



NORTHSTARS WINTER CLASSIC XV FUNDRAISER

This is the fifth year that we will be using our Winter Classic Girls' Hockey Tournament to help raise funds for a worthy cause, and once again, we are looking for **your help**. It all started in 2004, when our Northstars 16U team attended a hockey tournament outside of Ottawa, ON, the KGHA Competitive Tournament, hosted by the Kanata Girls Hockey Association. It was there that we learned of the plight of one of Kanata's own players, Emilie Joinette, and decided to dedicate our tournament to raising funds for her and her family. Emilie inspired us to make this an annual event, and the rest, as they say, is history!

- **2005** – We raised over **\$1,700** to help offset expenses for the family of **Emilie Joinette**, a member of the Kanata Rangers (Ontario) hockey organization, who has Cystic Fibrosis, and was at the time waiting for a double lung transplant (which she subsequently received in January, 2006). You can learn more about Emilie's courageous journey at <http://www.fusesite.com/emilie/>.
- **2006** – For our next effort, we chose to raise funds for the **Gulf Coast Youth Hockey Association** (Biloxi, MS), who, in addition to each of their families' personal hardships, lost all of their hockey equipment during Hurricane Katrina. We were thrilled to host their hockey director, Stephane Neron, at our tournament, and with the generosity of participating teams, we raised over **\$5,500** in our "*Hockey for Hurricane Relief*" fundraiser.
- **2007** – For our 3rd fundraiser, we decided to dedicate our tournament to raising money for the family of **Justin Lancour**, a teenager from Essex, VT, who suffers from an inoperable brain tumor. Justin's sister Jenna (a former member of our very own Northstars family), and his dad Pat were a big part of the previous year's fundraising efforts. Pat and Jenna's unbelievable generosity in donating items from their own hockey memorabilia for our "Hurricane Relief" fundraiser raffle was very moving, and we decided to help them in their time of need. We were thrilled to present the Lancours with a check for **\$5,200**, and are pleased to announce that Justin is doing very well these days!
- **2008** – Last year we chose two recipients for our fundraiser, the **Albany Cougars Special Hockey Club** and **Operation Adopt a Soldier**. The Cougars are a non-profit amateur hockey program for youths and adults with developmental disabilities, while OAS is also a non-profit organization that sends care packages to military personnel overseas and helps their families here at home. We were excited to present a check for **\$3,500** in raffle proceeds to the Cougars and **\$800** in 50/50 proceeds to OAS!

That brings us to this year's tournament. For Winter Classic XV, we have decided to raise money to help find a cure for a rare disease that has attacked a member of our very own Northstars family. Dylan McDonnell, son of Dave McDonnell, a long time coach with the Adirondack Northstars and 1st inductee into our Hall of Fame, was diagnosed with **Friedreich's Ataxia** at age 18. Now 30, Dylan was first diagnosed with scoliosis at age 6, fitted with a back brace by 10, and finally diagnosed with FA at 18. Dylan walked with the use of a cane until age 25 and now needs a walker and wheelchair for mobility.

Friedreich's Ataxia is a debilitating, life shortening, degenerative neuro-muscular disorder. Onset of symptoms include: loss of coordination (ataxia) in the arms and legs; fatigue and muscle loss; vision impairment, hearing loss and slurred speech; aggressive scoliosis (curvature of the spine); diabetes mellitus; and a serious heart condition (enlarged heart-hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.) The progressive loss of coordination and muscle strength leads to motor incapacitation and the full-time use of a wheelchair, but the mental capabilities of people with FA remain completely intact. There is currently no treatment or cure for FA.

The **Friedreich's Ataxia Research Alliance** (FARA) was established in 1998 by a group of patient families and leading FA scientists. FARA supports the research that will improve the quality and length of life for all those afflicted. To learn more about FA, go to <http://www.curefa.org/>.

In addition to our huge tourney raffle and 50/50 drawings, we annually encourage teams to partake in their own fundraising efforts towards this cause, as several teams have done in the past. Donations of items for our tourney raffle are also graciously accepted. As always, **100%** of fundraising efforts will go the fundraiser recipient. And, because we feel this is such an important facet of our tournament, we will once again present a commemorative plaque to the team raising the most money (last year's top fundraising team was the North Jersey Avalanche 12U team!). We also hope some of you will get a chance to meet and talk to Coach McDonnell, as he will be attending the tournament during the weekend.

Once again, on behalf of the Tournament Committee and the Adirondack Northstars, we thank all of you in advance for helping our tournament make a difference in the lives of others.

Sincerely,

Darryl Coltey

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darryl Coltey', written in a cursive style.

Winter Classic Director