



# Balloon Angels

## Lifting Children's Spirits

Fall  
2007

Quarterly Newsletter  
For volunteers and contributors

### Focus on our Volunteers...



Richard Galang is this month's Volunteer of the Month! Richard was originally born and raised in the Philippines. He attended elementary, middle and high schools in Quezon City which was a previous capital city of the

Philippines. Richard immigrated to the United States when he was sixteen and obtained an Associates Degree in Child Development. He has been living in Louisville since September of 2000.



Richard's passion for helping children didn't start with Balloon Angels. He has been working with

special needs children for over 10 years with most of his experience being in the public school system. Richard is currently an instructional assistant at Churchill Park School and he does respite work part time.



Richard recently had an opportunity to travel to the Special Olympics World Summer Games, which took place Oct. 2-11 in Shanghai, China where he served as a liaison who helped athletes' family members with logistical information. Richard enjoys going to the movies, musicals and Broadway shows. He also enjoys traveling and collecting key chains.



Richard's involvement with Balloon Angels is a little unique and started out from the patient's perspective. Through his work with special needs children, Richard spent a lot of his time at Kosair Children's Hospital and said, "Every Tuesday night, Balloon Angels would come by and give out balloons to the kids. It would make them smile, even if they were at their worst." Richard also noticed that watching those kids smile helped to make their parents, and him, smile as well.

Richard found himself wondering what it would be like to give out the balloons to the kids. On one Tuesday night, he noticed that a couple of the volunteers actually worked at the same school as

he did. After a few questions, he contacted Balloon Angels and came down and gave it a try – and loved it. Now if Richard is not working on a Tuesday night, you can find him at Kosair Children's Hospital volunteering with Balloon Angels. When asked why he continues to volunteer with Balloon Angels, he responds, "Just the fact that I can help the kids and put their worries and concern on hold for a while." Richard has been a volunteer since November of 2006 and helps us give out balloons at both Kosair Children's Hospital and Home of the Innocents.



### Happy Anniversary!!!

Happy Anniversary! November of 2007 marked the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the Balloon Angels organization! It was 5 years ago that the first volunteers for Balloon Angels went out, bought 10 balloons and took them into the pediatric unit of Baptist East Hospital. 5 years and close to 50,000 balloons later, Balloon Angels is an official non-profit charity that delivers free balloons to children at four different children's hospitals in Louisville and Lexington. A very special thanks to those of you who have been involved in one way or another since the beginning. Whether you're one of



the great volunteers who have helped us give out the balloons to those little smiling faces, one of the many people that have made regular donations to help us fund our efforts, or if you've just supported us with your words of kindness and support, we REALLY APPRECIATE all that you've done! THANK YOU!!!

### UK Kentucky Children's Hospital Update!

It seems like just yesterday, but 9 months ago on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Balloon Angels had our first night of delivering balloons to children at Lexington's UK

**Kentucky Children's Hospital**

Kentucky Children's Hospital. We currently have

two teams of volunteers delivering balloons



twice a month to kids in the hospital. Team Leader Tammy Tipton says that she looks forward to the fourth Thursday of each month and clears her calendar as much as possible to be able to hand out balloons to the kids. She says, "I look forward to the day because I've seen just how appreciative the kids and the families are when they get to pick out a free balloon. I also notice how much more appreciative of how fortunate I am to have two healthy children. At first, I feared that I was too soft hearted and wouldn't be able to handle seeing sick children or children with cancer, but what I have learned is that I can."

Team Leader, Lisa Thompson, says that, "Volunteering with Balloon Angels has been a great experience. My favorite thing is when I walk into a room and the child in that room sees ALL of the balloons that I have, and they immediately smile. Not just a regular smile, but a HUGE smile. They get so excited! The parents are so appreciative of such a little gift to their child. Even the nurses seem to be impacted by us just being there. I even heard a nurse one night say, 'I love balloon night...' I had to smile when I heard her say that. Sometimes I walk away from a night at Balloon Angels and realize just how much one little balloon affects so many people, it's just amazing!



Live in the Lexington area? Would you like to help give out free balloons to hospitalized kids? Join the Balloon Angels team! We're currently giving out balloons two Thursday nights per month and would eventually like to give out balloons each week. If you are interested in joining our Lexington team, contact us at (502) 253-0855 or at [gary@balloonangels.org](mailto:gary@balloonangels.org).

## Run For Balloons!

On October 21, 2007 Alan Anderson ran in the Louisville Marathon and completed his first 26.2 mile marathon with a great time of 4 hours and 10 minutes. You may ask why this accomplishment is appearing in our Balloon Angels newsletter, but Alan found a great way of turning miles into thousands of balloons for hospitalized children in Louisville and Lexington. A quick Q&A with Alan:



Q: Why did you choose to do the marathon as a fundraiser for Balloon Angels?

A: I have always wanted to do something that would benefit children in need. Balloon Angels puts

smiles on children's faces and that's what is important in life.

Q: How long did you train?

A: I trained for about 6 months. However, I have been running in organized runs (5K, 10K and 10 mile) for the last 3 years.

Q: What was the most difficult part of the training?

A: Balancing work and training was very difficult. I had to start running at 4:20 AM several mornings. The heat became a factor during July, August and September.

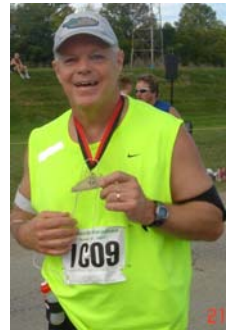
Q: What was the best part of the marathon?

A: Having my entire family attend the marathon and cheer me on. Also, finishing the race with somewhat of a smile on my face and being able to complete my first marathon with one of my BEST friends, Gary McQuillen.

Q: Are you going to do another marathon?

A: Absolutely! I will be running in the Indy Mini Marathon, Land Between the Lakes Mini Marathon, Rode City Run, Papa John 10 mile Run, and the Chicago Marathon in 2008.

Alan shared his 1<sup>st</sup> marathon Balloon Angels fundraising event with friends, family and coworkers and ended up raising almost \$2,000 for Balloon Angels! Thanks Alan and Congratulations on your first marathon!



## Friends or relatives in Indianapolis?

Julie Rhoad, one of our recent Louisville Balloon Angel volunteers, has relocated to Indianapolis this summer and has agreed to help us get Balloon Angels started up at Riley Hospital for Children. That's **EXCITING!** For those of you living in Indy or with friends & family in Indy help us spread the word and find volunteers for Balloon Angels for Riley Children's Hospital.



**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](mailto:gary@balloonangels.org)