

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES ILLINOIS

every child deserves a HOME

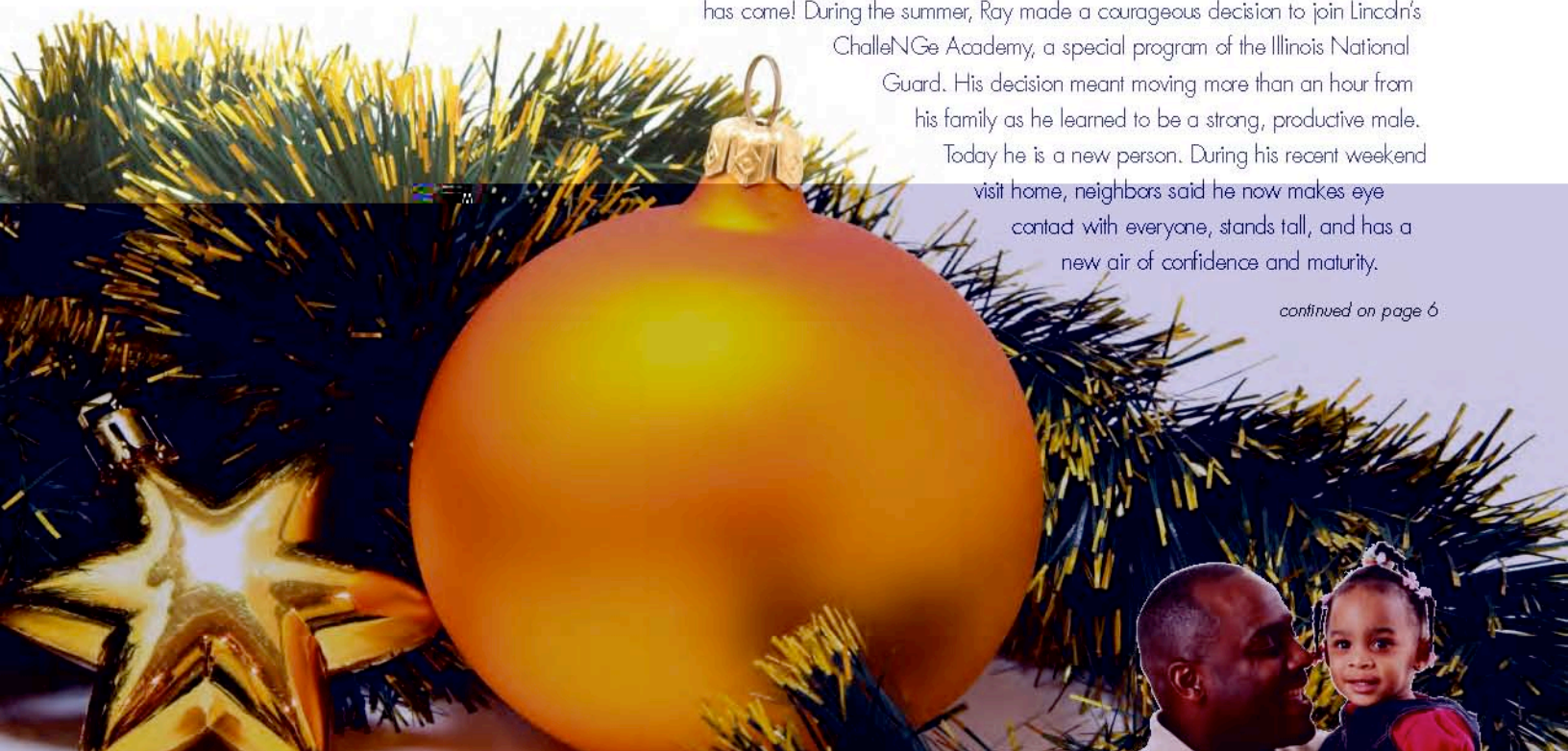
At SOS Children's Villages Illinois, a miracle begins every time a child finds healing, belonging, and hope. Every day has wondrous potential...

Where miracles begin

Taisha graduated from high school this year and wanted to go to college. But how could she afford it? She was afraid of college debt and anxious about leaving her family and the Village. A donor heard about her situation and offered nothing short of a miracle — a scholarship to a small college in Michigan. This generous gift gave Taisha the confidence to believe she could succeed on her own. She left Lockport Village in August 2007 to begin her life as college freshman.

Ray first came to the Village as a quiet and subdued child. Afraid to trust people, he barely made eye contact and wanted only to be close to his family. What a long way he has come! During the summer, Ray made a courageous decision to join Lincoln's ChalleNGe Academy, a special program of the Illinois National Guard. His decision meant moving more than an hour from his family as he learned to be a strong, productive male. Today he is a new person. During his recent weekend visit home, neighbors said he now makes eye contact with everyone, stands tall, and has a new air of confidence and maturity.

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OUR MISSION

at SOS Children's Villages
Illinois is to build families —
to provide a stable home in
a supportive community
environment designed to
help children in need grow
into caring, productive and
self-reliant adults.

Lockport Village

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www.sosillinois.org

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A Season of Miracles

Sometimes it just happens. With no rational explanation, something wonderful occurs. It may be as simple as smiling into an old friend, it could be radiance turning into good luck, or an ailing loved one now returning to good health.

Such unexpected events take an extraordinary meaning and create something wonderful in our lives. Often we consider them miracles. These magical moments seem to occur just often enough to keep us believing that an invisible agent or power is guiding and watching over us.

At SCIE-Children's Village of Utah, miracles occur one child at a time. Here we strengthen families by assisting fathers and vision one city together, in a home large enough and with the right resources for lives to grow as a family. Through the work of dedicated staff, volunteers, and donors, we stand together to guide each child in a

magical process of transformation. The miracle we provide requires more than a physically and emotionally safe home. It starts with the loving parents. They are key to the whole process, but meeting the child is a struggle then, through the transformative power of unconditional love, building that relationship into something sacred and astonishing. The ordinary rules of life are suspended. In this Village that believes each and every child belongs to us as a community in this bond of mutual caring, miracles occur for the children and all those around them.

The miracles we experience go beyond the people we see or meet in our journey. Many "invisible" individuals never seen by the children of SCIE provide something wonderful in the formation of a young life. With their contributions and support for our mission, these miracle workers help us move forward. All these people, people like you, work together to ensure the

children we meet find a healthy and wholesome lifelong home where they can recognize their hidden potential. To reach this point, we need to provide healing and nourished first, then provide the resources to help our children thrive.

We have opportunities to explore and witness miracles each day in all of our lives. I hope you realize how important you are in the process. Each word we speak about who we are, every step we take in providing care and support adds to creating something miraculous for the SCIE children. Our ordinary actions carry with them extraordinary results.

Sometimes miracles just happen, and for this we should all be grateful. We need miracles to give us hope and trust in the power of the human spirit to create new possibilities. In this special season, take time to realize how close we all are to something very magical and magical. ✨

CALL TO ACTION:

Miracles of Giving



Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley and other dignitaries cut the ribbon for the opening of SOS Chicago Village Community Center.

Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley led the roster of dignitaries celebrating the Oct. 1 **inauguration of the Chicago Village Community Center**, a vital asset to SOS Children's Villages and the surrounding neighborhood. The Center's facilities and services include the Jeanne Kenney Day Care Center, managed by Catholic Charities, which provides safe, affordable day care to 70 children. The Community Center was made possible by the generosity of capital campaign donors, in-kind donations, and individual, foundation, and corporate gifts. SOS is especially grateful to Tina and Walter Lavezzorio for their great generosity and commitment to SOS.



Jeff Arfsten (right) of Bovis Lend Lease, joined by Don Biernacki (left) of Related Midwest, presents a ceremonial check to SOS CEO Tim McCormick at the 4th Annual Golf Classic.

The **4th Annual SOS Children's Villages Illinois Golf Classic**, played Sept. 13 at Chicago's Harborside International Golf Course, raised \$150,000 in donations from sponsors, participants, raffle tickets, and auction items.

Heartfelt thanks go to lead sponsors Related Midwest and Bovis Lend Lease, along with all the supporters, volunteers, staff, and participants who made the benefit so successful.

On Sept. 15, a beautiful afternoon in the Lockport Village, the **9th Annual "Dare To Soar" Hot Air Balloon Fest, Craft Fair, and Classic Car Show** raised more than \$11,000 in support of Village programs. Special thanks go to the many volunteers coordinating this event, including the Lockport ROTC; Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; St. Bernard Parish; Lockport Township High School Art Department; balloonists



Balloon Fest 2007 took fund-raising to new heights at SOS Lockport Village.

Ray Liggett, Ed Najewski, and Wayne Werner; Lockport residents; and SOS staff, parents, and children. We greatly appreciate the work of the Balloon Fest committee — especially chairman Rick Brock, Kathy Hines, and Patty and Greg Lighton — for their generous commitment of time and talent in helping this year's event rise to new heights.

Volunteers and donors are the fuel that keeps SOS Children's Villages running each year. People often say they receive as much as they give through their experience with SOS. We invite you to explore the exciting opportunities in store as you volunteer or make a donation in support of the everyday miracles that take place at SOS Children's Villages Illinois. **To learn how you can help, contact Bob Andorka, Director of Development, at 312-957-1800, ext. 121 or use the enclosed envelope for your gift.** 🇺🇸

VILLAGE VOICES:

What I like about the holidays

Holidays are special because...

You can get gifts and be thankful for them.
- Shanika, age 10

They're fun, fun, fun!
- Tyrell, age 9

People smile nice at you.
- Michael W., age 13

I feel like I can give a whole lot of love to those who don't live with their biological families.

I can be a little sister or a big sister to somebody who needs me.
- Essence, age 15

We have each other.
- James, age 14
- Jermaine, age 12
- Jamyra, age 6
- Aaliyah, age 4
- Jamal, age 3

You can stay home from school.
- Marquon, age 13

We get to spend time with families.
- Damiqaye, age 13

There's no school, and you get to play outside with the other kids in the village.
- Jasmine, age 5

You share them with someone special like your family!
- Tynesha, age 14

We love each other at Christmas.
- Brandon, age 4

You get to do all the fun activities for the holidays.
- Terri, age 7

A lot of us don't have families to go home to, but we can look around at our new families and it feels like home.
- Khela, age 16

I like...

Going to parties and getting presents.
- Dante, age 8

Gifts and games.
- Dorj, age 6

Happy times with family and cooking.
- Demetrius, age 6

Seeing Santa Claus.
- Salome, age 6

Book bags and jingle bells.
- Michel, age 3

Eating Christmas cookies and pizza.
- Markiest, age 5

Celebrating Jesus!
- Cortez, age 9

Eating good food and peach cobbler.
- Jacob, age 2

Being surrounded by friends.
- Omri, age 12

Hanging around with my brothers, friends and Ms. Kathy's family.
- Terik, age 14
- Marvin, age 2

The holidays are a time to...



Make snowballs and have a snowball fight.
- Shamauri, age 7
- Amauri, age 7
- Malik, age 5
- Janisa, age 4
- Jalon, age 4

Remember that kids from destructive homes and incomplete families have been taken to a place where they feel they are loved and people want to help them.
- Justice, age 13

Share love, give thanks, and be grateful for all you have.
- Katrice, foster mom



Rachel loves to read. When she had the opportunity to participate in a reading program at a community center near school, she was excited. But she knew it would mean coming home late and extra driving for her foster mom, Gladys, who was also caring for Rachel's brother and two sisters. Gladys was more than willing to go the extra miles because of the potential and excitement she saw in Rachel. Since joining the reading program, Rachel has blossomed into an honors scholar and started tutoring other students in reading. As a reward for their generosity in helping others, Rachel and 20 other students received a school-sponsored trip to Disney World.

In June 2007, when SOS foster mom Darlene picked up little **Jeanette** from the shelter, the baby had no diapers, bottles, or blanket. The baby was frail, underweight, underdeveloped, listless, and suffered serious skin problems. Darlene feared the infant might have lost her ability to thrive. But  few months of loving care, a small miracle is unfolding. Jeanette has gained weight and is growing out of her clothes. Her hair and skin are healthy, and she's teething. She is active, curious, and showing signs of being an early walker. After a difficult start in life, Jeanette is entering this season of miracles as a happy, healthy baby. 



Crystals and Stars



In October 2007, a star-studded lineup of entertainers — including Jessica Alba, Eric Dane, Reba McEntire, Jordan Sparks, and Carrie Underwood — contributed their artistic talents to embellish jean jackets with Swarovski crystals. Auctioned on eBay, the jackets raised \$6,000 for SOS Children's Villages.

The online auction highlighted World Orphan Week, Oct. 1–7. Launched in 2005, the annual event is designed to raise awareness of orphaned and abandoned children around the world while inspiring volunteers to raise funds for vital programs meeting their needs.

Like SOS, Swarovski has its roots in Austria. The world's leading producer of precision-cut crystals, Swarovski was founded in Austria in 1895; SOS-Kinderdorf International, the parent organization of SOS Children's Villages USA, opened its first village in the same region in 1949.

To learn more about SOS Children's Villages USA and International, visit www.sos-usa.org.



SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW

Laura Sudler



Laura Sudler has witnessed the miraculous growth of SOS Children's Villages Illinois from a hopeful idea to the concrete realities of the Lockport and Chicago Villages. She is a loyal supporter, tireless advocate, valued leader, true champion, and friend of SOS children and families.

What motivated you to get involved with SOS Children's Villages Illinois?

I've been part of SOS Children's Villages Illinois since the beginning of the Lockport Village in 1990. Architect Dirk Lohan asked me to join the Board of Directors. While I was deciding whether to become involved, I read Alex Kotlowitz's book *There Are No Children Here*, about two children from the Henry Horner Homes in Chicago. I was so moved by the story and wondered, "How can I help?" SOS was the answer to my question.

Where have you found small miracles or inspiration in your work with SOS?

I believe in SOS and its philosophy. I've seen SOS Villages in places like Africa, Nepal, and Vietnam. What is so wonderful, so miraculous, is that SOS gives children a chance. It gives them an education, the love of their brothers and sisters, a safe home, a caring parent — everything they need. We have children in the Illinois Villages who are now attending college and technical school. Kids don't get that in other places. At SOS, they are given a chance to have a family, to be loved, and to succeed.

Do you have a wish for the SOS Children's Villages for the holidays?

To the children, families, volunteers, and staff of SOS, have a happy and healthy holiday season! 

Calendar of Events

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:
12TH ANNUAL SOS GALA
MAY 2, 2008
FOUR SEASONS HOTEL CHICAGO
MICHIGAN AVENUE AND
DELAWARE PLACE**

*Details of this year's elegant event
will follow in the months ahead.*

*Check out the newly redesigned
www.sosillinois.org Web site for
information on SOS Villages,
programs, success stories, children's
artwork, photos, foster parent info,
and much, much, more.*

Thanks to DickinsonGroup (Copy/Project Management)