



Autumn News from the Sweet Pea Foundation

Often times, our busy lives prevent us from fully appreciating things we hold dearest to us. Even when we try to “live in the moment,” life can throw something at us that we cannot fully be prepared for. A year ago, my brother Rob passed away. Even though Rob and I spent countless hours together (traveling, tailgating, working, etc.), his passing has made me realize that we need to cherish those who touch our lives the most. Losing Rob has been extremely difficult on all who knew him—especially his family.

Rob was an incredible and thoughtful individual with a deep love for his family and he truly believed in the mission of the Sweet Pea Foundation. Rob saw firsthand the struggles that Suzanne and I experienced when we were caring for Grace in the hospitals. After one of his many visits with Grace, Rob decided to start referring to her as “SBG” (Sweet Baby Grace). It was typical of Rob, coming up with his own unique way of connecting with his niece who he loved very much. In his home, Rob had a picture of himself and “SBG” sitting together while watching cartoons. It is a photograph, that we now cherish, of two people that we love and miss so much.

After Grace passed away, Rob became a passionate supporter of the Sweet Pea Foundation. In our early years, Rob would accompany me to hospitals and Ronald McDonald Homes to deliver toys and other items needed by these organizations. He helped us create and implement the Blarney Bash, one of our annual fundraisers that took place on St. Patrick’s Day for ten years. He also organized our first golf outing, calling it the Kickoff Classic—an annual event that we continue today.

There are countless other ways that Rob supported and assisted us with the Sweet Pea Foundation. His love and passion for helping those in need, especially sick children, is evident in everything that Rob did for the Foundation.

Reflecting back on this past year, I not only mourn the loss of my brother, but my best friend. I think about Rob every day. I encourage you reach out to your family and friends and let them know how important they are to you.

In peace,
Pete and Suzanne Letherman



sweet pea foundation Annual Kickoff Classic!

Event Sponsors 2019

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Additional Kickoff Classic sponsors can be found at www.sweetpeafoundation.org.

The funds received from the Autumn 2019 Campaign will be broken down as follows:

- 25% for “Hugs from Grace”
- 20% for toys
- 25% for books
- 20% “Seeds of Grace”
- 10% for Ronald McDonald House reserve fund

sweet pea foundation
from a little grace grows a world of love



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*Grace Elizabeth Letherman,
our inspiration!*





Here is a brief overview of the latest developments of the Sweet Pea Foundation:

“Hugs from Grace”

The Sweet Pea Foundation continues to assemble care packages called “Hugs from Grace” (Hugs) each holiday. We are busy preparing for the Thanksgiving-themed Hugs, ordering books, crayons, bubbles, arts & crafts



Old National Bank employees help stuff “Hugs” for a community service event at their Elkhart Main Street location.

and other items that go inside each sling bag. The Foundation has been blessed to have organizations and individuals help with our Hugs. We have had businesses, Brownie Troops and elementary

schools help us with stuffing the bags. The Hugs continue to be well received by nurses, parents and patients alike. Certified Child Life Specialist Jessica Lewis writes to us, “Thank you so much for thinking about the pediatric patients as you do every few months. Your bags are so fun for our patients and bring so much joy to them at a time that feels hopeless. The families comment on how thoughtful the bags are and we can’t help but be proud of your organization for your commitment and dedication to bringing smiles to our littlest ones.”



Brownies from Northern Indiana help stuff Hugs at an event called “Cookies, Cocoa & Community Service.”

Marketing for the Common Good

The Sweet Pea Foundation was recently asked to participate in the University of Notre Dame Summer Scholars Program. Summer Scholars spend two intense weeks under the guidance of Notre Dame faculty and earn course credit upon completion of a program track. The business track titled “Marketing for the Common Good” asked students to analyze the current marketing plans, programs and philosophies for five local, non-profit organizations, one of which was the Sweet Pea Foundation! In late June, Pete and Suzanne gave a presentation to the entire class of students. Four lucky students were tasked with researching and developing five recommendations for the Sweet Pea Foundation and the students then shared their findings at a final presentation in July. The information and opportunities gleaned from the Sweet Pea team of students was extremely valuable. We cannot thank Professor Bob Essig and the University of Notre Dame enough for this wonderful opportunity.



Students from the University of Notre Dame Summer Scholars Program presented their findings and recommendations to Pete and Suzanne on campus this past summer.



The Sweet Pea Foundation’s 16th Annual Kickoff Classic golf outing raised over \$10,000 with more than 85 participants!

Thank you to all who came out to play golf! A special thanks to all the event, food and hole sponsors. Congratulations to this year’s Kickoff Classic winners: Jeff Boetticher, Corey Betzer, Pete Byrne and Chris Cooper. We have listed some of the sponsors on the back of this mailer and the complete list can be found on the website. Next year’s Kickoff Classic golf outing will be held on **Friday, September 11, 2020**—the eve of the Notre Dame vs. Arkansas game.



2019 Kickoff Classic Winners!

Thank You Mary Kate!

Mary Kate Kocovski, pictured in front and to the far right, poses with friends at her birthday party. She asked her party guests to bring copies of their favorite children’s



books from their childhood to donate to the Sweet Pea Foundation instead of gifts for herself!

Sign up for AmazonSmile and support the Sweet Pea Foundation for all your holiday purchases! (smile.amazon.com).



“Because of your support I’ve been performing magic for the children at the hospital for several years now. Kids love magic. So to use the power of magic during a time of pain and uncertainty, to help spark a smile, laughter, or a sense of wonder in their eyes, I would say is priceless for the families that witness it. So again, thank you for supporting the magic shows. I wish you and the Sweet Pea Foundation much success.”

— Steve Vaught, Professional Magician

