



Help us celebrate a wonderful year helping many families with terminally ill children.

This newsletter is dedicated to those families that we have helped and to donors who have contributed through the Vancouver Rotary Club Festival of Trees and direct donations.

## A LITTLE HISTORY

The Vancouver Rotary Club established the *Alexa Dyer Life Challenge Award* in 2001 in honor of Alexa Dyer, daughter of Russ and Michele Dyer. **Alexa** was a delightful child who **touched the hearts** of all who knew or met her. In December of 1999, Alexa was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor on her 1<sup>st</sup> birthday. Beating the odds, Alexa outlived the doctors' prognosis and her **brave** battle with cancer ended on February 7, 2001.

One of the purposes of this very special fund is to raise money and in-kind contributions to **support children** and their families in situations where a child is facing a terminal illness.

The main focus of this fund is to help families with a child who is facing a terminal illness, and where the family is in need of financial assistance.

## HOW WE HAVE HELPED

Following, you will find a letter that we received from a family this year. They have allowed us to share their story and their thoughts about the Alexa Dyer Life Challenge Award.

We have also included a summary of just a few of the families we have been able to help.

## The delos Reyes Family

In May 2004, after her parents noticed she had lack of movement on her right side, the doctors found a large mass on the right side of her brain. Alexa delos Reyes at a year old, was rushed into surgery that was necessary for her survival. She was now subject to many weeks of chemotherapy after she was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor.



During the chemotherapy another MRI was performed and another tumor was found behind her eye, and the original tumor had grown. The prognosis is guarded.

The family was forced to exist on one income to take care of Alexa and the other children. Medical bills added up, and their savings were depleted.

The Alexa Dyer Life Challenge Award was able to help this family with their past due bills and relieve some of their financial stress.

The family has allowed us to share their story and thank you letter.

"The Alexa Dyer Foundation was there during our most trying time. When we found out our daughter had brain cancer, we were devastated and lost; we did not know where to go or who to turn to.

I had to quit my job of nine years to take care of our daughter. Michelle Dyer came to comfort us at the hospital after our little girl had just undergone brain surgery. She told us of their little girl, named Alexa, and her brave battle with cancer. She told us of their organization, and handed me an application for financial assistance and a Strength Angel coin to keep with me for strength. This wonderful family and committee takes the burden of financial woes and lets you enjoy time with your family to prepare for whatever battle lies ahead. We are so grateful to Russ and Michelle, and the Alexa Dyer committee. They are angels sent from above.

In conclusion, the Alexa Dyer foundation is a miracle foundation based on love, support, and strength for those going through terrible ordeals resulting in financial instability. Please all who read



this, think. What if this happened to us? Where would we go? What would we do? The answer is the Alexa Dyer foundation. They need to continue to raise money so they can help more and more families deal with the unexpected. You couldn't find a better foundation to invest in than one that helps families. The kindness and support you will receive give you strength and hope to continue on. God bless you, Russ, Michele, and the Alexa Dyer committee. And thank you little Alexa. May God hold all of you in his hands. Much thanks."

The delos Reyes Family,  
Dante, Monica, Cameron, and Alexa

### ALEXA DYER LIFE CHALLENGE AWARDS EXAMPLES

Little girl with nuregoblastoma cancer down her spine. \$2,000 for travel and accommodations to San Francisco for treatment. Unfortunately she passed away in November 2003.

Various families that have terminally ill children received gift certificates at Christmas time to make their Christmas a little cheerier.

Little boy with Ewings Sarcoma cancer. \$900 for respite care. He passed away in May 2004. His caregivers were so touched by the gift they did most of their respite care free of charge.

Little girl with brain cancer. \$1,900 for living expenses.

Assisted three families that have little children with brain cancer. The gifts were between \$1,000 - \$2,500 to help with rent and monthly bills.

Little boy with terminal stage leukemia. \$1,000 for digital camera and household items. He passed away in December 2003.

## TOTAL AWARDS GIVEN TO DATE:

## 24 FAMILIES AT \$26,000

### THE FUTURE

The future is bright for the program and helping families with terminally ill children. With help from community members and individual donors, the program continues to grow, as does help we can give. A very warm thank you to all our donors!

**We will give away \$20,000 a year to families and hope to increase that number as our fund grows.**

If you are interested in contributing to the Alexa Dyer Life Challenge Award, we encourage your support at the gala event at the Festival of Trees in Vancouver, Washington, during Thanksgiving weekend. For more information, visit the Festival of Trees website at <http://www.festivaloftrees.net/>

If you cannot come to the gala, donations can be sent to:

Alexa Dyer Life Challenge Award  
Vancouver Rotary Foundation  
PO Box 1000  
Vancouver, WA 98666-1000

**Please note that 100% of your tax deductible gift goes to the families. The Alexa Dyer Life Challenge Award is an all volunteer program and all materials to administer the program are donated.**

If you have questions about the program, **know a family that could use help**, or want more information, please contact Jennifer Larson at (360) 694-8415 or [jenniferl@murdock-trust.org](mailto:jenniferl@murdock-trust.org).

## Thank You for Your Support

### Alexa Dyer Life Challenge Award Committee

Sheryl Beauchaine	Tony Johnson
Kathy Condon	Jennifer Larson
Russ and Michelle Dyer	Jim Martin
Paula Johnson	Arch Miller

