

Fundraising

from front page



Manhattan Beach Police Officer Jeff Goodrich pictured with his wife Julie and their two daughters.

Goodrich is a hands-on person who is “always there to help out,” whether at work or in the community. “He doesn’t do things for the accolades,” adds Vasquez. A few years ago, when Police Officer Vasquez was diagnosed with blood cancer known as multiple myeloma, Goodrich right away took on the tasks of making sure meals were delivered to the Vasquez home on a daily basis and setting up a system so that Vasquez always had a ride to his radiation therapy sessions.

So it should not come as a surprise that when Goodrich was diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer in January 2009, his community would rally around him and offer its support in return. Goodrich, the giver, had to switch roles, and learn to accept the persistent outpouring of support from his family, friends, colleagues, and admirers. Several events recently have been put together to help relieve the financial burden on Goodrich and his family as he battles stage four glioblastoma, and the biggest event is coming up soon.

On May 31 there will be a bowling fundraiser and silent auction at Gable House Bowl in Torrance to benefit Goodrich. The goal of this event is to raise \$60,000, all of which will go to Goodrich and his family to help them offset the numerous costs associated with the extensive and ongoing cancer treatment. Family friend Sheri Milewski is organizing this event, which mirrors the bowling fundraising event held last October for Police Officer Vasquez.

In May, the Goodrich home was the site of a mini-extreme home makeover coordinated by Sumen and carried out by Goodrich’s fellow contractors and subcontractors. Before Goodrich was diagnosed with cancer, he had begun a remodeling of his home. That project was put on hold until his close friends in the contracting business decided to come together and help Goodrich finish

what he had started. “He’s given so much of his time to others, I figured it was time for us to help him out,” says Sumen.

In April, Rubio’s restaurants in Manhattan Beach, Torrance and Rolling Hills offered to help Goodrich by “giving back” 20 percent of its sales for one evening. The participation on the fundraising evening was overwhelming – a throng of friends, neighbors and supporters came out to the Manhattan Beach location and an impressive queue of diners snaked around the local restaurant for several hours. Milewski, who helped organize the event, said the community response was tremendous, and that even the Rubio’s manager commented it was the longest line of people and busiest night he had ever seen at his restaurant.

Goodrich learned on January 23, 2009 from doctors that he had a golf ball size mass in his brain that would require immediate surgical treatment. Goodrich had been experiencing excruciating headaches for months, and even had impacted wisdom teeth extracted believing this was the cause of his recent health troubles. When he returned to work after the extraction, Goodrich was not himself and his police department supervisor had him checked out by paramedics, who took him to the hospital where testing was done, revealing the source of his severe pain and discomfort.

Within five days of discovering the brain mass, Goodrich underwent surgery, and on January 28 was diagnosed with stage four glioblastoma. After five weeks of post-surgery recovery and six weeks of radiation treatments and chemotherapy, Goodrich returned to work full time. In about a month from now, intensive cancer treatments will resume.

Goodrich and his wife Julie grew up in the South Bay and were high school sweethearts. They have two daughters, one in elementary school and one in middle school. Goodrich has worked full-time as a Manhattan Beach

Unsung Heroes

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Congressional Art Competition winner Hyun Jung Park with her first place painting Herotd Hero which will be displayed at a national student exhibit in Washington DC.

giggles and talent” of the three young artists.

Speaking at the ceremony, Manhattan Beach Unified School District Dr. Beverly Rohrer, Superintendent said she was delighted by the outstanding collection of student art and satisfied that the “unsung heroes” theme was extremely relevant to the times. Her remarks stressed the importance of teaching the fine arts as part of public education programs, and she noted that recent state education budget cuts should not be allowed to interfere with maintaining the appropriate balance between academics and the arts in the public school system.

In introducing Harman, Rohrer said: “One of my heroes, over 20 years of personal association as well as through education, through not only her support of youth, technology, the arts, but most importantly our public education system, is our very own congresswoman. It is always a delight for me to have the opportunity at least once a year to express our gratitude as educators

police officer for the past five years while still working his second job as a general contractor. His wife has taken time off from nursing school while her husband goes through treatments. As a result of Julie’s research of supplemental cancer treatments, Goodrich has made drastic changes in his diet to improve his nutrition and chances of recovery.

Goodrich is grateful for the outpouring support he has received. He says the MBPD has been “more than gracious” in accommodating his work schedule, and that the department is “like a family” to him. Both the executive staff of the MBPD and the Manhattan Beach Police Officers Association are sponsors at the upcoming fundraising event. Goodrich also has the full support of his fellow officers, especially Vasquez, who understands what Goodrich is going through. “I’d been there; I knew just how he felt,” says Vasquez about the life-changing diagnosis.

Goodrich is equally thankful for the huge undertaking by Milewski in organizing the Gable House fundraising event. “She has spent an amazing amount of time on this,” he says with a discernible sense of disbe-

and parents in the South Bay, to welcome, to applaud and to recognize her importance to us in public education.” Harman in turn recognized Rohrer’s long-term commitment to public education in the South Bay by proclaiming lightheartedly: “I love Bev, don’t you?”

New City Councilmember Wayne Powell, a former Cultural Arts Commissioner for Manhattan Beach, gave the opening remarks at the ceremony. Harman took note that Powell was a newly elected City official, and complimented him for his long list of community service

activities over the years and his dedication to the community. “It is exciting to see someone elected to city government who brings all of these skills to his position,” said Harman.

The congresswoman also acknowledged the timeliness of the “unsung heroes” theme because the recent failing economy is taking its toll on families that are struggling to make ends meet. “There are a lot of unsung heroes in this district,” Harman said. “I am doing everything I can think of to help the federal government bring relief to you and your families.”

Harman is Chair of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Intelligence & Terrorism Risk Assessment, and also a member of the Energy & Commerce Committee, where she sits on the Health and Energy & Environment Subcommittees. She was a public school student through high school in Los Angeles, has been married for almost three decades to Sidney Harman, and has four adult children and three grandchildren.

lief that Milewski and others would come together so comprehensively to support him and his family.

Then again, Goodrich is a shining example of inspirational community spirit. Just a few weeks ago, right after undergoing intensive cancer treatments, Goodrich led the annual ShareFest workday at Adams Middle School – painting, building and planting for the benefit of others. “He is fighting for his life yet still finds the time to lead a work project at Adams Middle School,” explains ShareFest’s Mayer.

For more information about the May 31 fundraising event, please contact Sheri Milewski at sheri@coastalinteractive.com or 310-918-2883. The Talbert Family Foundation is the 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization accepting donations for the fundraising events, and the particular fund set up for Goodrich is “Jeff’s Journey to Victory.” For those unable to attend the bowling event, direct donations can be made through this organization by contacting Milewski or visiting: <http://www.talbertfamilyfoundation.org/pages/Jeff.html>, or <http://blog.rock-church.com/category/jeff>.

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