



Lion's Roar

The Newsletter of the Companions in Courage Foundation

Fall 2009

HOFer Leetch Honored at CiC Golf Event

The 7th Annual Companions in Courage Foundation Golf Classic took on special meaning when hockey's newest Hall of Famer, Brian Leetch was honored prior to the start of play.

The perennial Rangers All Star will be inducted into the Hall of Fame on November 9th in Toronto. Pat LaFontaine said, "We are thrilled that Brian was able to join us just a month before his induction. He represented his country and the NHL proudly both on and off the ice and he was always a fan favorite."

"It's just our small way to recognize the huge achievement of making it to the Hall of Fame," said LaFontaine.

Leetch joined the Rangers in 1988 after representing the U.S. at the Calgary Olympics. He was named Rookie of the Year in 1989 and was presented the first (of two) Norris Trophies as the league's top defenseman in 1992. In 1994, he was named Conn Smythe winner as MVP of the playoffs as he led the Rangers to their first Stanley Cup in

54 years.

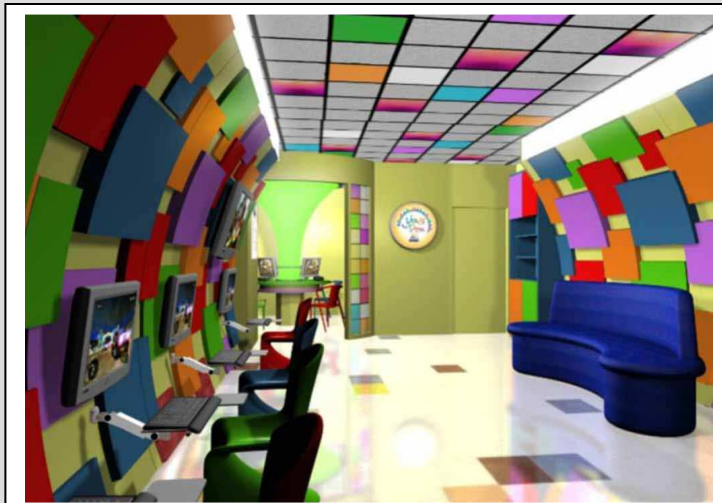
Leetch and LaFontaine were teammates on the 1996 U.S. team that won the World Cup of Hockey and then again as members of the U.S. Olympic team at Nagano, Japan. In 2008, the Rangers honored Leetch with the ultimate honor in sports when they retired his #2 to the Madison Square Garden rafters.

During the ceremony, teammate and friend Mark Messier called the defenseman, "the greatest Ranger of all time."

Leetch and his wife are raising their three children in the Boston area and he enjoys helping out at friend's charity events. His inclusion at Deepdale was a treat for all the participants.



Trottier, Gillies, Leetch, LaFontaine, Messier



Lion's Den Planned for CHOP in Philly

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia will be the site of the 9th Lion's Den Room when it opens later this year.

The room will be located on the 5th floor of the hospital and will feature four computer workstations, four Xbox 360 consoles and a semi-private video conference pod.

CiC Foundation's design team from Display Presentations is actively working with the hospital's IS, Facilities and Child-Life departments to plan for the installation.

Lion's Den rooms connect hospitalized children to their family, friends and heroes during their stay.



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Michigan Golf Lands Kiosks for Henry Ford

Dave Zaran of Riverview, MI has completed Ironman Triathlons in support of the CiC Foundation, so it's understandable why he was looking for a slightly easier way to draw attention to the charity and to help raise funds. In mid-July he worked with members of the Lochmoor Country Club in Grosse Pointe to host the 3rd Annual Companions in Golf Tournament in southeast Michigan.



Paul Rogers, LaFontaine, Dave Zaran

Paul Rogers of Fraser Bicycle and Fitness got his entire team together (including some who had a run a triathlon the day before!) as volunteers to make the day wonderful.

More than 100 guests participated in the outing that raised awareness for the mobile Xbox 360 kiosks that were delivered on behalf of the group to the Henry Ford Health System.

Phil Snyder, director of corporate and foundation relations for the health system graciously accepted the donation and personally thanked Pat LaFontaine and many members of his family who participated in the event.

Snyder and Zaran immediately huddled and are looking for ways to bring a Lion's Den Room to Michigan. Zaran said, "That's our new goal. We want to give the children of Pat's home state the chance to connect to all the other hospitals in North America with Lion's Dens."

With such determined advocates on the case, it probably won't be long before a ribbon-cutting is planned.

Main Street Mile Brings Out the Kid In All of Us

For the 5th consecutive year Long Islanders young and old kicked off their Labor Day weekend by participating in the Main Street Mile in Farmingdale.

Race director Mark Leff worked with Bob Cook of Runner's Edge and their race committee to host another stellar event that brought the community together for a great cause. The race was held to bring awareness for CiC Foundation and several Xbox kiosks to the Nassau University Medical Center.

The Kid's Fun Run opened the

day with 8-year-old Peter Johnson of Farmingdale winning the ¼-mile run. The women's and men's flights also produced outstanding performances.

Leonora Petrina set a course record in the women's open division at 4:44, while defending champion, Chris Mammone of Merrick prevailed in a blazing 4:14 to lead the men.

Dave & Buster's of Farmingdale served as a major sponsor and the race was run in memory of John McManus – a long-time member of the local running community who passed away in 2007.



8-year-old Peter Johnson, Jr.

"No child in the fight for life or health should ever have to go through it alone."



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Ross Presented CiC's 'Pioneer' Award

It was late in 2004, and Pat LaFontaine had just finished working with Edwin Schlossberg on the design of a hospital playroom he would dub, "The Lion's Den". This room would serve as a clubhouse for hospitalized kids and introduce technology to the healing process.

All the former hockey star needed was a hospital to agree to the install and a philanthropist willing to make an investment in that first room.

About that same time, Billie and George Ross were considering naming opportunities at a new hospital that was being built on the grounds of Westchester Medical Center. Maria Fareri Children's Hospital would be one of the premier facilities in the world treating youngsters.

After considering all options, the Ross's came back to the playroom design that they had seen in a PowerPoint presentation. George invited LaFontaine to his office at Trump Tower and had the hockey star explain his hope for the space. Ross has been a bit of a visionary in his career and reasoned that if his grandchildren ever needed to be hospitalized, he wanted them to have access to a space like the Lion's Den.

The pair shook hands and decided to build the first-ever Lion's Den in Westchester. On January 25, 2005, LaFontaine and the Ross Family cut

the ribbon on the inaugural Lion's Den at Maria Fareri Hospital.

The foundation will open its 9th Lion's Den later this year in Philadelphia, but it all started thanks to the vision of Billie and George Ross who understood the importance of connecting patients with the outside world.

At the 7th Annual CiC Foundation Golf Classic, LaFontaine presented Ross with the Companions in Courage "Pioneer Award" for his vision and his early commitment to the program. Every year thousands of hospitalized children across North America now have a "pioneer" to thank for their special room.



LaFontaine to Tackle NYC Marathon in November



Pat LaFontaine has tackled a marathon run six times as he's completed Ironman Triathlons, but he's never tried to "just" run a marathon. He'll handle one of the biggest on November 1st when he joins more than 40,000 runners at the ING New York City Marathon.

He will be one of a handful of celebrities including Olympian Dan Janssens and actor Edward Norton who will be participating for charity and to bring awareness to ING's 'Run For Something Better' program.

The program provides funding for school-based running activities and educates children about living an active lifestyle.

LaFontaine said, "You know that hockey players aren't built for running... But it's for a good cause, so I hope we can bring some awareness to the issue of childhood obesity."

The star will also be raising money for the CiC Foundation. **Please visit his website at: www.active.com/donate/CiCNYC and find out how you may be eligible to win 4 finish line tickets.**



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Companion in Courage:

Chelsea Inspires at L.I. Marathon

On a misty morning in May, more than 60 runners toed the starting line at the Long Island Marathon wearing yellow singlets with "Team Courage" emblazoned across their chests. No runner in the entire field of over 4,300 had a more compelling story than Chelsea Banaszek, a 14-year-old from Westchester, NY.

Each year at the marathon a couple of our great "companions," Bill & Doreen Isenberg of Fort Salonga, NY set up a tent at the finish line and provide refreshments and support to the entire group. Two years ago we were joined by, Chelsea Banaszek, the daughter of one of Bill's business associates and a couple of her friends. These young ladies were an inspiration as they completed the half marathon in just over 2:20!

In a fateful twist this past Thanksgiving, Chelsea was diagnosed with a tumor that had grown from her jaw and above her ear into her brain. Through the help of her concerned and caring doctors, Chelsea had the tumor removed in January. Many of the "companions in courage" she met during the marathon sent her inspirational messages and encouraged her to get well. After exhibiting tons of courage she was back to school just one week later and in training for this year's race!

Pat LaFontaine shared Chelsea's story prior to the race and talked about what an inspiration she was for all of us, and especially to hospitalized children who would benefit from this run. Chelsea was embraced by her Courage teammates and they headed for the start line. She and her dad ran the race together and she finished the half marathon in an amazing time of 2:56:06. "She's got so much spirit and so much life, she's just a great kid," LaFontaine said.



Chelsea's story reminds us that we never know what tomorrow brings. For many children stuck in children's hospitals they never know what the next 5 minutes might bring. One of the most important aspects of the CiC Foundation is the hope that it brings patients and their families. And sometimes that hope comes from people like Chelsea.

Lion's Den Rooms and Kiosks help bring some normalcy to the lives of hospitalized children by enabling them to connect to family, friends and their heroes during their hospital stay.

