

...because kids can't fight cancer alone!



DC
Candlelighters
 Childhood Cancer Foundation

dccandlelighters.org

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President's Welcome

I am thrilled to announce the relaunch of the DC Candlelighters quarterly newsletter! We hope that our readers will enjoy learning more about DC Candlelighters and how you can help us with our mission: To provide emotional, educational, practical and financial support to families of children fighting cancer – we provide a light in the darkness, because no family should face the uncertain world of childhood cancer alone.

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Light of the Month

DC Candlelighters love our families! Please allow us to spotlight your amazing child as our Light of The Month Super Kid! We would be honored to share your child's story in our quarterly newsletter and on our website! LOTM Super Kids will be announced the first Wednesday of each month, so please plan accordingly. Please visit our website to learn more about this exciting new program!

Save these 2023 Dates! – details, zoom link and registration info will be updated on our website!

Zoom Bingo

7- 8 pm
 April 25
 Sept. 26
 Nov. 28

Casino Night

March 4
 An evening for adults to gather and supporting our mission!

Rachel's Royal Tea Party

April 22
 Princesses and princes are cordially invited to a regal afternoon of dress up and other delights!

Family Fun Day

June 4
 A DC Candlelighters beloved tradition! Food, fun, fellowship and outdoor activities!

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I am a founding member of the DC Candlelighters, a group of moms and one social worker who met to create an organization that could make a difference for families fighting childhood cancer. I have had the honor of serving as the President since 2017. We hope to be back in person, soon, providing some of the activities that have meant so much to our families. Our hospital teas provided parents with the comfort and knowledge that they are not alone. Our events provide some fun for families in the midst of unbelievable challenges.

During my time with the organization, we have welcomed new families, volunteers and board members. We remember, with great fondness and respect, those who are no longer with the DC Candlelighters, but whose contributions made a significant impact in the lives of our families. Each of you adds value to our group, by attending events, playing Bingo with your children and supporting each other and our organization.

I hope you will join me in participating in our events and sharing the news of our good work. As always, I extend a profound thank you to those who sustain us with their financial gifts.

Kindest Regards,
Meg
Mom to Rachel (and 5 more)

The 2023- 2024 DC Candlelighters Board

- Meg Crossett - President
- Jennifer Teise - Vice President and Volunteer Coordinator
- Madonna Whiting - Secretary and Communications Director
- Michelle Slaughter - Treasurer
- Laura Tartaro-McGowan - Fundraising and Development Chair
- Constance Connor - Special Events Chair
- Sheri Schaffer - Special Events, Marketing and Advertising Chair
- Andrea Bilaniuk - Webmaster, Newsletter Editor and Scholarship Chair
- Sharon Truzzi - Database Manager
- Pat Lawless - Founding Member
- Amy Switzer - Hospital and Clinic Liaison
- Asia Watson - Branding Manager
- Rachel Dacanay Smith - Non-Profit Organization and Community Liaison



2022 Holiday Highlights

On December 6, 2022, the DC Candlelighters were invited to the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors' Top Producers in Tinsletown Holiday Party. It was a pleasure to meet so many wonderful people in the community. Thanks to all who stopped by our table to learn more about our organization!

On December 11, 2022, our families, volunteers, and partners enjoyed a wonderful afternoon of holiday cheer! Thank you to the Chantilly Youth Association (CYA) for providing a workshop venue where Santa's elves, Wildcats vs. Cancer and the CYA community, were busy wrapping gifts. Many thanks to Centreville Presbyterian Church for hosting our event. DC Candlelighters children (and their siblings) received presents (a huge thank you to our donors!), met with other organizations who also provided presents (Summer Grace Foundation, Make-a-Wish, Still Brave and Special Love) and smiled for our cameras. We are grateful to SillyShotz for capturing the many beautiful memories!



Scholarship Season is Underway! Financial Assistance is Available!

More info on our website

Rachel Crossett Memorial Scholarship

The Rachel Crossett Memorial Scholarship is presented to a survivor of childhood cancer pursuing post-secondary education (college or trade school). The Crossett Family established the scholarship in honor of their beautiful, vibrant daughter whose life was cut short by neuroblastoma in 2001, at only 6 years old.



Thank You to Our Sponsors!

Thank you for considering a monetary donation to DC Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Foundation, a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your tax-deductible donations are critical to sustaining our mission and programs. 100% of all donations are allocated to pediatric oncology families. Our staff receives no compensation. Event sponsorship is also recommended as an effective method to generate positive brand awareness among your customers and our supporters. When you sponsor a DC Candlelighters signature event, your company name and logo are included on our event program materials.



Survivor Scholarship

The DC Candlelighters proudly offers \$1,000 scholarships to childhood cancer survivors (aged 17 to 30), to help with the costs of college, technical, or vocational school. We are now accepting applicants for the 2023 Award. Please download the application from our website.

Scan our QR Code

- 1) Open your phone's camera
- 2) Scan the image
- 3) Kindly help support our mission with your donation. Thank you!!



Angel Tribute

The DC Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Foundation respectfully remembers the children under our care who are now in Heaven. It is our utmost privilege and honor to serve our children and families in all phases of their remarkable journeys.

ALEXANDER COMPTON *April 28, 1993 – October 10, 2002*



In April 2000, Alex, a six-year-old boy, started getting bad headaches and throwing up. One night at dinner his eyes started to cross in a very peculiar way so we took him to the doctor. Little did we know that would begin Alex's cancer journey. The day Alex was diagnosed with Medulloblastoma, a brain tumor that had metastasized down his spine, he was sitting in the hospital bed playing with his Gameboy. Earlier that evening he had been outside riding his bicycle and playing with his sister.

When Alex came out of surgery later that night, he was paralyzed and mute. Immediately following this devastating diagnosis, Alex began intensive radiation and chemotherapy. He had to learn to walk and talk all over again. He had to have daily physical, occupational and speech therapies. Alex spent the first 8 months in the hospital, with many subsequent hospitalizations over three years, and, when not in the hospital, he had daily visits to the office for chemo, blood counts, and transfusions. He also fought courageously against many other complications from the brain tumor related to his pituitary glands and digestive track.

Alex's courage and determination were a constant inspiration to all those who met him. He made friends with the other kids in treatment and especially with Margy Jost, the "Play Lady", at the clinic, and a fellow "Angel."



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Alex loved to attend all of the events for the kids in treatment when possible. He longed for the day, though, when he could return to school which did finally happen for a few hours right before the end of the school year. He was so happy and proud of his accomplishment.

Unfortunately, in July of 2002, we learned that Alex's tumor had come back and he needed a stem-cell transplant. Unfortunately, that procedure was just too intensive for his already cancer-ravaged body and he succumbed to his illness in October 2002.

Alex will forever be loved and remembered as an engaging, lively, hard-working, determined young boy. We will forever be grateful for the support our family received during Alex's illness. To honor Alex's memory and give back, Alex's mother is now serving as Treasurer for DC Candlelighters.



Our next newsletter will be published Summer 2023!
Please visit our website and follow us on social media!