

# OCC Swim-a-thon Benefits Nicholas Colby Fund

By Jill Tarkoff, OCC



Nicholas Colby Fund volunteers Sarah Atkinson, Becky Edwards, Dustin Montero, Allie Edwards, & Erin Collier Photo Allie Edwards



Steve Haufler, OCC Head Swim Coach with swimmers Photo Allie Edwards

"I love swimming as a sport, but it makes me even happier to swim for children who are less fortunate. I feel special that I was part of this," said Kyle, an Orinda Country Club swimmer. On July 21st the Orinda Country Club Sharks swimming team, coached by Steve Haufler, held their annual Swim-a-thon. This year the team swam laps to raise money for The Nicholas Colby Fund in Walnut Creek. Swimmers age four to eighteen donated \$5,000 to help children with cancer, degenerative conditions or other life threatening illnesses and their families.

The Nicholas Colby Fund

reaches out to children through collaborative relationships set up with Children's Hospital Oakland, Stanford-Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, The University of California San Francisco Children's Hospital and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Their motto is "Helping Children Be Children." They accomplish this goal through partnerships with area businesses to provide breaks from treatment through ticket donations to Warriors basketball games, Oakland A's baseball games, Oakland Ice Arena events, Harlem Globetrotters basketball games and the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus.

Holidays are another time that the Nicholas Colby Fund reaches out. At Thanksgiving the fund also provides thanksgiving dinners for parents and their children in the hospital. At Christmas they collected donated toys for patients to give to their siblings. At New Year's, baskets are delivered to patients, parents and medical staff to help ring in the new year of possibilities and hope.

When a child is diagnosed with a life threatening illness, a family may struggle for moments to smile. The Nicholas Colby Fund tries to provide not only nutritional treat packs to parents of children in Pediatric Intensive

Care Units and backpacks filled with fun things to do for newly diagnosed children, but also a moment to treasure. A night away from treatment, seeing the sparkle in your child's eyes and laughing together can make all the difference and a lifetime of memories.

OCC is proud to help the Nicholas Colby Fund in their pursuit of helping children be children. Just as we clap and cheer for our swimmers as they reach their individual goals we know that our small contribution will help other families and children in the Bay Area reach theirs.