

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Re: 2015 Pull for Kids Classic

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Location: Houston, Texas

On Saturday, May 2, 2015 Child Advocates, Inc. hosted the 23rd annual Pull for Kids Classic, presented by Texas Children's Hospital and honoring longtime supporter and volunteer Mark Heeg. Mark was a court appointed advocate who served 37 children before he lost his battle to ALS in 2014.

The event kicked off with a sporting clays tournament at American Shooting Centers where teams came out to shoot skeet and compete on behalf of Harris County's abused and neglected children. The team from Alliance Graphics took home the first place award.

That evening, nearly 700 guests gathered at the Bayou City Event Center for "Derby Days", a Kentucky Derby themed party complete with silent, big board and live auctions as well as a traditional Wine Pull and Wine Toss. The auctions included trips to Hawaii and Playa Del Carmen, a made to measure suit, a chef's dinner for six at Ibiza, and two private hunts at the Wyatt Ranch, along with hundreds of other items. Cheers could be heard throughout the night from the "Race to Napa" ring toss as attendees played to win rare, premium or large format wines and be entered to win a three night stay in Napa Valley.

The program began with a bugle call and a prayer from second grader, William Oakley a friend of Mark Heeg who spoke of him with adoration and respect. After dinner was served, a video was shown sharing the story of former Child Advocates child Brendon and his sister Sentiana, who were brutally abused, both physically and emotionally, by their mother for many years until law enforcement removed them from their home. Brendon shared in the video about Mark's comforting presence and support as his advocate and Mark's family spoke about how important his volunteer work was to him. As soon as the video concluded, 20 year old Brendon was given a standing ovation and he was able to present an award to the Heeg family for Mark's years of service.

By the end of the night, the 2015 Pull for Kids Classic raised over \$730,000. Event chair Elizabeth DeLuca and her team of committee chairs, Jeff Birmingham, Bryan Boyer, Rick Burnett, Lauren DeLuca, Mark Ellenberger, Christine Gabriel, Suzette Kelly, Bernadette Payne, Allison Sandlin, Emily Trout and Steven Wyatt put together a hugely successful event.

Child Advocates, Inc. mobilizes court appointed advocate volunteers to break the vicious cycle of child abuse. We speak up for abused children who are lost in the system and guide them into safe environments where they can thrive.

Our court appointed volunteers are at the heart of Child Advocates' mission and are shining examples of ordinary individuals making an extraordinary impact in the lives of abused and neglected children of Harris County. Our 30-hour training course is offered several times each year and prepares our volunteers for this incredible experience. All potential volunteers are required to go through this training, along with interviews and thorough background checks including, Local Criminal, National Criminal, CPS and National Sex Offender checks.

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