



Balloon Angels

Lifting Children's Spirits

Fall
2006

Quarterly Newsletter
For volunteers and contributors

Focus on our Volunteers...



Vikki Hoskinson is this month's "Volunteers of the Month". Vikki has been volunteering with Balloon Angels now for about 2 years and is a great example of a volunteer that is making a difference in the lives of hundreds of children.

Vikki was born in Houston, TX, but have lived in Louisville most of her life. She attended Oldham County High School and then earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology at Eastern Kentucky University and then her Masters degree in Educational and Counseling Psychology at the University of Louisville. Vikki met her future husband Tim 17 years ago through a mutual friend. Vikki said that they had their first date on Christmas night and "have been together nearly every day since!" Vikki and Tim were married in September of 1992 and have been married for more than 14 years. For their 15th anniversary they are planning a trip to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico for one week – without the kids! Vikki and Tim have two children, Jacob and Noah. Jacob is three and a half and attends Middletown Christian Preschool and Noah is 8 and is a 3rd grader at Bowen Elementary School.



Vikki has taught at Indiana University Southeast for more than 10 years and for the last 8 years she has taught career classes through the School of Business that help students identify career opportunities and helps them prepare for entry into the job market. She also does career consulting for individuals and companies. Vikki runs a home-based business called Piece by Piece Designs where she makes floral arrangements, does faux painting and wall murals, derby hats, and gifts of all kinds. In December Vikki will be launching on the internet an infant growth chart that she created. All of this and she still manages to make time to volunteer with Balloon Angels!



Vikki started with Balloon Angels through an outreach initiative with Northeast Christian Church (www.necchurch.org) called Kingdom Assignment 2 about two years ago and has been a faithful volunteer ever since. When asked how she felt after giving that first child a balloon, Vikki says, "It was like nothing I'd experienced before. I've been fortunate to not have to go through a difficult experience with my own children like these families have, and it makes me feel good to be able to make their experience even a little bit better." When asked what keeps her coming back to help with Balloon Angels, she says, "Every time I see the smile or look of awe on a child's face when they see a huge bouquet of balloons to choose from or hear the sincere thank you from a tired or discouraged parent, I know this is something I will be a part of for a long time."



Vikki has helped us with numerous special events and orientation classes. Several times a year we'll reach out to the community and have 40-50 new volunteers that want to come and try Balloon Angels just once to see what it's like and to see if they want to become regular volunteers. Vikki is always there to lead new volunteers around and make sure that they have a wonderful experience. Thanks Vikki for all that you do!

The United Way

We have a great and easy way for you to help out the Balloon Angels team.



Many companies have fundraising drives to help support the United Way. Several of our volunteers and donors work for Pfizer, who has a major partnership with the United Way.



Pfizer encourages it's employees to participate and make "an investment in the community" by making donations (through a regular payroll deduction) to the United Way. Through the United Way you are able to designate the financial "pledge" to a specific United Way agency or a non-profit charity of our choice, such as

Balloon Angels. Overall, this very simple work related initiative resulted in donations of over \$5,000 to Balloon Angels in 2006! That's a lot of balloons and helium! If your employer shares this corporate partnership with the United Way, this could be a very easy way for you to become a regular donor to Balloon Angels. This is the only information that you need to allocate some or all of your "pledge" to Balloon Angels. Thanks in advance for helping us out if you can!

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Balloon Angels start at Kentucky Children's Hospital in Lexington!

We are preparing to launch Balloon Angels at the University of Kentucky Children's Hospital in Lexington! On November 13th, 2006 we held our



first orientation for new volunteers to help us give out balloons at this hospital. We had about 20 new volunteers attend the orientation and we're planning a

second orientation in December. If you have a friend or relative that may be interested in volunteering with Balloon Angels in Lexington, call us at (502) 253-0855 or email us at gary@balloonangels.org. Our goal is to complete the orientation process and start delivering balloons in December or January.

Kentucky Children's Hospital is part of UK HealthCare offers a comprehensive list of pediatric services under one roof. It includes a 12-bed Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), 50 bed NICU, 44 acute care (non-ICU) rooms, 26 bed normal newborn nursery, and 8 -10 beds devoted to 23 hour admissions/observation. Each year, the pediatric clinic has over 46,000 patient visits.

Friends or relatives in Cincinnati or Indianapolis?

Balloon Angels is working with a young lady in Cincinnati and we hope to start delivering balloons to hospitalized children in the Cincinnati area early next year. If you have friends or relatives in the



Cincinnati area, tell them about Balloon Angels and see if they would be interested in taking in free balloons to hospitalized children. Most of our volunteers serve one night per month and it usually

only takes a couple of hours. If you think you may have someone that may be interested, contact us at

(502) 253-0855 or contact us email us at gary@balloonangels.org.

Visit our new Balloon Angels website!

At the beginning of May, Balloon Angels launched its new website! You can still find us at www.balloonangels.org – it's just our look that has changed. Now you can find out more about us – how we got started, about our volunteers and even some of our accomplishments. You can also find copies of all of our

old newsletters. We're also trying to keep an updated calendar for future events. One of the best

new features is our picture and comments section. You can view

pictures of our volunteers and events and you can read comments from patients and their parents that have received our balloons. You can also read comments from hospital administrators and from our current volunteers. So stop by and visit us at www.balloonangels.org.



Do you have a heart for kids? If so, we would love to have you on our team! We can always use your help. If you or someone you know has a heart for children and may be interested in helping us get started give us a call! If you live in Louisville, Lexington, Cincinnati, Indianapolis we need your help! If you live outside of this area and you or someone you know may be interested in helping get started in your area, let us know!

Comments – If you have an idea for our newsletter, contact Gary McQuillen at gary@balloonangels.org

Here are some of the balloons that we take into kids:

