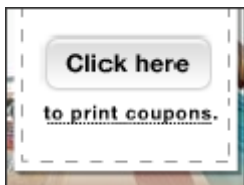



[News](#)
[Sports](#)
[Autos](#)
[Entertainment](#)
[Business](#)
[Features](#)
[Opinion](#)
[Marketplace](#)


Southfield | Lathrup Village | Oak Park | Northwest Detroit

[Local news](#) | [sports](#) | [calendars](#)
[E-MAIL THIS STORY](#) | [PRINTER-FRIENDLY FORMAT](#)

MARK SNYDER/OAKLAND SPORTS: Group proves hockey has heart

Volunteers driving force behind group Hockey has Heart

February 17, 2005

BY MARK SNYDER
FREE PRESS COLUMNIST

Susan McCoy accepted her husband Rick's passion for ice hockey.

For 20 years, he would shuffle off to a metro Detroit rink to play, referee and hang out with those who shared his love for the sport.

In all that time, Susan never imagined hockey would help save Rick's life.

"My husband had a massive stroke in July," McCoy said last week. "He was in business for himself and when he had his stroke, his business stopped. I have a good job as a teacher in Livonia but he needed a caretaker, who cost \$600 per week, and insurance does not cover that."

When Rick was in the hospital, he and Susan received a visitor, Kyle O'Malley. He brought Susan a book about Wayne Gretzky's father, who also suffered a stroke, and he brought an offer.

O'Malley, the secretary for Farmington Hills-based charity Hockey has Heart, told McCoy that the charity would help pay for the beginning period of her husband's caretaker, producing \$8,000 to cover nearly three months of care.

"I can't even sing the praises highly enough," McCoy said. "They didn't know me or Rick at all but they followed up on the lead."

You've heard of pay it forward? This is passing it forward, from hockey stick to hockey stick.

It all started in 2002 when Farmington Hills resident Lucy Oakleaf heard about a local man, Terry Gould. Gould's son Brian played at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena, where Oakleaf was president of the Farmington Hills Hockey Association.

"One of the teams came to us and said they had a dad in need of a heart transplant and was there anything we could do as an organization to help," recalled Oakleaf, whose son Mike started playing hockey at age 7 and now

CLASSIFIEDS

- [Find a Home](#)
- [Find an Apartment](#)
- [Vacation Properties](#)
- [Buy & Sell Boats](#)

[New & Used Cars & Trucks](#)

SHOPPING

Find the best sales & deals at major retailers near you:

- [Target](#)
- [Circuit City](#)
- [Mervyn's](#)
- [Bass Pro](#)
- [Home Depot](#)
- [Shops](#)
- [Sears](#)
- [Jo-Ann Stores](#)
- [Parisian](#)

FIND MORE RETAILERS ▶

ADVERTISEMENT

Community links >

[Southfield](#)
[Lathrup Village](#)
[Oak Park](#)
[Detroit](#)
[Oakland County](#)

More coverage >

[More Oakland news](#)
[Prep sports](#)
[Real estate transactions](#)
[Carol Cain: Small business](#)
[Other communities](#)
[How to reach us](#)

Quick links >

[Home page](#)
[Site index](#)
[View the front page](#)
[Weather](#)
[Lottery](#)
[Comics](#)
[Photos](#)
[Movie listings](#)
[Restaurant guide](#)
[Search](#)
[Archives](#)
[Death notices](#)
[Personals](#)
[Auto news](#)
[Newspaper subscriptions](#)
[About the Free Press](#)
[Free Press Jobs Page](#)
[Bookstore](#)

plays at Redford Catholic Central.

"Terry was not doing well and was on the transplant waiting list. We got together in Farmington Hills and said, 'What can we do?' One thing led to another and the hockey community in metro Detroit came together."

A gala fund-raising dinner was held in Gould's honor in early 2003 and reportedly raised \$150,000. He received a new heart in May 2003 and now, nearly two years later, he's thriving.

"When they first started I thought it'd be nice and they'd have a hockey shootout to raise a couple hundred dollars," Gould said. "But never in my wildest dreams did I think about this. You hear these stories about people who get together to help a family out. It happened to me."

The experience with Gould pushed Oakleaf and her friends to apply for status as a non-profit organization and the response has been tremendous. More than 20 families -- including the McCoys -- with a hockey tie have benefited from the organization in the past two years. Many of those families had no idea Hockey has Heart existed.

At HHH, every individual is a volunteer and Oakleaf said 99 percent of the money raised goes to families in need. HHH has distributed \$215,688.72 to families since 2002.

Most of the money is raised at the yearly banquet. This year's banquet will be held April 8 at the Laurel Manor in Livonia.

Before that, though, HHH will run a few different fund-raising events, including a Feb. 27 hockey game in Ann Arbor between University of Michigan alumni and Detroit Red Wings alumni and a raffle to win a suite at Joe Louis Arena for the Central Collegiate Hockey Association championship in March. HHH also raffles off hockey memorabilia to raise money.

The word will spread in mid-March with a five-minute Southeastern Michigan spot on CNN Headline News.

"Ultimately, we would like it to become a national foundation," Oakleaf said. "You crawl, walk and then you run. So far, we've limited it to the state of Michigan. With our charter we're able to help families affiliated with the sport."

HOOPS CHANGES: High school basketball fans, expect to be a bit busier at this time next year.

It's almost certain that both boys and girls basketball will be played in the winter, so the Oakland Activities Association plans to play games Tuesday though Friday.

Most of the state's leagues are planning a Tuesday-Friday tripleheader system where the three girls games (freshman, junior varsity, varsity) would play at one school while the boys games would be at the opposing school at the same time.

The OAA plans to play one gender's games on Tuesday and Thursday and the others on Wednesday and Friday with the genders flipping days halfway through the season.

As other athletic directors have pointed out, playing Wednesday and Thursday gives the OAA a better chance to get officials and by keeping games out of the early afternoon, parents will have a better chance to attend.

Contact **MARK SNYDER** at 248-351-3688cq or msnyder@freepress.com.

Ready to wed?
**IT'S BRIDAL
EXPO SEASON!**

Strut's found
one near you.

Look for it
this February on
Strutmag.com



SUBSCRIPTION CENTER



**GET UP TO
4 WEEKS FREE**
WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW

- [Start Home Delivery](#)
- [Renew Subscription](#)
- [Customer Service](#)
- [Earn Extra Income - Become an Independent Carrier](#)

NEWSPAPER ADS



FEATURING:
Dining Delights

More Savings:



- [Online Shopping Mall](#)
- [Print Grocery Coupons](#)
- [Win Movie Tickets](#)

[Browse the Classifieds](#)

 [email this](#) |  [print this](#)

[Home](#)

[News](#)

[Sports](#)

[Entertainment](#)

[Business](#)

[Features](#)

[Opinion](#)

[Tech](#)

[Marketplace](#)

Copyright © 2005 Detroit Free Press Inc. All rights reserved.