President’s Award recipient, who excels in consumer issues and community news and interests, he also works with diverse charitable boards and marketing groups.

Pasquale has hosted The Crystal Ball since its beginning in 2001 and is both privileged and pleased to be in your company at the 8th Annual Crystal Ball.

Barbara Ciara
Barbara Ciara can be seen regularly on YOUR News Channel 3. Barbara has produced a number of works that bring history into perspective with today’s world, such as her award winning documentary on “Massive Resistance” in Virginia with compelling interviews of the “Norfolk 17,” the students who first integrated Norfolk Schools in 1959. It’s the kind of reporting that gets noticed. Barbara has received the 1997 Edward R. Murrow Award from the Radio and Television News Directors Association, 1997 Emmy nomination for “Operation Haiti” featuring children living in poverty on the island nation, 1995 Emmy nomination for the series “Letters from the Hood,” a gripping story documenting the lives of children who live in violent urban areas. Ciara has also been honored with numerous Associated Press and United Press International awards dating back to 1986, as well as a dozen prestigious “Excel” awards from the Hampton Roads Black Media Professionals.

Barbara is honored to be hosting the 8th Annual Crystal Ball.

Special Guest
Caroline Pennell
Caroline Pennell is a 13 year old eighth grader from Richmond, Virginia. Caroline was diagnosed with Limb-Girdle Muscular Dystrophy when she was nine years old. Her family includes mom Robin, dad Pat, and brother Patrick. She loves attending MDA Summer Camp every year, and she enjoys art, swimming, spending time with her dog, and socializing with friends. Caroline has been very involved with MDA as a Goodwill Ambassador through Fire Fighter visits, Shamrock Kick-offs, and the annual Labor Day Telethon. The Pennell family has also raised over $30,000 in the past three years for MDAs Stride and Ride walk event. We are thrilled that she and her family are our special guests at the 2009 Crystal Ball.

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The Muscular Dystrophy Association is a voluntary health agency — a dedicated partnership between scientists and concerned citizens aimed at conquering neuromuscular diseases that affect more than a million Americans.

MDA combats neuromuscular diseases through programs of worldwide research, comprehensive medical and community services, and far-reaching professional and public health education. With national headquarters in Tucson, MDA has more than 200 offices across the country, operates 230 hospital-affiliated clinics and supports nearly 400 research projects around the world.

MDA supports more research on neuromuscular diseases than any other private-sector organization in the world. MDA scientists are in the forefront of gene therapy research and have uncovered the genetic defects responsible for several forms of Muscular Dystrophy, Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, a form of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS, or Lou Gehrig’s disease), childhood spinal muscular atrophy, and several other neuromuscular conditions.

The Association’s comprehensive service program includes medical examinations, flu shots, support groups, MDA summer camps for youngsters and assistance with purchase of wheelchairs and leg braces.

MDA was created in 1950 by a group of adults with Muscular Dystrophy, parents of children with Muscular Dystrophy, and a physician-scientist studying the disorder. Since its earliest days it has been energized by its number-one volunteer and national chairman, entertainer Jerry Lewis.

The Association’s programs are funded almost entirely by individual private contributors. MDA seeks no government grants, United Way funding or fees from those it serves.
The MDA Research Minute

Our bulldozer, our torch.
Our fight, our hope.
Our victory, our celebration.

Challenges that seem Unconquerable,
Obstacles that seem Insurmountable,
Are plowed down, Rolled over,
Paving a smoother road For the journey.

A flimmer of insight
Burning bright with desire,
And desperation,
Dances us into the future,
Transforming the passive
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Hope for understanding
That will rid us of
The last ashes of
Neuromuscular disease.

Just think on the reality of
The MDA Research Minute

The minute it takes
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To reading between the lines
Of medical mysteries.
It is the human touch
That lights our path,
Fueling the Energy and momentum.
The greater the touch,
The brighter the torch,
The stronger the energy.

Just think on the reality.
Just think on the reality.

Children’s National Medical Center,
Washington, DC
Dr. Eric Hoffman, PH.D.
Dr. Robert Leshner M.D.

Funds from last year’s Crystal Ball are hard at work on important projects. $35,000 is being used to start the first careful study of Limb-girdle muscular dystrophy patients, studying their strength and abilities. The study will have two major goals. First, the lab bench work (previously supported by the Crystal Ball) using genomics methods on muscular dystrophy patient muscle biopsies has suggested that one particular type of LGMD may be very different from the others. Second, by studying a large series of LGMD patients, future clinical trials can be designed more precisely using fewer patients, and less cost.

A second project funded for $35,000 is to develop a newly discovered type of drug, called non-hormonal steroids, for use in muscular dystrophy patients. This new class of drugs are derivatives of the very commonly prescribed prednisone (steroids). Research supported by the Department of Defense at Children’s National Medical Center has made significant progress in defining the different effects of prednisone, and how the many different activities of the drug might be separated, harnessed, and used as a new class of more effective therapies with less side effects.

All support from the Crystal Ball has focused on translational and therapeutic approaches, and support from previous years has been used for a collaboration between Washington DC and Tokyo. This study looked at the ability of designer ‘exon skipping’ drugs, targeted specifically to a single muscular dystrophy gene mutation, to repair the gene, and restore muscle.

The future priorities for the Crystal Ball funds are to bring the exon skipping successes in mice and dogs to the first effective therapy for Duchenne muscular dystrophy and other dystrophies.

Research Update

We believe the future holds a cure for MD

Congratulations to our friend, Linda Fox-Jarvis, and her dedicated Crystal Ball Committee, for their ongoing success in raising funds for Muscular Dystrophy Research

Debbie & Don Keeling
Matt Marris

Our mission is to conduct and promote medical research and education programs within Children’s Hospitals that will lead to improved understanding, prevention, treatment, and care of childhood diseases through basic and clinical research and education.
Jerry R. Mendell, MD
Director, Center for Gene Therapy
The Research Institute at Nationwide Children’s Hospital, Columbus Ohio

We have completed a phase I gene therapy trial in patients with LGMD. The results show great promise for the future and we are in the process of submitting the findings to the Journal for publication. This will be the first time this has ever been done. In the lab we published an important paper on LGMD2D showing no toxicity of alpha-sarcoglycan overexpression supporting clinical gene transfer. This was an important report leading to the clinical trial above. This paper was cited and fully discussed in the MDA magazine.

We are working on gene therapy for other forms of LGMD in the lab including dysferlin deficiency. This work is showing promise and moves the potential forward for treating another one of the LGMDs.

We have had a major publication showing that we can increase muscle size and strength blocking myostatin with gene therapy using follistatin. We are currently working on production of these vectors for this therapy and we have plans to bring this to clinical trial in 9-12 months. We have also finished construction on our own vector production facility. This is a very important step that will help us bring new gene therapy products to the clinic in a timely fashion.

The University of Iowa
The University of Iowa
David Hartshorne
Role of the Calpain System in Human Muscular Dystrophy

The loss of muscle mass in the muscular dystrophies is due to a greatly increased rate of muscle protein degradation. This degradation may be initiated by a variety of physiological events, but it ultimately is mediated by two proteolytic enzymes belonging to the calpain system. This project will determine how the calpains are changed in human dystrophic muscle and how these changes lead to increased and/or unregulated muscle protein degradation.

The University of Arizona
Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is the most common motor neuron disease, and very little is known about factors that predispose to the development of ALS. Only 5–10% of ALS patients have a familial (genetic) form of the disease. Among the remaining 90% of patients with sporadic ALS, the cause is unknown. It is likely that a multifactorial process causes ALS, with contributions from both environmental and genetic factors. Using data from a recently completed epidemiologic study of ALS, we propose to investigate whether exposure to metals or pesticide chemicals is associated with the risk of developing ALS, and whether certain genetic factors either increase or decrease the risk associated with these exposures. By determining whether genetic factors modify the risk associated with these environmental agents, we hope to provide insight regarding the biological basis for the development of ALS. If these factors are shown to play a role in the cause of ALS, this will contribute to knowledge about the mechanisms of disease. With this knowledge, strategies could be developed to prevent ALS or to slow disease progression among affected individuals.

The University of Arizona
David Hartshorne
Role of the Calpain System in Human Muscular Dystrophy
The History of the Venetian Mask

In 1162 Doge Vitale Michieli triumphed over Ulrich II of Treven and an annual celebration to commemorate the occasion was commenced. The first documented usage of Venetian masks in conjunction with the annual celebration was in 1268.

As Venice grew in popularity as a tourist destination through the middle ages the city became known as a pleasure palace. During this period the popularity of masks grew as prominent social figures dawned disguises to conceal their identities as they performed unscrupulous and immoral acts in pursuit of carnal pleasures.

During the 16th through 18th century Venetian Masks became the signature of the Commedia Dell’arte. The Commedia Dell’arte were popular plays in the form of improvisational theater that were performed by theater companies that traveled the Italian peninsula producing comedies involving the topics of adultery, jealousy, and love.
Congratulations

To The Crystal Ball committee and
Linda Fox-Jarvis, Chairman, for raising over
$1,350,000 over the past 7 years to help find
a cure for Muscular Dystrophy.

One day, you will be rewarded for your
dedication.

When the announcement is made that this
disease is eradicated from the human race
forever, tens of thousands of children and
adults will cry out with thanks, as they are
freed from the effects of muscular dystrophy.

We pray that day will come in the very near
future. God bless you for your dedication and
hard work.

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Several of Venice’s popular mask forms such as the Capitano, the Pagliancio (clown), the Pulcinella (the mascot of Naples), and Zanni (the threadbare old servant of Venice) were shaped in character in the traveling road show known as the Commedia dell’arte.

On October 17, 1797 Venice became part of the Kingdom of the Lombardy-Venetia (Austria). When the Austrians took control of the city masked celebrations were outlawed. Venetian masks faded into obscurity.

The tradition of mask making was not rekindled until 1979 when some undergraduate art students revived the tradition in an effort to profit from the tourism trade in the city. And a successful endeavor it turned out to be. In less than 30 years the artisan profession has flourished and now masks and Venice are synonymous.

The history of the Venetian Mask is nearly as colorful as the masks themselves.
**Congratulations to the Crystal Ball on 7 successful years. Good luck again this year!**

Bob and Lee Liverman

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All proceeds from Hope’s Garden Resort & Boutique go directly to support the mission of Hope for Life Rescue, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to the care, rehabilitation and placement of homeless, abused, and/or abandoned animals.

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Don & Kathy Carter

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Bob and Lee Liverman

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Several of Venice’s popular mask forms such as the Capitano, the Pagliaccio (clown), the Pulcinella (the mascot of Naples), and Zanni (the threadbare old servant of Venice) were shaped in character in the traveling road show known as the Commedia dell’arte.

On October 17, 1797 Venice became part of the Kingdom of the Lombardy-Venetia (Austria). When the Austrians took control of the city masked celebrations were outlawed. Venetian masks faded into obscurity.

The tradition of mask making was not rekindled until 1979 when some undergraduate art students revived the tradition in an effort to profit from the tourism trade in the city. And a successful endeavor it turned out to be. In less than 30 years the artisan profession has flourished and now masks and Venice are synonymous.

The history of the Venetian Mask is nearly as colorful as the masks themselves.
Congratulations

To The Crystal Ball committee and Linda Fox-Jarvis, Chairman, for raising over $1,350,000 over the past 7 years to help find a cure for Muscular Dystrophy.

One day, you will be rewarded for your dedication.

When the announcement is made that this disease is eradicated from the human race forever, tens of thousands of children and adults will cry out with thanks, as they are freed from the effects of muscular dystrophy.

We pray that day will come in the very near future. God bless you for your dedication and hard work.

BEVERLY AND JACK FOX
The History of the Venetian Mask

In 1162 Doge Vitale Michieli triumphed over Ulrich II of Treven and an annual celebration to commemorate the occasion was commenced. The first documented usage of Venetian masks in conjunction with the annual celebration was in 1268.

As Venice grew in popularity as a tourist destination through the middle ages the city became known as a pleasure palace. During this period the popularity of masks grew as prominent social figures dawned disguises to conceal their identities as they performed unscrupulous and immoral acts in pursuit of carnal pleasures.

During the 16th through 18th century Venetian Masks became the signature of the Commedia Dell’arte. The Commedia Dell’arte were popular plays in the form of improvisational theater that were performed by theater companies that traveled the Italian peninsula producing comedies involving the topics of adultery, jealousy, and love.
Jerry R. Mendell, MD  
Director, Center for Gene Therapy  
The Research Institute at Nationwide Children’s Hospital, Columbus Ohio

We have completed a phase I gene therapy trial in patients with LGMĐ. The results show great promise for the future and we are in the process of submitting the findings to the Journal for publication. This will be the first time this has ever been done. In the lab we published an important paper on LGMĐD showing no toxicity of alpha-sarcoglycan overexpression supporting clinical gene transfer. This was an important report leading to the clinical trial above. This paper was cited and fully discussed in the MDA magazine.

We are working on gene therapy for other forms of LGMĐ in the lab including dysferlin deficiency. This work is showing promise and moves the potential forward for treating another one of the LGMĐs.

We have had a major publication showing that we can increase muscle size and strength blocking myostatin with gene therapy using follistatin. We are currently working on increasing this after developing our own vector production facility. This is a very important step that will help us bring new gene therapy products to the clinic in a timely fashion.

The University of Iowa  
Erik Rader  
Efficacy of LARGE as a Therapeutic Strategy for Limb-Girdle Muscular Dystrophy

LARGE is muscle protein that is critically important for maintaining healthy muscles. Dr. Rader will test whether overexpression of LARGE anchors the dystroglycan complex to the surface membrane and minimizes the pathology in mouse models of sarcoglycan deficiency, a form of limb girdle muscular dystrophy. He will study skeletal muscle structure and function following LARGE overexpression in mice that lack alpha-, beta-, gamma-, or delta-sarcoglycan. The results will shed light on the molecular pathogenesis of sarcoglycanopathy but also on the therapeutic potential of pharmacological strategies that modulate expression and/or activity of LARGE.

The University of Arizona  
David Hartshoren  
Role of the Calpain System in Human Muscular Dystrophy

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is the most common motor neuron disease, and very little is known about factors that predispose to the development of ALS. Only 5–10% of ALS patients have a familial (genetic) form of the disease. Among the remaining 90% of patients with sporadic ALS, the cause is unknown. It is likely that a multifactorial process causes ALS, with contributions from both environmental and genetic factors. Using data from a recently completed epidemiologic study of ALS, we propose to investigate whether exposure to metals or pesticide chemicals is associated with the risk of developing ALS, and whether certain genetic factors either increase or decrease the risk associated with these exposures. By determining whether genetic factors modify the risk associated with these environmental agents, we hope to provide insight regarding the biological basis for the development of ALS. If these factors are shown to play a role in the cause of ALS, this will contribute to knowledge about the mechanisms of disease. With this knowledge, strategies could be developed to prevent ALS or to slow disease progression among affected individuals.

The University of Iowa  
Erik Rader  
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The University of Arizona  
David Hartshoren  
Role of the Calpain System in Human Muscular Dystrophy

The loss of muscle mass in the muscular dystrophies is due to a greatly increased rate of muscle protein degradation. This degradation may be initiated by a variety of physiological events, but it ultimately is mediated by two proteolytic enzymes belonging to the calpain system. This project will determine how the calpains are changed in human dystrophic muscle and how these changes lead to increased and/or unregulated muscle protein degradation.
Children’s National Medical Center, Washington, DC
Dr. Eric Hoffman, PH.D.
Dr. Robert Leshner M.D.

Funds from last year’s Crystal Ball are hard at work on important projects. $35,000 is being used to start the first careful study of Limb-girdle muscular dystrophy patients, studying their strength and abilities. The study will have two major goals. First, the lab bench work (previously supported by the Crystal Ball) using genomics methods on muscular dystrophy patient muscle biopsies has suggested that one particular type of LGMD may be very different from the others. Second, by studying a large series of LGMD patients, future clinical trials can be designed more precisely using fewer patients, and less cost.

A second project funded for $35,000 is to develop a newly discovered type of drug, called non-hormonal steroids, for use in muscular dystrophy patients. This new class of drugs are derivatives of the very commonly prescribed prednisone (steroids). Research supported by the Department of Defense at Children’s National Medical Center has made significant progress in defining the different effects of prednisone, and how the many different activities of the drug might be separated, harnessed, and used as a new class of more effective therapies with less side effects.

All support from the Crystal Ball has focused on translational and therapeutic approaches, and support from previous years has been used for a collaboration between Washington DC and Tokyo. This study looked at the ability of designer ‘exon skipping’ drugs, targeted specifically to a single muscular dystrophy gene mutation, to repair the gene, and restore muscle.

The future priorities for the Crystal Ball funds are to bring the exon skipping successes in mice and dogs to the first effective therapy for Duchenne muscular dystrophy and other dystrophies.
The Muscular Dystrophy Association is a voluntary health agency—a dedicated partnership between scientists and concerned citizens aimed at conquering neuromuscular diseases that affect more than a million Americans.

MDA combats neuromuscular diseases through programs of worldwide research, comprehensive medical and community services, and far-reaching professional and public health education. With national headquarters in Tucson, MDA has more than 200 offices across the country, operates 230 hospital-affiliated clinics and supports nearly 400 research projects around the world.

MDA supports more research on neuromuscular diseases than any other private-sector organization in the world. MDA scientists are in the forefront of gene therapy research and have uncovered the genetic defects responsible for several forms of Muscular Dystrophy, Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, a form of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease), childhood spinal muscular atrophy, and several other neuromuscular conditions.

The Association’s comprehensive service program includes medical examinations, flu shots, support groups, MDA summer camps for youngsters and assistance with purchase of wheelchairs and leg braces.

MDA was created in 1950 by a group of adults with Muscular Dystrophy, parents of children with Muscular Dystrophy, and a physician-scientist studying the disorder. Since its earliest days it has been energized by its number-one volunteer and national chairman, entertainer Jerry Lewis.

The Association’s programs are funded almost entirely by individual private contributors. MDA seeks no government grants, United Way funding or fees from those it serves.

Jennifer Bern-Vogel has been the Cantor of Ohef Sholom Temple since 1996. Before coming to Norfolk, VA she performed Off-Broadway with the NYC Folksbimer Yiddish Theater in their 80th season. She was invested as Cantor from Hebrew Union College - Sacred School of Music in NYC in 1995. Prior to that, she received a diploma in Opera Performance from the State School of Music and Theater in Hannover, Germany in 1984. During her time in Europe she toured throughout Germany and Switzerland singing in operaeta and musical productions, including the role of Anita in "West Side Story" at the Luzbeek Opera House with additional performances in Berlin and Hannover. She sang the world premier of the Esther Oratorio by Reka Molnar in Huenberg, Germany in 1985. In 1988, she founded the Jewish music trio, "L’Chaim" presenting concerts and lecture recitals until 1991. Cantor Bern-Vogel is currently the President of the Hampton Roads Board of Rabbis and Cantors.

Fighting Neuromuscular Diseases

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A " Naw-fick" native, is a graduate of the U.S. Armed Forces School of Music at Norfolk Amphibious Base and has studied music education at Old Dominion University. As pianist with various U.S. Army bands he served in Korea and Germany during the first Gulf War and has played extensively across Europe. He was pianist for the Mainz/Wackenhein theatre and women’s ensemble and served as pianist/organist for Bad Kreuznach Community chapel. He is currently organist for Va. Beach Christian Church in Va. Beach and has played in numerous churches across Tidewater. William has taught master classes at the Governor’s School of Performing Arts in Norfolk were he currently works as accompanist for the dance department. In addition, he instructs piano, teaches ballroom dance/swing and salsa and enjoys playing and singing swing music with his big band orchestra.
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Pasquale Giovani
Accomplished host/interviewer and naval veteran, Pasquale Giovani has been hosting and producing talk shows for nearly seventeen years. In addition, he interviews and interacts with a variety of CEOs, politicians, and people on the go. A Farm Fresh President’s Award recipient, who excels in consumer issues and community news and interests, he also works with diverse charitable boards and marketing groups.

Pasquale has hosted The Crystal Ball since its beginning in 2001 and is both privileged and pleased to be in your company at the 8th Annual Crystal Ball.

Barbara Ciara
Barbara Ciara can be seen regularly on YOUR News Channel 3. Barbara has produced a number of works that bring history into perspective with today’s world, such as her award winning documentary on “Massive Resistance” in Virginia with compelling interviews of the “Norfolk 17”, the students who first integrated Norfolk Schools in 1959. It’s the kind of reporting that gets noticed. Barbara has received the 1997 Edward R. Murrow Award from the Radio and Television News Directors Association, 1997 Emmy nomination for “Operation Haiti” featuring children living in poverty on the island nation, 1995 Emmy nomination for the series “Letters from the Hood,” a gripping story documenting the lives of children who live in violent urban areas. Ciara has also been honored with numerous Associated Press and United Press International awards dating back to 1986, as well as a dozen prestigious "Excel" awards from the Hampton Roads Black Media Professionals.

Barbara is honored to be hosting the 8th Annual Crystal Ball.

Caroline Pennell
Caroline Pennell is a 13 year-old eighth grader from Richmond, Virginia. Caroline was diagnosed with Limb-Girdle Muscular Dystrophy when she was nine years old. Her family includes mom Robin, dad Pat, and brother Patrick. She loves attending MDA Summer Camp every year, and she enjoys art, swimming, spending time with her dog, and socializing with friends. Caroline has been very involved with MDA as a Goodwill Ambassador through Fire Fighter visits, Shamrock Kick-offs, and the annual Labor Day Telethon. The Pennell family has also raised over $30,000 in the past three years for MDA’s Stride and Ride walk event. We are thrilled that she and her family are our special guests at the 2009 Crystal Ball.

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In addition to the committee, thanks to the following people for their hard work.

Nanette Albano
Tess Bradlee
Sonia Bonney
Margrit Corcoran
Laverne Crown
Terri Dorfman
Helene Frost

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Honey Maizel
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Thanks to Tom Johnson and the Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hilton for their support of the Crystal Ball

Thanks to Brian Jarvis for the Power Point Presentation

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February 2009

Dear Crystal Ball Supporters,

Welcome to the 8th annual Crystal Ball! I want to thank all of our supporters and committee members who have made this event possible. Your generosity and caring to make a difference in the lives of children and adults dealing with neuromuscular disease means the world to me, my family and friends, the MDA and most importantly... all the people with MD and ALS. Every year I am continually amazed at the kindness and generosity of our sponsors, underwriters, advertisers, donors and attendees. Thank you for sharing my passion – searching for a cure for MD and ALS.

As you know, we are working hard to find a cure for the over 43 different types of neuromuscular diseases that are considered Muscular Dystrophy, which includes ALS. For so many children and adults, it truly is a race against time, because if a cure is not found in the near future, they will not survive. Research is very expensive, costing over $82 per minute. In many cases, research is on hold due to lack of funding. In the past 7 years we have raised over $1,350,000 (NET), which is incredible, but we still have work to do,

On February 7th, I ask you to open up your hearts as well as your wallets. Our goal for this year’s Crystal Ball is to raise “one dollar more” (as Jerry Lewis says) than the $213,500 raised at last year’s Crystal Ball. All of the Crystal Ball monies go 100% to research, so you can feel confident your money is going where it is intended – TO HELP FIND A CURE FOR MD AND ALS.

I hope you have a wonderful time at the Crystal Ball 2009 - A Venetian Masquerade - where we are looking to “Unmask a Cure for MD and ALS”. Take this opportunity to celebrate with the people you care about. I thank you for making The Crystal Ball one of your “chosen” charities.

Linda Fox-Jarvis
Chairman, The Crystal Ball

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