

The Garth Approach

Garth Brooks: A "Teammate" for Kids



In early May, Variety the Children's Charity of Pittsburgh, Tent 1, was advised that it would be receiving a grant from the Garth Brooks Teammates for Kids Foundation in Littleton, CO in response to a recent proposal submitted at the recommendation of Board Member Mike Schneck.

Teammates for Kids Foundation is a non-profit corporation co-founded by Garth Brooks and Bo Mitchell. The purpose of the Foundation is to contribute financial resources to selected non-profit organizations that effectively serve and benefit children with emphasis on health, education, and inner-city services. As stated by Garth Brooks, "100% of the money goes to the kids. That's not a goal ... it's a rule!"

Teammates for Kids invited Variety Pittsburgh to attend its annual Teammates for Kids Summer Appreciation Party in Las Vegas on July 13 & 14 and to bring along a family helped through Variety's Kids on the Go! Program as guests of the foundation.

Selected was 11 year-old Zach, who has spina bifida and who recently received an adaptive handcycle through our Kids on the Go! Program. Joining Zach were his parents, Ray and Tammy, and sister Holly, age 3. Zach was a natural fit for Teammates for Kids as he plays adaptive sled hockey and has won many championships and trophies.

Four children from selected charities were invited to participate in the festivities of the Teammates for Kids summer appreciation party and our very own Pittsburgh "superstar,"

Zach, was one of the children chosen. During the dinner presentation Friday evening, each child was escorted on stage by professional athletes and family members while their stories and the charities missions were showcased on video.

During the "Meet and Greet," the four families mingled with special invited guests and celebrities and viewed the numerous items available for both the silent and live auctions. The item of most interest to Zach's parents and Tent 1 Executive Director Celia Hindes were the Pittsburgh Steelers helmet personally

autographed by 1970's Steelers Terry Bradshaw, Rocky Bleier, John Stallworth, Lynn Swann, Joe Greene and Mel Blount and the matching autographed Steelers jerseys.

During the live auction, as the bids for these Steelers items reached \$35,000, Garth Brooks approached the highest bidder and then announced to the audience that he (Garth) really wanted the Steelers



helmet. The winning bidder advised Garth Brooks that he would give him the Steelers helmet if he (Garth) would match his bid of \$35,000. Garth Brooks agreed and to everyone's amazement the Steelers items were sold for \$70,000!

Even more surprising was that later in the evening Garth Brooks walked over and presented that same Steelers helmet to Zach!

This fabulous evening ended with a 90-minute concert by Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood.

Pictured above: Garth Brooks, Zach and Trisha Yearwood