



The Kids First Fund

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Kids First Fund experienced a very good year by delivering professional educational programs in Latvia, generating record donations and realizing national media attention. The year also marked the beginning of a planning process which will continue into 2004.

2003 was our fifth year as a non-profit organization. During the fall season I began to sense the benefits created by our tenure. I have learned how to better engage the board of directors in activities and likewise, the directors have become more confident in their abilities and cognizant of their responsibilities.

I also recognized a strong sense of confidence in our mission among donors. The persistence and the collective experience of its supporters have made the **Kids First Fund** a mature, capable and efficient organization.

The **Kids First Fund** continues to grow in service to the needs of abused and abandoned children. I believe 2004 will be a wonderfully productive year as we build new programs, partnerships and financial resources.

The **Kids First Fund** has been blessed with a fantastic board of directors and exceptional donor support. During a time of global economic difficulties, the Kids First Fund has generated donations in excess of \$50,000 for 2003.

Money is the engine of our good works. Planning creates our roadmap for the future. Partnerships help deliver local services to children. Good works, money, planning and partnerships will certainly define our activities in 2004.

Thank you for your support. Thank you for allowing me to serve as president of this great organization. Who tucks in abused and abandoned children at night? You do!

For the kids,

Jay Sorensen

Volunteer and President

“I believe 2004 will be a wonderfully productive year as we build new programs, partnerships and financial resources.”

JAY SORENSEN



“Children in Latvia
enjoy better lives
because of our donors
and volunteers.”

JEFF PATRIAS

Board Member
(Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA)

“Our education
programs reached
240 Latvian
professionals
during 2003.”

JUDGE MIKE DWYER

Board Member
(Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following statistics describe the accomplishments of the **Kids First Fund** since its founding in 1999:

- Funds raised 1999 through 2003: **\$159,000**
- Program expenditures 1999 through 2003: **\$34,000**
- Project examples: Renovation of social hall and residences for children, purchase of athletic equipment, field trips and outings, training and education for center staff, social worker and psychologist salary subsidies, operating support for abused pregnant teenager home, conference material printing and hall rentals for educational seminars
- Direct assistance for the care of abused children: Approximately **380** children have received services since 2000
- Professionals, such as police officers, doctors, legislators, judges and prosecutors, reached via the seminar series since 2001: **420**
- Amount deducted in U.S. for overhead, salaries, fundraising and administration: **\$0**

LEGISLATIVE SEMINARS

Four volunteers from Wisconsin traveled to Latvia during May 2003 to give day-long seminars on “An Introduction to U.S. Laws Protecting Children and Women From Abuse.” The seminars were designed to introduce United States justice, legislative and social welfare professionals to their Latvian counterparts and to exchange ideas about the two countries’ systems. The seminars concentrated on legislative and legal issues related to child and domestic abuse.

Phill Koss, a volunteer speaker who is the Walworth County District Attorney, offered this summary of the program to the Janesville Gazette: “The seminars were broken into morning and afternoon sessions. In morning sessions, each volunteer speaker presented an overview of their specialty and how it fits into the U.S. system. After their introductions, the group presented a case of a young girl reporting an assault to her teacher. The four then led a discussion on how the case would be handled in the United States.”

“In the afternoon, we split into two sessions where I talked about presenting children’s testimony and the common crimes against children and their penalties. Basically, it was an overview of the criminal justice system from beginning to end. The other group spoke to their peers and presented on foster care and domestic abuse. The schedule allowed time to meet with Latvian prosecutors and judges.”

Attendees included a wide array of professionals involved in child abuse issues such as police officers, social workers, members of parliament, government ministry staff, attorneys, judges, prosecutors, community activists and members of the press. Thank you to Phil Koss, Judge Michael Dwyer (Milwaukee County Circuit Court), State Senator Joanne Huelsman (Retired) and Margaret Flood (Social Worker with Roger’s Memorial Hospital) for volunteering a week of your time to this project. Seminar support was also provided by the U.S. Embassy in Latvia and David Bernstein.

“Our hockey auction raised money and great awareness of our mission.”

ARTURS IRBE

Board Member
(Riga, Latvia)

“Few things in life are more important than helping needy kids.”

DAVID BERNSTEIN

Kids First Fund donor
and supporter since 1999

(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA)

ALL-STARS HOCKEY AUCTION

The All-Stars Hockey Auction for Kids

opened for bidding on November 20, 2003 with 153 autographed hockey items from 115 all-star players. 100% of the items were donated by the players including celebrities such as Mario Lemieux, Mike Modano, Marty Turco, Ed Belfour, Marian Gaborik, Nikolai Khabibulin, **Kids First Fund** board member Arturs Irbe, honorary director Sergei Zholtok and Mr. Hockey, Gordie Howe.



The auction raised \$6,000 for the **Kids First Fund** with all of the 153 items sold. Just as significant was the media exposure provided by major newspapers in the United States and Canada. Coverage of the auction and the **Kids First Fund** was generated in the *New York Post*, *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, *Miami Herald*, *San Jose Mercury*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Toronto Star* and the *National Post of Canada*. A sampling of articles is available for review at KidsFirstFund.org.

Joining the **Kids First Fund** as friends supporting the auction were the National Hockey League, NHL Players' Association, Minnesota Wild, Inglasco, Logitech, The All Stars Hockey Team, eBay.com, eBay Canada, Canadian Internet Publishing, DB Air, Ltd., Moonlight Design, Swiss International Airlines and Irbe personal equipment manager Steve Swenson. Thank you for helping to make the auction a great success.

DONOR RECOGNITION

We take the opportunity to recognize one of our donors and supporters. David Bernstein has been a friend of the **Kids First Fund** since it was founded in 1999 and has been a consistent and generous donor. There is a Yiddish expression to describe a person who acts this way — *mensch*. Scholar Leo Rosten defined the word as “someone of substance, someone to emulate, someone of noble character.” This defines David. He has always been ready, willing and able to assist the **Kids First Fund** through cash donations, providing airline tickets for seminar speakers or defraying our expenses.



David is an entrepreneur and investor in aviation-related businesses. He is the CEO and part-owner of Rock-It Cargo, a leading company in equipment transport and logistics support for entertainment tours throughout the world. David is part-owner of an aircraft leasing company that owns Boeing 727 charter aircraft. He lives in a Philadelphia suburb with his wife Annika and four children.

David — thank you for being a friend of the **Kids First Fund** since the beginning!

“Our donors made 2003 a record year even during challenging times.”

BOB BAHLMAN

Treasurer and Board Member
(Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA)

“Did you ever think that by purchasing a plane ticket you could help a child half a world away?”

**ARTHUR FROMMER'S
BUDGET TRAVEL MAGAZINE**

January, 2004

RECORD SUPPORT

Total donations for 2003 exceeded \$50,000 which represents more than an 80% increase from 2002.

Fundraising during the year included a wide variety of activities such as the very successful January 24th event in Raleigh, N.C., with Arturs Irbe, RBC Centura Bank and Carolina Hurricanes. The event generated donations of \$19,000. Special thanks is expressed for the outstanding efforts of Mary Ann Baldwin and Russell Killen. The auction was made a success by these Raleigh-based friends of the Kids First Fund.



**RBC
Centura**

During 2003, support from directors, solicitation by board members and exposure generated by the website yielded over \$16,000 in donations. The Kids First Fund finished 2003 with an account balance in excess of \$96,000.

GREAT ONLINE AUCTION

Look for the Great Online Auction for Kids scheduled to launch February 19, 2004 at eBay.com under the member name KidsFirstFund. With a generous donation by American Trans Air of 25 system-wide tickets, the idea for an online auction was born.



Donors will be allowed to bid on more than 60 airline tickets to the United States, Canada, Europe, South America and Asia. Donor airlines include American Trans Air, AirTran Airways, Frontier Airlines, Icelandair, Midwest Airlines, South African Airways, Swiss International Airlines and Virgin Atlantic Airways. The auction will close on February 29, 2004.

CONTACT THE KIDS FIRST FUND

Learn more and donate online at: KidsFirstFund.org

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