

# dance marathon alumni interest group annual newsletter 2007

*dance marathon 2008 - hope finds a way - february 22-24*

Dance Marathon  
Alumni Interest Group  
Board of Directors

Jeff Krisciunas, President  
Stacy Forbes, Vice President  
Bill O'Tormey, Secretary  
Rob Schmidt, Treasurer

#### Contributing Directors

David Brownstein  
Jennifer Cohen  
Greg DeBuck  
Amanda Goble  
Emily Greenberg  
Daniel Halperin  
Seth Moser  
Michael Funk, Immediate  
Past THON Overall  
Chairperson

#### Student Directors

Dan Cocco, THON 2008  
Overall Chairperson  
Michelle LaBoda, THON  
2009 Overall Communica-  
tions Chairperson

*Thanks to our dedicated  
membership of hard-  
working donors and  
volunteers!*

*For more information,  
please visit [www.dmaig.org](http://www.dmaig.org)*

## a letter from the president -ftk, jeff krisciunas

When I wrote to you last year, I mentioned that the coming years would be filled with tremendous growing support for THON and the Four Diamonds Fund. Well, this past year has seen some amazing strides in that direction of solidifying our efforts to do just that!

As many of you have already seen, in the middle of this past summer we launched our new membership database on the website. If you have not registered yet, please do! It's free and will allow you to continue to further your connection to THON!

We have also increased our media efforts in providing more information to our members via our regular listserv emails. If you have not checked the website out lately, take a peek at [dmaig.org](http://dmaig.org).



THON Express runners before the 2007 relay

In addition to increasing the availability of THON information, the DMAIG has been actively working over the past year to provide many new ways for alumni to get involved. Through programs like regional gala events including the Liberty Ball in Philadelphia (hosted by the Philadelphia Chapter of the PSUAA), the overnight run from Hershey to State College affectionately known as the "THON Express," mini-THON support with the Four Diamonds allowing alumni to help the THON spirit flourish in neighboring local school

districts, alumni dancer couples, as well as many other great local regional events, DMAIG regional events fill a great calendar that will only continue to flourish!

I believe we all were overwhelmed with excitement and jubilation when the \$5.2 million cards were raised last year at the THON 2007 at its awesome new home in the Bryce Jordon Center. Even moreso, I think we all are looking forward to the future and what that brings. So, I ask you to continue to stay involved, in helping THON add to its nearly \$47 million lifetime to date contribution to the Four Diamonds Fund.

We can, and we will conquer childhood cancer...One day, one child, one dance at a time! Join me, and THON ON! ♦

### inside this issue:

looking back	2	event showcase	4
roaring forward	2	<a href="http://dmaig.org">dmaig.org</a>	5
<i>four</i> the kids	3	get ready to line dance!	6
advisor's office	3	alumni notes	6

## looking back... -ftk, mike funk

Wow, what a year! I can hardly put into words how humbled I am by all of the hard work and support of thousands of students, alumni, friends, and family. You have all made the Bryce Jordan Center our new home, packing more than 10,000 people into the stands on the final day and raising an incredible \$5.2 million, a million more than the year before. From the bottom of my

heart, I say thank you.

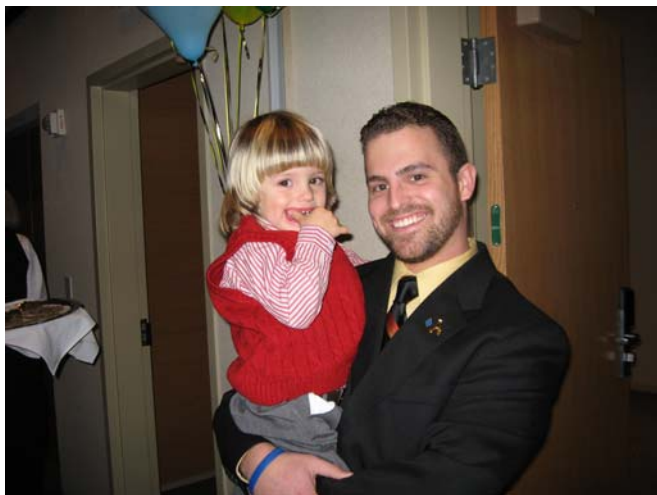
The transition from Rec Hall to the BJC went better than I ever could have hoped, and that is greatly due to all of the hard work of the Penn State students. I would also like to thank all of the alumni for their continued support of THON through all of the changes this past year. The reason that THON continues to stay strong and grow each year is not only due to the students, but continued support from the DMAIG.

We saw a slew of record numbers this year: 50 new fundraising organizations; online donations nearly doubled; the webcast was viewed in more

than 35 countries by thousands of people; and we had a thousand more committee members this year.

The hard work of the students and alumni pay off every year, as we work to fulfill our mission to the Four Diamonds Fund. We had a record number of families attend our pre-THON events as well as THON weekend. THON will never be about how many hours we dance or how much money we raise, THON is always about thousands of Penn State students and alumni coming together to give these kids the chance to live a normal life.

I wish the best of luck to Dan Cocco and all those who will dedicate this next year to THON 2008. I have no doubt that this will be the biggest and best THON yet. THON on for the kids! ♦



## ...and roaring forward -ftk, dan cocco

Greetings from 210 HUB, the THON Office!

The overall committee cannot thank all of our proud alumni enough for your continued support. It is with your help that THON is now and always will be the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. It is with your help that the Four Diamonds Fund has never turned down and will never turn down a family who is seeking assistance. Since April I have been working closely with an amazing group of individuals, the THON 2008 overall committee. We have been making the necessary improvements to ensure the long term suc-

cess of our organization.

With the great success of THON 2007, we are witnessing an overwhelming level of support from all areas of Penn State. Volunteers and supporters packed the Bryce Jordan Center and created an amazing atmosphere of love and

excitement. Raising \$5,240,385.17 during the five-month fundraising period, we have set a new record.

We have recently selected 315 captains to assist with the running of THON. They are poised to do amazing things. We have been heavily recruiting the students to fill our 3,000 committee member positions. The level of support from alumni is growing every year as more volunteers graduate and take on influential roles in the communities they live in. I am excited to see where we can go if we successfully utilize our network of alumni.



*(continued on page 7)*

## four the kids ftk, sara firestone

The partnership between the Four Diamonds Fund and the DMAIG continues to grow as both organizations find new and creative ways to connect with one another. On behalf of the Four Diamonds Fund, I would like to thank all DMAIG members for your continued commitment to the Four Diamonds Fund, our patients, and their families.

It was a tremendous year for the Four Diamonds Fund. The incredible success of THON 2007 and the growth of the middle and high school mini-THON program helped the Four Diamonds Fund raise more than \$6 million during the past fiscal year.

DMAIG members are taking an active role in helping the Fund with the mini-THON program, and we are thankful for all of the support. During the 2006-07 school year, thirty-four schools participated in mini-THONs and raised a record setting \$621,101.96! In August, several DMAIG members participated in the mini-THON workshop to learn more about the program and help determine ways for DMAIG members to become involved in mini-THON events. A special thank you goes to Megan Collins for leading the effort in getting DMAIG members involved

with the Four Diamonds mini-THONs.

All of the support from DMAIG, whether financial or through volunteer opportunities, goes a long way in helping the Four Diamonds patients and their families. Last year, The Four Diamonds Fund assisted over 600 patients and their families. Unfortunately, of those 600 patients, 104 were newly diagnosed at Penn State Children's Hospital. The number of newly diagnosed patients continues to rise, but we are confident the patients are receiving the best care possible because of the support of the Four Diamonds Fund.

As many of you know, in 2004 THON pledged \$10 million for the creation of the Pediatric Cancer Pavilion in the new Penn State Children's Hospital. I am pleased to let you know that recently Penn State Hershey Medical Center's Board of Directors approved plans for the creation of a four-story children's hospital. With the board's approval, the plans are now proceeding to the

formal architectural design phase. When the architectural design phase is completed, designs will be presented to Penn State board as well as the Penn State University Board of Trustees for final approval in order to begin actual construction. The presentation of designs is expected to happen sometime in the fall of 2008.

*(continued on page 7)*



## from the advisor's office -ftk, barry bram

My name is Barry Bram and I am thrilled to have been asked to serve as the advisor to THON. My role as the director of the Center for Student Engagement has provided me with many opportunities to work with some of Penn State's outstanding student leaders. However, the passion, commitment, and talent of this year's overall committee have truly amazed me. I am incredibly fortunate to be able to work with them, and I look forward to getting to know them, all of you, and future THON leaders.

I am originally from Cleveland (yes, I'm a fan of all Cleve-

land teams). My undergraduate degree in political science is from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and I have a master's degree in Higher Education from the University of Vermont. Stops at Vermont Technical College and the University of South Dakota led me to Penn State in 1994. The first twelve years of my Penn State career were spent in Residence Life and I have been in my current position since July 2006. My wife, Laura Perry, works in Residence Life and we have one son, Joshua, who is in eighth grade in the State College school district.

Since assuming the advisor role in late August, I have learned so much about THON and I hope to spend the rest of the year continuing to do so. Dan Cocco is committed to creating a structure that will insure THON's success in the years to come. I look forward to working with him, the rest of the overall committee, the Four Diamonds Fund, and the DMAIG to make this happen. Feel free to get in touch with me if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions. ♦



## event showcase

Don't leave your THON spirit behind when you graduate! Spread your passion and love for the kids by organizing and attending regional events in your area. DMAIG has grown this year to provide regional chairs in New York/North Jersey, DC/Virginia/Maryland, Philadelphia/South Jersey/Delaware, and Pittsburgh/Erie; that's just the beginning! If you're interested in strengthening THON alumni involvement, please contact regional events coordinator Emily Greenberg at [regionalevents@dmaig.org](mailto:regionalevents@dmaig.org).

Your regional chair supports local events by registering the event with THON, providing advice and "how-to" guides, promoting the event to our membership through our website and monthly emails, promoting the event through THON, helping to find volunteers if needed, and providing THON print materials and merchandise to be sold at your event. Your regional chair is the link between your event and THON and the Four Diamonds Fund, and will make sure all THON rules and regulations are followed while making sure your event is an enormous success for the kids!

When you decide to organize an event, contact your regional chair to begin the planning process. We will work with you through planning, from finding a venue to turning in funds raised to THON, helping you to establish an annual event. Remember, the money raised may be credited to the organization of your choice. DMAIG wants to help and support alumni and friends holding and attending events and does not need to receive credit for the donation to THON. Many successful events have been held by alumni already this year! DMAIG would like to highlight some events from updates from event chairs in each region.

### New York/Northern New Jersey

Regional Chair Aaron Jones

[nycevents@dmaig.org](mailto:nycevents@dmaig.org)  
 With the help of the Northern New Jersey, Long Island, and NYC Alumni Chapters, the first annual NYC THON Softball Tournament took place at the Great



Lawn in Central Park on August 4th. We had fantastic weather, and a more than 100 players and spectators enjoyed a great day. The event was capped off with a THON Night Out and raised more than \$1000 for THON! It was a great start to what hopefully will be a PSU NYC tradition for years to come.

### Philadelphia/Southern New Jersey/Delaware

Regional Chair Melissa Ciurlino [phillyevents@dmaig.org](mailto:phillyevents@dmaig.org)  
 War on the Shore III took place at the Windrift in Avalon on August 4 and was as successful as ever! With over 250 PSU alumni taking over the rooftop deck, the event raised over \$20,000 for the kids! Just as the crowd grew, so did this year's raffle. Some of the prizes were football tickets to this year's games against Notre Dame, Ohio State, and Florida International, great Penn State memorabilia, tickets and memorabilia from the Phillies, Eagles, Mets, and Yankees, as well as gift certificates to area restaurants and stores and much more. We are always looking towards next year, hoping to continue to make it bigger and better. If you would like to help out for next year, please contact Patrick McNichol at [pat.mcnichol@gmail.com](mailto:pat.mcnichol@gmail.com). Thanks to this year's supporters for your generous help!

### Central Pennsylvania

Regional Chair Amanda Goble [thonexpress@dmaig.org](mailto:thonexpress@dmaig.org)  
 Sixteen runners and 5 drivers successfully completed the inaugural THON Express 2007, entering the Bryce Jordan Center at 7:45 pm on February 16. Everyone who made the 135-mile trek from the Hershey Medical Center entered the BJC through a tunnel of moralers that stretched from the founders entrance of the BJC, down 2 flights of

stairs, and all the way around the perimeter of the BJC to the stage. What an amazing experience to be cheered on by so many! THON Express 2008 is currently looking for a few people who are interested in running. There is a greater need in the areas of coordination, promotion, and logistics. Together we will continue to show our support for the kids and help the advancement of the Four Diamonds Fund's mission. If you are interested, please contact Hank Angus at [prizebull@comcast.net](mailto:prizebull@comcast.net) or (717) 774-7354. For further information regarding THON Express please visit [thon.org/thonexpress](http://thon.org/thonexpress).

### Pittsburgh/Erie

Regional Chair Sarah Kreinbihl [pittsburghevents@dmaig.org](mailto:pittsburghevents@dmaig.org)  
 In January, 2005 alumna Celeste Brown organized a THON Night Out at Doc's Bar in Shadyside. At the event, volunteers sold raffle tickets for Penn State memorabilia including an official Penn State football signed by Joe Paterno! Doc's Bar also donated the cover and drink specials. Around 75 people attended the event and raised \$1,000 for THON!

### Washington D.C./Virginia/Maryland

Regional Chair Mike Werstuik [dcevents@dmaig.org](mailto:dcevents@dmaig.org)  
 On July 6, 2007, JoePalooza was held for the first time at Bailey's Pub in Arlington, VA, and the event was a huge success! With local State College favorites Velveeta and DC-area alumni Destro rocking the house, about 260 people attended the event and had a great time while raising \$2,000 for the kids!

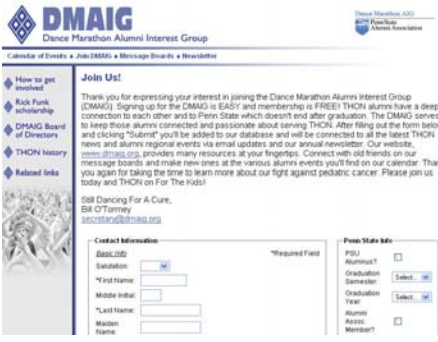
### Atlanta, Georgia

Email [regionalevents@dmaig.org](mailto:regionalevents@dmaig.org) to become a regional chair!  
 On February 2, 2007, the Penn State Greater Atlanta Chapter organized the inaugural Diamonds Over Georgia charity to support the Four Diamonds Fund and Penn State Dance Marathon at the 1420 Room in Atlanta. The event hosted over 100 people for an evening of hors d'oeuvres, drinks, and dancing. The event also featured a Mount Nittany Winery wine tasting, a live auction featuring a "Penn State Weekend Getaway," and dance contests for cases of Yuengling. Thanks to your generosity we raised \$5800! The second annual Diamonds over Georgia will be held on February 1, 2008, from 8 pm until 1 am. Again, Mount Nittany Winery and Yuengling will be sponsoring the event, which will feature hors d'oeuvres, drinks, dancing, and a live auction at 1420 Room. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 this year! ♦

Thank you to ALL event chairs, volunteers, and supporters! Your continued dedication to conquering childhood cancer helps spread awareness and brings us one step closer to prevailing for the kids! More events are held by alumni everywhere...please send us your event details, so we can help promote and spread the word about your success!

**dmaig.org** -ftk, greg debuck

The DMAIG has unveiled a new membership database this year so we can better communicate with you. We



want to make sure you all have the latest news and are aware of any THON events in your area, and you don't want to miss the upcoming THON weekend events hosted by DMAIG. We hope you will continue to

support THON as alumni, and this organization can be your link to the students and The Four Diamonds families. Please update your information at [www.dmaig.org/](http://www.dmaig.org/) join, and refer any other contacts to sign up too! Remember, our membership is FREE and open to anyone, so please join soon.

While you're online, check out the newly redesigned [thon.org](http://thon.org), and keep checking [dmaig.org](http://dmaig.org) for new updates.

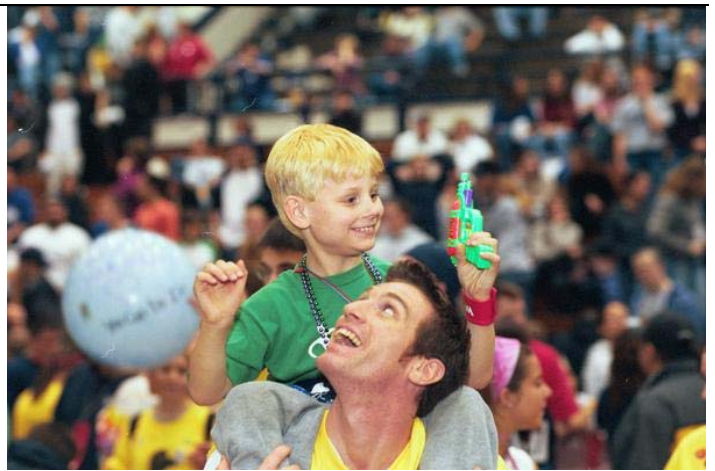
With any questions, please contact Greg DeBuck at [membership@dmaig.org](mailto:membership@dmaig.org).

Every February, we take a weekend full of sights and sounds, all the memories that help us remember what's important and just how much difference we make with courage, wisdom, honesty, and strength.

Sometimes, photos only begin to tell the story.

Sometimes, photos are just what we need to help bring us back.

Share your photos with the online THON family, and come visit often to find new postings at the THON photobase: <http://thonpass.cse.psu.edu/photo/>.



**remember the line dance...hope surrounds us all!**

*This February, hope will surround us all when we celebrate the fifth anniversary of the 2003 line dance! We learned this one in record time, so refresh your memory quickly!*

Hey Rec Hall  
It's time for THON,  
48...Bring it on!  
Throw your hands up in the air  
Show the kids how much we care.

Goldmember, Spiderman;  
Frodo's on a quest with Sam.  
Obi-Wan and Yoda,  
Someone free Winona!  
Big Blue on the Corner:  
Go Norm Brown!  
Guard the Glory 2K2  
MTV at PSU.

Holla!  
Can you hear me now?  
Dude, you're getting Rendell.  
Hansel, so hot right now.  
Hallie, Denzel, take a bow.  
Fashion news:

Dirty denim, bowling shoes.  
Enron's gone;  
Worldcom's broke;  
Corporate scandal, it's no joke.

Nine rescued from the mine;  
Rally monkey Anaheim.  
Hey, Yao, you're an all star,  
Get your game on, go play.  
Men's soccer:  
Big Ten crown;  
Kelly M:  
Puts 'em down.

24 11 5:  
Johnsons keep the game alive.  
Who is Monty anyway?  
The Lion's best in every way!

Let's go Penn State!  
Dance for the kids!  
THON on let's have some fun tonight;  
We are Penn State!  
Hope Surrounds Us All  
THON 2003

Hope Surrounds Us All  
One Hope, One Dream

Move cancer, get out the way.  
Baby powder, rubbing feet;  
Bathroom breaks can't be beat  
On the floor and in the stands,  
Stomp your feet and clap your hands!

Canyon Pizza late night spot;  
Starbuck's Coffee always hot.  
Campus growing south and west,  
Even bigger, still the best!

Roar Lions Roar!  
Roar Lions Roar!

For Hershey, we'll work it,  
Throw my THON on flip it and reverse it;  
Strength  
Honesty  
Wisdom  
Courage

If you can can can...  
Yes we can can can!

Let's go Penn State!  
Dance for the kids!  
THON on let's have some fun tonight;  
We are Penn State!  
Hope Surrounds Us All  
THON 2003  
Hope Surrounds Us All  
One Hope, One Dream

So throw those hands back in the air;  
Remind those kids how much we care!

We like it...  
We love it...  
We want more of it!

Four Diamonds  
Three Decades  
Two Days  
THON!

## class notes -ftk, stacy forbes

*Thanks to all who replied to my recent request for an update. I have tried to include as much information as I was able, separated by year of graduation. It was great hearing from you! Please feel free to email any future updates to VP@DMAIG.org and I will save them for the next newsletter. Thanks! ♦*

### the '90s

1993 - Melissa "Captain Masey" Hamilton (Morale Captain '92, '93) married Matthew Love in November 2006 and has relocated from Philadelphia to the Lehigh Valley. After a successful career in health and science marketing communications, she is now back in school, pursuing a new path: completing her RN degree at St. Luke's School of Nursing/Moravian College in Bethlehem, PA, with aspirations of being an oncology or hospice nurse. A certified yoga and pilates instructor and a massage therapist, she also owned and managed a yoga and wellness center in the Philadelphia area, specializing in therapeutic movement for persons with special needs. She still remembers fondly her THON experiences, THON families and fellow moralers, especially "Captain Winnie," and she can be reached at OmGr1108@yahoo.com.

1994 - Steve Levy (Overall Marketing Chairperson '93, Dancer '94) is a pediatrician working at Kids First Salem Road in Burlington, NJ. The practice is owned by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. He currently resides in Mt Laurel and can be reached at psusteven1@aol.com.

1995 - Stacy Bingler Forbes (Overall Chairperson '95, Overall Social Chairperson '94, DMAIG Dancer '00, DMAIG Vice President) and her husband David welcomed their third child, a daughter, Katherine Bingler Forbes on October 14, 2006. She joins big brother Jack (4½) and big sister Emma (2½).

1997 - Rhonda Penn Seidman (Overall Morale Chair-

person '97) and her husband Michael welcomed their daughter Jenna Brooke Seidman on May 27, 2007. They live in New York City.

1999 - Tony Pettinato (Overall Family Relations Chairperson '99, Reception and Family Relations Committee Member '96-'98, Dancer '95, '96) has taken a promotion within GSI Commerce in King of Prussia, PA, and now works as a senior internal auditor. He is currently studying for the CPA exam. He and his wife Kristen will be celebrating their fourth wedding anniversary in October; they live in Collegeville.

### the '00s

2001 - David Ulmer and his family moved to Plymouth, MN, a suburb of Minneapolis last year as part of a temporary work project. He is currently working for an electricity grid operator, PJM, and his wife Marion stays at home with their two beautiful children Will (4) and Christine (2). They are looking forward to being back in Pennsylvania soon to see everyone, and until then they can be reached at ulmers@psualum.com.

2001 - Stephanie Gundry (Morale Committee Member '01, Dancer '00) has been attending THON since 1999, and even though she graduated in 2001, she had never missed a THON until this year. But it was with good reason; Stephanie's son, Noah Edward Vespi, was born on September 21, 2006. Although they were unable to attend THON 2007, they will be there this year ready to support the dancers and THON in any way they can!

2002 - Teri Hennigan Bossard (OPP Captain '01, Dancer '99) and her husband Jim moved to Tuscaloosa, AL, where she currently attends the University of Alabama School of Law. She can be reached at [teri@psualum.com](mailto:teri@psualum.com). *(continued on page 7)*

---

### Do you want to Dance in THON 2008?

**Relive** the magic of dancing, or **experience** it for the first time.

Capture the **energy** and **passion** of THON and dance as one of the alumni couples.

Fundraising is underway, and the couples who raise the most money will be awarded the opportunity to dance in THON 2008.

The money raised by those people not selected for dancing will be donated to THON in the name of DMAIG.

For more information, or for resources to aid your fundraising efforts, contact Jennifer Cohen at [dancercouple@dmaig.org](mailto:dancercouple@dmaig.org) and visit [www.DMAIG.org/dance](http://www.DMAIG.org/dance).

*roaring forward, continued from page 2*

As we start a new fundraising season, we look to increase the amount of online donations as well as purchases from the THON store. These two forms of fundraising are the fastest growing and we see huge potential there. I ask you to assist us and promote these two easy ways to support THON in any way you can.

New to THON 2008 is the merchandise committee. With the dramatic increase in THON store sales over the past few years, this committee is dedicated to maintaining a store year round and will ensure customer satisfaction. Visit [www.thon.org](http://www.thon.org) often to see some of the new projects we are working on during the year.

As THON looks to the future, we examine the decisions we make today to ensure that the families will receive the level of support they need from us for as long as they need it. With your help, we all can ensure that every child's dreams come true. ♦



*alumni notes, continued from page 6*

2005 - Mike Cocco (Overall Morale Chair '05, Morale Captain '04, DMAIG Dancer '06) and Katie Clark (Morale Captain '05, Independent Dancer '06) got engaged on March 4, 2007. Their wedding will be on August 9, 2008, at Penn State's Eisenhower Chapel.

2007 - Joseph Mays (College of EMS THON committee overall chairperson '07, Rules and Regulations Captain (Pass Team) '07, College of EMS THON committee family relations chairperson '06, Rules and Regulations committee member '06, College of EMS THON committee member '05, Rules and Regulations committee member '05) graduated in May and finished his student internship with the Pennsylvania State Climate Office in August. After finishing his internship, he moved to Indiana and is currently employed at the Indiana State Climate Office as a data specialist. He and Kelly Ross (College of EMS THON committee Family Relations chairperson and Rules & Regulations committee member '07, College of EMS THON committee member and Dancer '06) got engaged on July 7. They are getting married July 4, 2009, in State College. Kelly also graduated in May and finished her student internship with Dr. Anne Thompson in the department of meteorology in August. She is attending Purdue University to get her MS in atmospheric science. They look forward to returning to State College for THON 2008. They can be reached at [JMays1454@gmail.com](mailto:JMays1454@gmail.com) and [kel.lynn.ross@gmail.com](mailto:kel.lynn.ross@gmail.com). ♦



*four the kids, continued from page 3*

THON is allowing the dreams of a free-standing children's hospital and dedicated space for our pediatric oncology patients to become reality. We thank you for your support of THON, the Four Diamonds Fund, and Penn State Children's Hospital. Through THON, the Four Diamonds Fund has helped Penn State Children's Hospital create a top quality pediatric cancer program. We look forward to the continued partnership between the DMAIG and the Four Diamonds Fund, and we thank you for all of you do as we work toward our goal of conquering childhood cancer. ♦



DMAIG  
Box 924  
State College, PA 16804

NAME LASTNAME  
ADDRESS 1  
ADDRESS 2  
CITY, STATE ZIP