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It Bears Mentioning...

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER/MAY 2010

Oh, What a Night!

The 15th annual Bears Care Gala, "Brian's Song...So That Others May Live to Sing," was held at the United Club at Soldier Field on Saturday, May 15. Over 50 Bears players, coaches and front office personnel attended the black-tie event, including **Virginia McCaskey**, Head Coach **Lovie Smith**, General Manager **Jerry Angelo**, the Bears Coaching Staff and nearly 30 current Bears players. **Jeff Joniak**, the Voice of the Bears on WBBM-AM, emceed the event, and **Eric Ferguson** of "The Eric and Kathy Show/The Mix" served as the auctioneer.

Current Bears players who were in attendance included: **Al Afalava**, **Devin Aromashodu**, **Josh Beekman**, **Zackary Bowman**, **Rashied Davis**, **Matt Forte**, **Jarron Gilbert**, **Caleb Hanie**, **Chris Harris**, **Devin Hester**, **Hunter Hillenmeyer**, **Israel Idonije**, **Tim Jennings**, **Patrick Mannelly**, **Jim Marten**, **Brad Maynard**, **Richmond McGee**, **D.J. Moore**, **Frank Omiyale**, **Julius Peppers**, **Eric Peterman**, **Nick Roach**, **Will Ta'ofu'ou**, **Chester Taylor**, **Pisa Tinoisamoa**, **Matt Toeaina** and **Brian Urlacher**.

The 775 guests in attendance had the opportunity to bid on a number of unique prizes and experience packages during the live and silent auctions. The live auction featured a 7-night stay for four couples at Benessere Vineyards in Napa Valley; "Monday Night Football at Halas Hall," which gives two teams of 20 people the opportunity to play a flag football game at the Walter Payton Center, with current Bears players serving as coaches; and a unique gameday experience for four people at the Bears annual Breast Cancer Awareness Game, which will take place on October 17, 2010. But it was the "Leave Town with the Bears" trip that generated the most excitement, and funds, with a winning bid of \$20,000. The winner and a guest will travel with the team to a Bears road game. They will fly on the team charter, stay at the team hotel and travel on police-escorted team buses throughout the weekend. Pre-game sideline passes, game tickets and Bears apparel are also included.

Guests bid on over 100 items during the silent auction, which included prizes such as a Chicago Bears 1947 throwback jersey, autographed by **Brian Urlacher**; a trip to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico; autographed jerseys from **Julius Peppers**, Kobe Bryant and LeBron James; and two trips to New York City—one for a viewing of a dress rehearsal of Saturday Night Live, and the other for the Notre Dame vs. Army game at new Meadowlands Stadium.

Over \$600,000 in net proceeds were raised at the Gala, which was a 10% increase from 2009. Funds raised will support breast and ovarian cancer research and treatment programs in Chicago.

Bears Care wishes to thank Motorola, Jel Sert, United Airlines, the Bears Care Gala Committee, and the Chicago Bears players, coaches and staff who gave of their time to make it such a spectacular evening. For more information about Bears Care or to donate, please visit

www.ChicagoBears.com/community/bearsare.



Bears players posed for a photo with Mrs. McCaskey at Soldier Field.



Mike Martz and Devin Hester attended the 15th Annual Bears Care Gala.

Ed Block Courage Award

Defensive lineman **Israel “Izzy” Idonije** was recognized as the Bears 2010 recipient of the Ed Block Courage Award during a luncheon at Maryville Academy in Des Plaines on Tuesday, April 6. Many members of the Bears Family were in attendance to show their support for Izzy, including Head Coach **Lovie Smith**, fellow defensive linemen **Jarron Gilbert**, **Tommie Harris**, **Henry Melton** and **Matt Toeaina**, Head Athletic Trainer **Tim Bream**, and several members of the front office staff.

Izzy was selected by his teammates for this award because of his tireless off-the-field work through The Israel Idonije Foundation (IFF), which extends positive, life-changing opportunities to families and individuals in economically disadvantaged communities on a local and global scale. IIF promotes the pursuit of education and knowledge, while providing programs for youth and community members in hope that they may actualize and maximize their full potential. With branches in Chicago and Winnipeg, IFF’s interactive programs include “First Down,” “All-Star Football and Dance Camps,” “Caring, Advancing, Restoring and Educating (CARE) Africa” and “Street Love.”

The Ed Block Courage Award is given to one player on each of the 32 NFL teams and has become one of the most esteemed honors bestowed upon a player. The Courage Award is named in honor of Ed Block, the longtime trainer of the Baltimore Colts who was a pioneer in his profession and a respected humanitarian. The Ed Block Courage Award Foundation has celebrated the courageous efforts of NFL players while raising awareness of the plight of abused children in NFL communities for over 28 years. The Crisis Nursery at Maryville Academy serves as the Chicago Courage House. Proceeds from the luncheon benefited the Ed McCaskey Scholarship Fund at Maryville.



Head Athletic Trainer Tim Bream presented Israel Idonije with the 2010 Ed Block Courage Award.



Garrett Wolfe posed for a photo with members of the LaFollette Park Wildcats.

Homecoming for Wolfe

Chicago Bears running back **Garrett Wolfe** returned to the place where his football career started on Friday, April 16 when he had his youth football jersey retired during a heartfelt ceremony at LaFollette Park in Chicago. Garrett, who wore number 25 when he played for the LaFollette Park Wildcats while growing up on the city’s west side, was joined by his former coach as well as current Wildcat players and cheerleaders at the event. LaFollette Park is one of 16 teams in the Chicago Park District’s Junior Bear Tackle Football program, which is offered at no cost to boys and girls ages 8 – 13 throughout the city of Chicago. For more information about the Junior Bear Tackle Football program, please visit www.ChicagoBears.com/community.

Celebrity Gridiron Challenge

Bears cornerback **Charles Tillman** is partnering with Meijer to host the 4th annual Celebrity Gridiron Challenge on Saturday, June 19th at Lake Zurich High School. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Charles Tillman Cornerstone Foundation, whose mission is to provide opportunities and resources to children or their families who are in need. Fans are invited to come out and join in on the fun between 10am—2pm, where they will have an opportunity to watch the games, meet and greet Chicago Bears players, check out the Cornerstone Fan Zone, and much more. The Flag Football contests are comprised of 14 teams of eight “Regular Joe’s” and their celebrity quarterbacks who go head-to-head in this annual competition. To enter, each team raised a minimum of \$4,000 for the Charles Tillman Cornerstone Foundation.

The Cornerstone Fan Zone will have lots of games and activities for children of all ages. Youngsters will have a chance to win great prizes such as an iPod Touch, register to participate in on-field activities, and visit Meijer’s Healthy Living Advisor. The Jesse White Tumblers will also perform for the audience at 1:15pm to showcase their skills and high-flying talent!

Tickets to the Celebrity Gridiron Challenge are free and currently available at your local Meijer store.



This is the 4th consecutive year that Charles Tillman has hosted the “Celebrity Gridiron Challenge.”

Brian Piccolo Awards

Center **Olin Kreutz** and wide receiver/kick returner **Johnny Knox** were named the 2009 veteran and rookie recipients of the Brian Piccolo Award during a press conference at Halas Hall on Tuesday, April 20. Each year, Bears players vote for who they think best exemplifies the courage, loyalty, dedication, teamwork and sense of humor of the late Brian Piccolo. The award was first given to a Bears rookie in 1970, and was expanded in 1992 to include a veteran who possesses the same qualities.

Head Coach **Lovie Smith**, Offensive Coordinator **Mike Martz**, Special Teams Coordinator **Dave Toub**, and Senior Director of Special Projects **Patrick McCaskey** were also on hand to present this prestigious award.

Proceeds from the Piccolo Fund benefit breast cancer research at Rush University Medical Center and the Clearbrook Center for the developmentally disabled.



Olin Kreutz and Johnny Knox posed for a photo with their Piccolo Award trophies.



Staley da Bear flexed his muscles during the “Tales to Tackle” football clinic.

Tales to Tackle

Bears defensive tackle **Jarron Gilbert** and cornerback **D.J. Moore** joined nearly 150 students from across the Chicago area on Saturday, April 17 at the Walter Payton Center in Lake Forest. All of the students at the event successfully completed the Bears “Tales to Tackle” reading incentive program or Bears mascot Staley da Bear’s “Tackle Reading” program during the 2009 – 2010 school year. As a reward for their achievement, the children were invited to take part in a football skills clinic led by Jarron, D.J., and coaches from the Chicago Bears Youth Football Camps. Each student also received a medal in recognition of their reading accomplishments during an awards ceremony following the clinic, as well as autographs from the players.

This was the sixth consecutive year that the Bears partnered with ComEd to offer “Tales to Tackle,” which is geared toward 6th, 7th and 8th grade students. The main component of the program is a reading notebook that features pictures of Bears players, includes a list of suggested books and has plenty of space for students to write book reports and keep track of the books that they read. The program

encourages students to read three teacher-approved books each month during a three-month period.

Staley’s “Tackle Reading” program, which targets students in 1st through 5th grades, is designed to foster young students’ interest in reading both fiction and non-fiction books. The program is divided into four quarters and one “overtime” week. Students are encouraged to read one book per quarter, including two fiction books during the first half and two non-fiction books during the second half. Students can complete the “overtime” portion by either writing a book report or short story on one of the four books read during “regulation.” For more information, please visit www.ChicagoBears.com/community.

Sit, Stay, Read!

George McCaskey, who will assume the role of Bears Chairman of the Board in 2011, visited Faraday and Hendricks Elementary Schools in Chicago on Thursday, May 20 and Wednesday, May 26, where he participated in “Reading Reward Celebrations” for the schools’ *Sit Stay Read* classes. As emcee for the events, George congratulated and rewarded students for their reading accomplishments during the 2009-2010 school year. Each child also received a Summer Reading Fun Pack, which included two books to keep their reading skills sharp over summer vacation.

Sit Stay Read is a unique program that uses trained volunteers and their dogs to help children improve their reading skills. Through a curriculum designed with the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Center for literacy, *Sit Stay Read*’s volunteer and certified dog teams improve reading fluency, make reading fun, and inspire children to become lifelong readers. Reading to a dog increases confidence and generates excitement about reading. Combined with dog-themed books and writing assignments, the dogs bring the sessions to life and provide a text-to-world connection. Programs are provided free of charge to public schools and community facilities serving low-income families in the city of Chicago. Bears Care, the charitable beneficiary of the Chicago Bears, has provided over \$25,000 in grants to support *Sit Stay Read*’s innovative programming. For more information, please visit

www.sitstayread.org.



George McCaskey listened intently as a student practiced his reading skills.



Zack Bowman participated in an assembly celebrating the finale of the “Play 60 Challenge.”

Play 60 Challenge

Cornerback **Zack Bowman** and defensive tackle **Marcus Harrison** encouraged students at Mark Sheridan Math & Science Academy in Chicago to get up and get movin’ during the Bears “Play 60 Challenge” finale on Friday, April 30. The Bears, Walgreens and the American Heart Association (AHA) joined forces to present the “Play 60 Challenge” fitness program in seven Chicago area schools during the fall of 2009. Focusing primarily on middle school students, the Challenge taught kids about staying fit and created an engaging and fun environment meant to inspire them to be physically active for at least 60 minutes every day—both in school and at home. Students were asked to keep track of their daily activity, and Mark Sheridan Academy was awarded the visit because of their successful integration of the “Play 60 Challenge” over the six-week period.

Zack and Marcus participated in a short Q & A session with the students, and talked about the importance of making exercise part of your daily routine and establishing good health habits early on. They also got a great workout with the 120 kids in attendance while they assisted with a fitness assembly led by “Stretch-n-Grow North, Inc.” Stretch-n-Grow is a youth fitness and health education program that makes it fun for kids to get fit and make healthy eating choices. Sessions incorporate all

of the fundamentals of safe and healthy exercise. For more information about Stretch-n-Grow, visit www.stretchngrownorth.com.

Since the visit by the Bears was an award for the entire school’s participation in the “Play 60 Challenge,” Zack and Marcus strolled through the hallways of the school following the assembly, giving high-fives to all of the students at Mark Sheridan Academy, while also stopping to chat and sign autographs for some very excited children.

To learn more about the NFL’s Play 60 initiatives, please visit www.NFLRUSH.com.

Coaching the Coaches

Bears Special Team Coordinator **Dave Toub** spoke to a sold-out crowd when he served as the keynote speaker at the USA Football Coaching School at Halas Hall on Saturday, May 8. Toub talked about the impact youth coaches can make in a child’s life, and how they are laying the foundation for the future of young men, not only in football but in life. He said it was his 5th through 8th grade coaches who inspired him the most to excel in the sport of football and ultimately pursue a coaching career. Said Toub, “They taught me that football is not only fun, but also how much work it takes to be great.”

USA Football Coaching Schools are training clinics held throughout the country designed to prepare youth and middle school coaches with the ability to teach the game of football and create positive experiences for their players, parents and assistant coaches. The Schools are conducted by successful local high school and youth coaches and educate participants on techniques necessary to teach the fundamentals of every position, organize a season with practice planning and tips for a better scheme for offense, defense and special teams.

For more information about USA Football Coaching Schools, please visit www.USAFootball.com.



Rashied Davis got to work making flatbread during a field trip with Common Threads.

Common Threads

Wide receiver **Rashied Davis** joined over 40 students on a field trip to The Chopping Block—Merchandise Mart in Chicago on Friday, May 7. The students, who came from several different Chicago Public Schools, had been participating in cooking classes for the past 12 weeks with the non-profit organization Common Threads, and the trip was meant to be an end-of-the-year treat. During the 3-hour visit to the Chopping Block, the kids learned about the culture of Papua New Guinea while cooking food native to the country.

Common Threads teaches low-income children to cook wholesome and affordable meals because they believe that through hands-on cooking classes they can help prevent childhood obesity and reverse the trend of generations of non-cookers, while celebrating cultural differences and the things people all over the world have in common. For more information, please visit www.CommonThreads.org.

Football for Heart

The Bears were excited to expand our partnership with the American Heart Association (AHA) in 2010 by creating a new program called “Football for Heart,” which helps students learn the value of community service and develop heart-healthy habits while playing the great game of football. The program was piloted in four Illinois schools during the month of April—Granger Middle School in Aurora; Gurrie Middle School in LaGrange; Morrisonville Middle School in Morrisonville; and Stratford Middle School in Bloomingdale.

Modeled after the AHA’s successful “Hoops for Heart” and “Jump Rope for Heart” programs, “Football for Heart” is a football skills program combined with a multi-week, in-school campaign to educate students about heart health and the importance of being physically active for at least 60 minutes a day. At the same time, “Football for Heart” promotes community service by raising funds to help children and adults through lifesaving heart and stroke research and education programs. The program also supports the NFL’s Play 60 youth health and fitness campaign, which is focused on making the next generation of kids the most active and healthy.



Brian Urlacher congratulated students at Granger Middle for being the top fundraising school during the “Football for Heart” program.

Students who participated in “Football for Heart” could earn Bears prizes by reaching specific fundraising goals, and the school that raised the most money for the American Heart Association was to be awarded with a visit from a Bears player at their school. All four schools did an amazing job by collectively raising over \$16,000 for the AHA, but it was Granger Middle School in Aurora that won the top prize by collecting over \$8,700!

While the Granger students anxiously waited to hear if their school took the top honor during their end-of-the-year awards assembly on Wednesday, May 19, they had no idea that Bears linebacker **Brian Urlacher** was waiting outside to personally congratulate them. The kids went crazy when Brian walked into the gym after the announcement! The top two fundraisers, who raised over \$500 each, were recognized in front of the entire school and received an autographed football from Brian. Each student who raised at least \$10 was entered into a raffle for a third football, which was given out during the ceremony. During his visit, Brian also handed out awards to eight Special Olympics athletes who won medals during a competition that took place earlier in the week.

The Bears and AHA are extremely grateful to the teachers and students at all four participating schools for helping to make the first year of “Football for Heart” an overwhelming success. For information about the 2010—2011 “Football for Heart” program, please check back to

www.ChicagoBears.com/community.



Students at Gurrie Middle School participated in a football-based obstacle course during the “Football for Heart” program.

Chicago Bears Youth Football Camps



Chicago Bears Youth Football Camps officially kick-off on Monday, June 14 at the Latin School in Chicago.

Chicago Bears Youth Football Camps are the official youth camps of the Chicago Bears. These week-long camps feature safe, non-contact football instruction and athletic development as well as instruction about good nutrition, proper hydration, and rest and recovery for kids ages 6 to 14 years old. Camps are led by professional educators with supplemental instruction from Chicago Bears Heroes such as **Robin Earl, Allan Ellis, Kris Haines, Al Harris, Jim Morrissey, Revie Sorey, Jim Thornton** and others.

Kids learn to run, throw, catch, defend, form block, form tackle and explode out of stance with proper technique and improved speed. Join us this summer and learn to play the Chicago Bears way!

Chicago Bears Youth Football Camps will kick-off in June, and there is still time to sign your child up for the action! It will be the best week of their summer.

See our 27 camp locations at www.BearsCamps.com or call us at

(312) 226-7776 for more information or to register.