

Bringing You Closer to
the Lives You Help Change

Connections

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Born without a diaphragm, Grace Buckeye (shown below before surgery) developed severe scoliosis after a growth spurt. She traveled six hours from North Dakota for surgery at Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare. Today, Grace (shown after surgery at right) is happy to "finally" have a straight back.

Why Did Grace Travel Six Hours for Surgery? Because the Hospital You Support Could Help Her

When you see pictures of Grace Buckeye's back before surgery, you can't help but take a deep breath. With an 80-degree curve in her spine, Grace clearly needed intervention—a fact that's obvious even to an untrained eye.

Buckeye. "We had assumed the issues with her back had to do with being born without a diaphragm. We didn't realize it could be dangerous without treatment."

Thankful for Gillette's Expertise

Within a month, the Buckeyes traveled to St. Paul, Minn., to see Lonstein. They learned that Grace would one day need surgery. At first, however, she could wear a brace to keep the curve from worsening. The goal: to hold off on surgery for as long as possible.



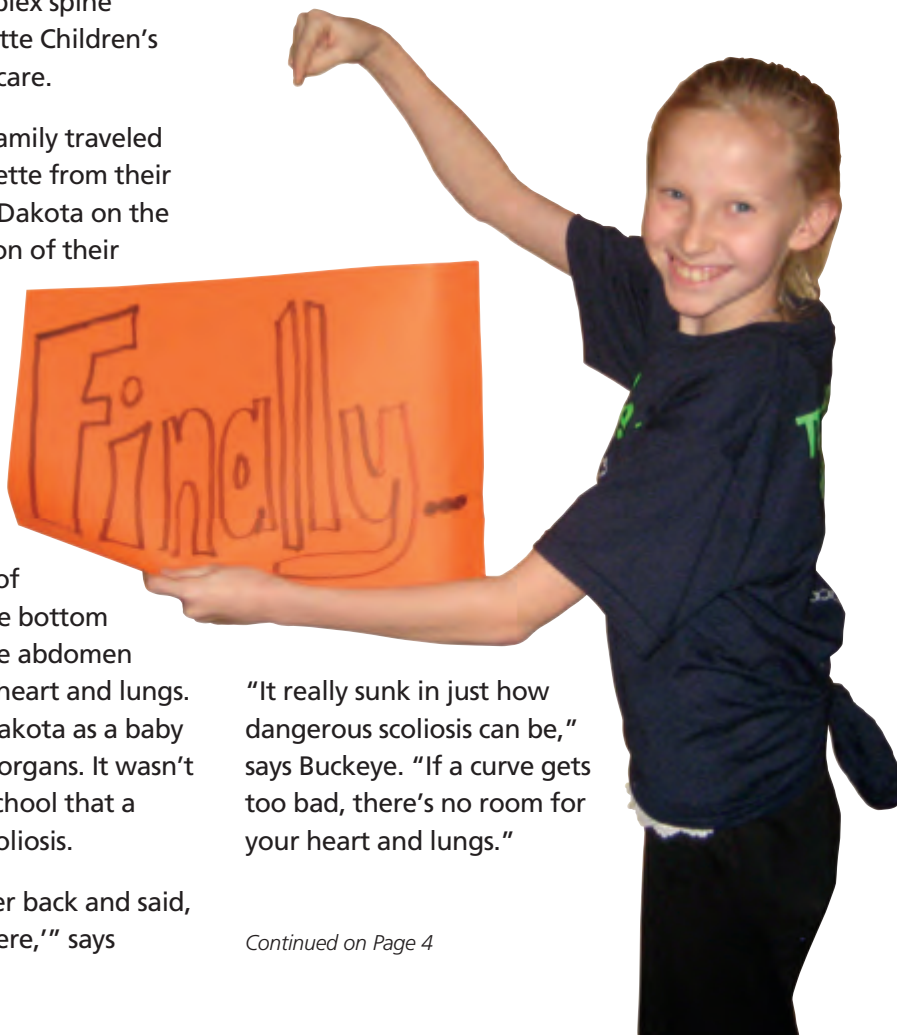
"She hit a growth spurt, and the curve became bad very quickly," says Grace's mom, Diane Buckeye. "Luckily, we were already seeing the best doctor available." That was John Lonstein, M.D., a surgeon known worldwide for performing complex spine surgeries at Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare.

Grace and her family traveled six hours to Gillette from their home in North Dakota on the recommendation of their family physician. "He said Dr. Lonstein was the best," says Buckeye. "The best anywhere."

Born Without a Diaphragm

Grace's challenges started at birth. She was born without a diaphragm—the sheet of muscle that extends across the bottom of the rib cage, separating the abdomen from the area that holds the heart and lungs. Grace had surgery in North Dakota as a baby to correct problems with her organs. It wasn't until she was in elementary school that a doctor diagnosed her with scoliosis.

"Our doctor took a look at her back and said, 'Uh oh, we have a problem here,'" says



"It really sunk in just how dangerous scoliosis can be," says Buckeye. "If a curve gets too bad, there's no room for your heart and lungs."

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A Word From Our President

Margaret Perryman

Children Travel Far and Wide for What You've Built Here

St. Paul, Minn. An unassuming city in the heart of the Midwest. A place known for its family-friendly parks, Cass Gilbert architecture and proud Irish history.

But St. Paul also is home to Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, which provides one of the top pediatric orthopedic programs in the world. Unlike any other facility in the region, we've built our services entirely around the needs of children who have disabilities or complex conditions and injuries.

Ever since Gillette's founding, orthopedics has been central to our mission. In fact, a vast majority of the children we treat have conditions that affect their growing muscles and bones. So it should come as no surprise that our goal has always been to offer the highest level of expertise in this area.

To that end, we've assembled one of the nation's largest pediatric orthopedic groups—offering a level of expertise that's unmatched in the region. The benefits of such expertise extend far beyond St. Paul, the Twin Cities or even Minnesota. We attract families from throughout the nation and world.

I'm sharing this because I want you to know just how tremendous a gift you're providing to children in your community—and beyond. No matter how far families travel to get here, you offer them a place to call home. You offer facilities designed for their needs. You offer experts familiar with rare and complex conditions. You show them that *all* children deserve the best.

At Gillette, children who have disabilities don't need to compete for resources with other patient populations, navigate facilities designed for adults, or see providers who have limited experience with their needs. Instead, with your help, we have the freedom to invest our resources in care for the children we serve.

Last year, we added more surgeons to our pediatric orthopedics team to keep pace with demand. We also opened a new surgery center with larger operating rooms that can accommodate the complex procedures we perform. And we built a surgery simulation center that will help us prepare for complex surgical procedures as well as train the next generation of pediatric surgical teams.

Thank you for all that you do to make our services possible. Because of you, children in your neighborhood—and throughout the world—can count on health care designed for their needs.

Why we Give

Changing Lives for Nearly 30 Years!

Will You Join Friends of Gillette in Making a Difference?

A glass slipper sculpted from ice. A table filled with cupcakes. A magical performance featuring Cinderella.

It was a little girl's dream.

But for sisters Lily and Kaeli Harris, attending the Friends of Gillette 27th annual benefit was about more than sparkly shoes and princess dresses. The event, held at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, featured a musical performance and auctions and raised more than \$220,000 for Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare.



Lily (right) and Kaeli Harris have a strong sisterly bond. The girls recently enjoyed a magical night at a Friends of Gillette benefit. Lily, who has cerebral palsy, is one of the 23,000 patients Gillette serves each year.

Lily, 6, has a severe form of cerebral palsy. She is one of the more than 23,000 children whom Gillette helps each year. "It was amazing to see the generosity of the people who attended," says Lily and Kaeli's mom, Adele Harris. "It's hard to put into words how much it means to me, knowing that the money raised helps families like mine."

Since 1985, Friends of Gillette has been supporting the hospital through individual contributions, fundraising events and volunteerism. Over the years, the group has raised more than \$3.4 million and organized countless events for patients and families.

"We're dedicated to raising awareness about the care and services at Gillette and the funds required to make those services possible," says co-president Wendy Dumke. "Together, we're making sure the dreams of children really can come true."

Become a Friend Today!

Friends of Gillette is looking for people interested in making a difference in the lives of children. Through membership, individual contributions, volunteering and fundraising events, members support world-renowned care for children who have some of the most complex needs in pediatric medicine.

Although Friends of Gillette is an organization about giving, it's amazing how much members get in return. You'll quickly discover a deep sense of connection with the children Gillette serves. In addition, you'll experience the support of a strong network of enthusiastic and compassionate people.

You can become a member for only \$50 per year. Household memberships (\$85 for two people) and lifetime memberships (\$750 for one person) are also available.

For more information, call Gillette Children's Foundation at 651-229-1740 or visit www.gillettechildrens.org/friends on the Web.



Friends of Gillette
Helping Kids Be Kids

A Letter of Thanks

Dear Gillette Supporters,

You've never met me or my family, but I want you to know how much you've changed our lives.

More than 30 years ago, my twin sister, Jacquie, and I were diagnosed with a disease called hereditary multiple exostoses (HME). The condition causes tumors to develop on our bones. Although not life-threatening, the tumors can be incredibly painful and can cause permanent problems for us, such as bone deformities, chronic pain and shortened arms and legs.

Because the condition has a 50-percent chance of being passed along to children, we realized that some of our kids might be born with it. Although we hoped to defy the odds, five of the eight children we have between us have been diagnosed with HME.

But thanks to Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, we now realize how far technology and care has come in treating children with this condition. Through Drs. Stephen Sundberg and Ann Van Heest, we have found a "dream team" for our children. These are some of the first doctors we've met who truly understand our rare condition. We often wonder how our own lives might have been different if we'd had access to such amazing expertise when we were children.

My daughters and nephews will probably face many surgeries during their growing years. We're just grateful that they have access to some of the best doctors in the nation. At Gillette, our kids aren't experiments. Instead, they are children who have the unique opportunity to overcome problems associated with HME—before they even start.

Thank you for supporting such an incredible hospital. You are helping to give our children the gift of a normal life.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Boich

Jennifer Boich

Jennifer Boich and two of her daughters, Sofia and Olivia, live with hereditary multiple exostoses. Pictured, from left to right: Giana, Sofia, Jennifer, Dan and Olivia.



Jacquie Timperley and three of her sons—Wyatt, Maxwyl and Owyn—have hereditary multiple exostoses. Pictured, from left to right: Maxwyl, Lewys, Jacquie, Wyatt (in back), Owyn (in front), Jeff and Sawyer.

Make the
Connection!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Save the Date!

Eat Pancakes to Help
Kids on Feb. 28

Craving pancakes? IHOP's seventh annual National Pancake Day is Tuesday, Feb. 28. For a cash donation to Gillette, you'll enjoy a short stack of buttermilk pancakes courtesy of Children's Miracle Network Hospitals sponsor IHOP.



Head to your local IHOP for breakfast, lunch, or dinner—the event lasts all day. Visit www.ihoppancakeday.com to find a location near you.

Connections is a quarterly publication of Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare. Direct comments and questions to the Gillette Children's Foundation office at 651-229-1726 or foundation@gillettechildrens.com.

KS95 for Kids™ Celebrates 13th Successful Year

The number 13 isn't always associated with good tidings. But during our 13th annual KS95 for Kids™ radiothon—held December 9 and 10 at the Mall of America—generosity and goodwill abounded! The two-day event raised more than \$413,000 for Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare and Children's Cancer Research Fund, bringing the radiothon's 13-year fundraising total to more than \$11.6 million.



Patient families representing Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare and Children's Cancer Research Fund celebrated with KS95 staff members and on-air talent.

We're grateful to our sponsors and donors, our patient families, and our friends at KS95 for making the radiothon a continued success!

Grace's story continued from Page 1

Astounded by Surgery's Results

Bracing kept Grace's curve from worsening for about two years. Then last summer, at 10, Grace went through a growth spurt. "The curve went to 64 degrees in July and then to 80 degrees just before her surgery last fall," says Buckeye. "We knew it was time to do more."

Lonstein performed a spinal fusion—a highly complex procedure that straightens the spine using metal implants and then fuses it using bone from another part of the body. The surgery took Grace's curve from 80 degrees to just 29 degrees. "I noticed the change immediately," says Buckeye. "Suddenly, her shoulders were straight!"

"I can't say 'thank you' enough!"

Grace's friends and family rallied around her in the weeks before and after her surgeries. Calling themselves

"Grace's Gladiators," they organized a big presurgery party and asked friends and family across the country to pray for a good outcome.

"We were in amazing hands, both in our community and at Gillette," says Buckeye, who adds that her daughter won't need future surgeries to correct her scoliosis. "Everyone at Gillette was incredible. I never questioned whether we were at the best place. We knew it. I can't say 'thank you' enough!"



Calling themselves "Grace's Gladiators," a group of friends, family and neighbors organized a presurgery party for Grace.