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**CHASE**

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# It Bears Mentioning...

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER/MAY 2009

## A Night to Remember

The 14th 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 9. It was a record-setting evening for the black-tie event, with Bears coaches, staff and 29 current players in attendance. **Jeff Joniak**, play-by-play announcer for the Bears games on WBBM radio, served as emcee for the evening. The hundreds of guests were a sports-minded, and very generous, group. The most popular live and silent auction items of the night were centered around the Bears and Chicago's other successful sports teams, with jerseys from the Blackhawks' Patrick Kane and Jonathan Toews, the Bulls' Derrick Rose, and the Bears' own **Jay Cutler**, **Brian Urlacher** and **Matt Forte** raising significant funds for Bears Care.

But it was two prizes during the live auction that generated the most excitement. The first was a "Road Trip" with the Bears, which gives the winner and a guest the opportunity to fly on the team charter, stay at the team hotel and travel on police-escorted team buses throughout the weekend of a Bears away game. Pre-game sideline passes, game tickets and Bears apparel were also included in this amazing package. The other prize was a surprise, last-minute addition to the live auction. The Bears Care Gala was **Jay Cutler's** first visit to Soldier Field, and in the spirit of the evening, he offered the opportunity for one table of ten to join him, tight end **Greg Olsen** and quarterback **Caleb Hanie** on a behind-the-scenes locker room tour led by head equipment manager **Tony Medlin**. Following dinner, the lucky winners grabbed their new Bears hats and headed to the locker room where they had the

chance to try on Jay's equipment, take pictures and visit with the players. Those two prizes alone raised over \$40,000 for Bears Care!

Current Bears players who were in attendance included: **Anthony Adams**, **Brett Basanez**, **Josh Beekman**, **Earl Bennett**, **Zack Bowman**, **Alex Brown**, **Jay Cutler**, **Jason Davis**, **Dusty Dvoracek**, **Matt Forte**, **Robbie Gould**, **Corey Graham**, **Caleb Hanie**, **Devin Hester**, **Kevin Jones**, **Joey LaRocque**, **Danieal Manning**, **Brad Maynard**, **Trumaine McBride**, **Jason McKie**, **Greg Olsen**, **Frank Omiyale**, **Kevin Payne**, **Adrian Peterson**, **Craig Steltz**, **Matt Toania**, **Brian Urlacher**, **Nathan Vasher**, and **Chris Williams**.

The silent and live auctions helped set a record this year for funds raised on the night of the Gala, which supports breast and ovarian cancer research and treatment programs in Chicago. Its success was a collaborative effort, achieved through the generosity of all the guests, donors and area businesses that participated, the Bears Care Gala Committee, and the Chicago Bears players, coaches and staff who gave their time to make it such a spectacular evening. For more information on Bears Care or to donate, please visit [www.chicagobears.com/community/bears-care](http://www.chicagobears.com/community/bears-care).



**Jay Cutler auctioned off a private tour of the Bears locker room.**



**Bears players posed for a photo with Mrs. McCaskey in the United Club.**



## AHA Heart Ball

Bears President and CEO **Ted Phillips** attended the American Heart Association's 27th annual Heart Ball on Saturday, April 18 at the Palmer House Hilton, where he accepted the "Heart of Gold" award on behalf of the Chicago Bears. The American Heart Association selected the Bears as their 2009 Corporate Honoree because of the club's efforts in the fight against childhood obesity.

For the past three years, the Bears have partnered with the American Heart Association (AHA) through the "What Moves U Challenge," a national movement created by the NFL and the AHA to encourage our children to become more physically active. Through this partnership, the Bears and the AHA continue to reach thousands of Chicago-area children and parents with positive messages about the importance of good nutrition and living a healthy lifestyle. Bears players support the fitness movement by attending student assemblies to lead children in exercises and encourage them to be physically active on a daily basis.

**Ted Phillips** accepted the "Heart of Gold" award on behalf of the Bears.

For more information about the "What Moves U Challenge, please visit [www.chicagobears.com/community](http://www.chicagobears.com/community).

## Ed Block Courage Award

Chicago Bears cornerback **Charles Tillman** was recognized as the Bears 2009 recipient of the Ed Block Courage Award during a luncheon at Maryville Academy in Des Plaines on Tuesday, April 7. Head Coach **Lovie Smith**, Defensive Coordinator /Linebackers coach **Bob Babich**, fellow defensive backs **Zack Bowman**, **Corey Graham**, **Trumaine McBride**, **Kevin Payne**, **Craig Steltz** and **Nathan Vasher**, and many Bears front office staff members were in attendance to show their support.

Charles was selected by his teammates for this award after his amazing display of strength, courage and perseverance in the face of personal tragedy. In the spring of 2008, Charles' infant daughter, Tiana, was diagnosed with dilated cardiomyopathy. He and his wife, Jackie, were told Tiana would need a heart transplant to survive. After being on the waiting list for three months, Tiana received a new heart in July. She is now a happy and healthy one-year-old. While he was dealing with his daughter's illness, Charles remained the ultimate professional at work, and more importantly, an inspiration in the locker room. He had a stellar season in 2008, creating several critical turnovers, despite battling a nagging shoulder injury throughout the year.

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. Maryville Academy has served as the Chicago Courage House since 1992. Proceeds from the luncheon benefited the Ed McCaskey Scholarship Fund at Maryville.



**Charles Tillman** visited with team owner **Virginia McCaskey** during the Ed Block Courage Award Luncheon.



**For the third consecutive year, the Bears hosted the USA Football Coaching School at Halas Hall in Lake Forest.**

## USA Football Coaching School

The Chicago Bears partnered with USA Football to host over 200 youth football coaches from all over the state of Illinois at Halas Hall, the Bears training facility, for the USA Football Coaching School on Saturday, May 16 in Lake Forest. This clinic was designed exclusively to provide youth football coaches with effective ways to develop and organize their team, teach the proper fundamentals, implement drills and communicate with players, parents and other coaches.

Bears wide receivers coach **Darryl Drake** served as the keynote speaker during the morning session. He provided insight about his coaching experiences, his path to the NFL, and the importance of teaching today's youth the fundamentals of football. He also shared receiving drills with the coaches that they can use in their own youth practices. For more information about USA Football Coaching Schools, please visit [www.USAFootball.com](http://www.USAFootball.com).

# Brian Piccolo Awards

Cornerback **Charles Tillman** and running back **Matt Forte** were named the 2008 veteran and rookie recipients of the Brian Piccolo Award during a press conference at Halas Hall on Thursday, April 23. 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. Tillman became the sixth Bears player to win the award as a rookie and veteran.

Head Coach **Lovie Smith**, Offensive Coordinator **Ron Turner**, Defensive Coordinator / Linebackers coach **Bob Babich**, and Senior Director of Special Projects **Patrick McCaskey** were also on hand to present this prestigious award. Matt Forte, who was unable to attend the press conference because he was finishing his degree in Finance at Tulane University, accepted his award in a pre-taped segment that was shown during the award presentation.

Proceeds from the Piccolo Fund benefit breast cancer research at Rush University Medical Center and the Clearbrook Center for the developmentally disabled. The fund has raised more than \$5 million since 1991.



**Charles Tillman and Matt Forte were the 2008 recipients of the Piccolo Award.**



**Cody Balogh and Josh Beekman joined Bears and Boeing employees during a home rehabilitation project in support of Habitat for Humanity South Suburbs.**

## Habitat for Humanity

Offensive lineman **Josh Beekman** and **Cody Balogh** joined The Boeing Company's Employee Volunteer Council in supporting Habitat for Humanity Chicago South Suburbs in Riverdale on Saturday, May 16. Josh and Cody assisted volunteers with various activities associated with rehabbing an existing house. The project was a month-long effort by employees of The Boeing Company, who are committed to helping fulfill the dream of owning a home for Habitat families.

Habitat for Humanity is an ecumenical Christian housing ministry that works in partnership with people in need of shelter to build simple, decent and affordable homes. Habitat for Humanity homeowners purchase their houses through no-profit, no-interest mortgages while contributing 400 hours of "sweat equity" labor working on their house and the houses of others. Mortgage payments are then utilized to help build homes for additional families. Habitat for Humanity Chicago South Suburbs strives to build more houses for working families who truly deserve their support.

## Chicago Bears Youth Football Camps

This summer, the Chicago Bears will once again offer non-contact youth football camps for children ages 6 to 14 years old. The summer schedule includes 26 week-long camps in various Chicagoland communities. Each camp runs Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Through comprehensive, non-contact football instruction, camp participants learn to run, throw, catch, defend and perform other football fundamentals. Teamwork, sportsmanship, self-esteem and nutrition are also important components of the Chicago Bears Youth Football Camps curriculum.



**Chicago Bears Youth Football Camps are led by professional educators and are appropriate for all skill levels, from beginners to experienced players.**



The Camps are led by professional educators, with supplemental instruction provided by Bears Heroes such as **Bobby Douglass, Robin Earl, Allan Ellis, Kris Haines, Jim Morrissey, Revie Sorey** and others. Participants are grouped according to age and skill level, so the camps are ideal for both experienced players and newcomers to the game.

By bringing the camps to local communities, the Bears are making safe, high quality football instruction available to children throughout Chicagoland. For more information or to register, please visit [www.BearsCamps.com](http://www.BearsCamps.com) or call (312) 226-7776. Payment plans are now available!



## Mother's Day Brunch

On Sunday, May 3, Bears defensive tackle **Anthony Adams** and his mom, Connie Davis, joined the Professional Football Players Mothers Association (PFPMA) for a Mother's Day Brunch at Seldom Blues in Detroit, MI. A portion of the proceeds from the event will benefit the American Heart Association. The PFPMA has recently joined forces with the AHA and their "Go Red for Women" campaign to help raise awareness of heart disease, the number one killer of women in the U.S. The brunch featured special guest speakers Jerome Bettis and his mother, Gladys Bettis, a fancy hat competition, and a heart-healthy brunch.

**Jerome Bettis and Anthony Adams posed for a photo with their moms during a Mother's Day Brunch.**

When asked why this cause was important to him, Anthony responded, "My grandmother had triple bypass surgery three years ago. Seeing my grandmother in the hospital has led me to become an advocate for better heart health for my family." His

mother, Connie, also feels strongly about supporting the work of the AHA. "A healthy heart is important to me because [it] means I can care for my grandson versus my grandson taking care of me."

## Ogunleye Goes Back to School

Defensive end **Adewale Ogunleye** appeared at Cameron Elementary School on Wednesday, April 22 in support of the Bears School Outreach program. As part of his visit, Wale spoke to 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders about the importance of education, goal-setting, and commitment to excellence. The classrooms he visited had earned the reward by exhibiting good behavior throughout the first semester of the school year, which was based on attendance, grades, and abiding by the school's uniform policy.

Wale spoke to the kids about hard work, his own upbringing in New York and his experiences at Indiana University. He told the students that balancing school work and outside activities is the key to success, and that while he was never the best athlete in high school or college, he was given opportunities that better players missed out on because he made his education a priority.

The Bears School Outreach program reaches over 7,000 students on an annual basis.



**Adewale Ogunleye visited Cameron Elementary School in support of the Bears School Outreach program.**



## Play It Smart at Bears Expo

Over 5,500 fans flocked to Soldier Field on Sunday, May 17 to get an early glimpse of their beloved team during Bears Expo. Over 40 current players attended the festivities, along with many former Bears greats. Fans had the opportunity to get autographs from their favorite players, participate in Bears Bingo, buy authentic game-worn equipment, visit the Bears locker room, and participate in on-field activities. The activities that drew the biggest crowds were the seminars that were held in the United Club. President and CEO **Ted Phillips**, General Manager **Jerry Angelo** and Head Coach **Lovie Smith** received a standing ovation during their hour-long seminar, where they talked about the team's exciting off-season and hopes for the upcoming year. New quarterback **Jay Cutler** and tackle **Orlando Pace** were officially introduced to Bears fans during their Q & A session with tight end **Greg Olsen** and running back **Matt Forte**.

**Football players from the Play It Smart program assisted with on-field football drills at Bears Expo.**

Football players from Christian Fenger, Hubbard and South Shore High Schools in Chicago volunteered their time at Bears Expo by assisting with football drills on the field, which were led by coaches from Chicago Bears Youth Football Camps. The high school players that were in attendance are part of the *Play It Smart* program. *Play It Smart* is an educational program targeted at high school football players from economically disadvantaged environments in which family support and community support are often lacking. The program, designed to transform student-athletes' passion for sport and intense dedication to their team into a force for greater good in their lives, is remarkably successful. *Play It Smart* participants graduate from high school and go on to college at rates well above those of their peers.

## Rookies Lend a Hand at Boys & Girls Club



The 2009 Rookie Class volunteered at the BGCLC's new Teen Center.

The 2009 Bears Rookie Class joined General Manager Jerry Angelo and his wife, Bernie, at the Boys & Girls Club of Lake County (BGCLC) in Waukegan on Wednesday, May 27. As part of the visit, the group helped pull up carpet at the proposed site for the Club's new Teen Center. Working together, they were able to remove the carpet from the entire house in under an hour. The Angelos have been heavily involved with BGCLC for several years and helped raise \$71,000 for the organization

by selling raffle tickets for a motorcycle that was donated by a Harley Davidson dealership in Lisle. From that donation, \$31,000 was used to purchase the house that is being converted into the Teen Center. After they completed their work at the Teen Center, the rookies visited the main BGCLC building and conducted a youth football clinic for over 50 kids.

This visit was the first of four volunteer activities the Bears rookies will support as part of the "Rookie Rally" program, which was created by the Bears Community Relations department to involve the team's first-year players, as a group, in charitable activities throughout the season. The "Rookie Rally" program helps the rookies learn more about their new community, serve several worthwhile charitable organizations in the area, and bond together as a group through volunteerism.



Jerry Angelo lent a helping hand at the BGCLC.

## Communities in Schools of Chicago

Defensive end **Adewale Ogunleye** visited Hayt Elementary School, and fullback **Jason Davis** visited Bridge and Brennemann Elementary Schools in Chicago during the month of May to speak to students about the importance of education and leading an active lifestyle. These visits were in support of a partnership that the Chicago Bears established with Communities in Schools of Chicago (CISC) during the 2008-2009 school year to promote the Bears "Play 60" fitness initiative, which encourages kids to get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Through this collaboration with CISC, the Bears provided free flag football equipment to four deserving Chicago Public Schools that recently established flag football programs in their schools.



Jason Davis played flag football with kids at Bridge Elementary School.

## Charles Tillman's Celebrity Gridiron Challenge



Charles Tillman will host his 3rd annual Celebrity Gridiron Challenge on Friday, June 26 at Elmhurst College.

Cornerback **Charles Tillman** is inviting all football fans to participate with him and many of his fellow Chicago Bears teammates at the 3rd Annual Charles Tillman's Celebrity Gridiron Challenge—The Ultimate Flag Football Experience at Elmhurst College's Langhorst Field on Friday, June 26 starting at 10:00 a.m. Admission is free to the public and there will be prize giveaways all day, including autographed memorabilia, Wii game systems, tickets to Bears home games, and much more!

All proceeds from the event will benefit Charles Tillman's Cornerstone Foundation, whose mission is to improve the lives of critically and chronically ill children throughout the Chicagoland area by providing daily support and life changing experiences. Since 2005, Charles Tillman's Cornerstone Foundation has impacted the lives of nearly 20,000 Chicago-area children.

For more information about the Charles Tillman's Cornerstone Foundation and Celebrity Gridiron Challenge, please visit [www.charlestillman.org](http://www.charlestillman.org).