

now you see it

bringing the power of magic to the patient's bedside

When Ed Barry steps into a patient room at **Advocate Hope Children's Hospital**, strange things happen. Objects go missing, things change color and — if only for a few minutes — a child's awareness of his or her own illness can disappear. Barry is not part of any medical team. In fact, he does not even work for the hospital. But he does have a tremendously positive effect on the patients he visits.

After all, having a parent tell you it is the first time their child smiled in three days is very powerful.

Barry is a volunteer magician through Open Heart Magic (OHM), a program designed to use close-up magic as the basis for a therapeutic and positive interaction to empower children and teens in hospitals. Once a week, a magician visits Hope and performs one-on-one magic for the patients at their bedsides. But the magic does not stop there. The magician then teaches the child how to perform one of the tricks and even leaves the child with the supplies to amaze just about anyone who will watch.

Sharing the magic

Mike Walton started Open Heart Magic in 2003. Walton wanted to do bedside magic without knowing if it was even possible in a medical environment. He found not only was it possible, but it also had therapeutic benefits. "It gives the children control in a world where they have little control and provides a special memory that will stay with them," said Walton.

Mike Guzy, president of Hearts for Hope, a

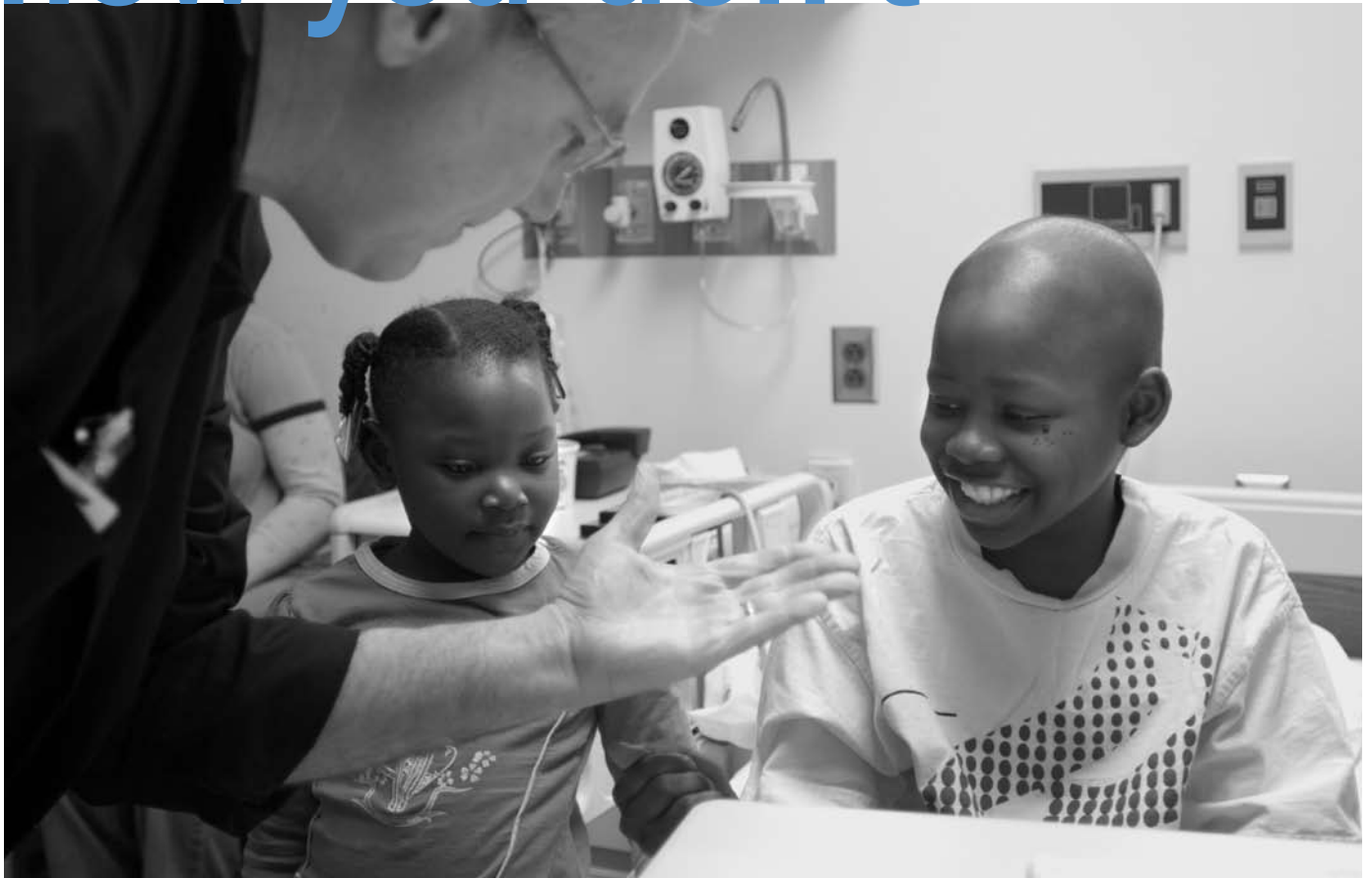


volunteer organization dedicated to raising awareness of and philanthropy for Hope Children's Hospital, first heard about OHM through a golf outing he ran every year. Hearts for Hope strives to find creative ways to raise funds and friends for Hope. The organization was looking for another program it could sponsor that would directly benefit children.

Hearts for Hope saw an immediate fit with OHM. Board member Mark Joyce and his fellow employees at NationaLease raised more than \$3,000 to help OHM get started at Hope Children's Hospital. "We hope that through the support of grateful parents, concerned families and community leaders, we are able to continue programs like Open Heart Magic at the hospital," said Guzy. **Advocate Lutheran General Children's Hospital** is hoping to follow Hope's lead. The hospital is currently seeking funding to expand its magic program.

Join us on June 18, 2007, for Hope Children's Hospital Golf Outing at Cog Hill in Lemont. For more information, please call 708.684.3764.

now you don't



Bedside magic

Ed Barry loved magic as a kid, so when he heard about OHM he became a volunteer. Through training, he learned how to perform tricks and how to teach them to kids. But most importantly he learned how to interact with hospitalized children.

When Barry comes to the hospital each week, he receives a list of patients to visit from Child Life Services, a program to help children and their families cope with the emotional and psychological challenges of hospitalization and treatment. “The Open Heart Magic program is great for kids who cannot leave their room,” said Lisa Boland, child life specialist. “Before, those patients would have to miss out on some of the programs. With bedside magic, the fun comes to them. The response has been great.”

Barry makes sure he visits every patient on the list. He usually performs a variety of tricks and teaches each patient at least one. “One little boy took to the magic right away. When a nurse came in to give him a shot, he insisted on showing her a trick first. The day he was discharged, he was performing

tricks as he was wheeled down the hall,” said Barry. Before the boy left, he whispered to Barry that he had not given away any secrets: Each child takes the magician’s oath not to reveal how the tricks are done.

Although many OHM magicians prefer the sponge ball trick, Barry’s favorite is Red Hot Mama. “With Red Hot Mama, the cards change color. The look on the kids’ faces is amazing,” said Barry. “There is one teen who has been there since I started. He has seen every trick I have and has mastered all five of the tricks we provide as takeaways. He really wants to learn Red Hot Mama. I told him I would talk to my boss, but first reminded him of his magician’s oath.”

Although the magicians do not know why the patients are in the hospital, it does not stop them from making a connection. Barry focuses on making each child laugh, smile and feel part of something special — something magical. ■

To make a donation to Hope Children’s Hospital or for more information about Hearts for Hope, call 708.684.3764.