



Winter | 2008-09



# NEWS

“Providing support to Oklahoma children with cancer and their families.”

## Toby Keith Kicks Off Ally's House Renovations In Oncology Unit at The Children's Hospital

On December 3rd, country music star Toby Keith and his young friends, hammers in hand, knocked down the first wall to officially begin renovations to the pediatric oncology ward at The Children's Hospital at OU Medical Center. The wall-breaking represents the culmination of nearly 2 years of planning and will benefit young Oklahoma cancer patients for years to come.

“We're going to make it better for the kids of Oklahoma,” Keith said.

When this phase of the renovations and improvements are complete, there will be four new areas on the oncology unit to improve the quality of life for patients and families facing cancer treatments and hospitalizations.

**PLAYROOM** – The Playroom will be a place for patients to escape the life of a hospital patient and interact with other kids in a positive environment. This will be a space for kids to be kids, to relax, have fun and play games.

**FAMILY RESOURCE ROOM** – The Family Resource Room will be a space where parents can get information about cancer treatment and have access to resources and information about possible support from Ally's House. Wireless Internet access will allow laptops to be used and communication can continue between family members and loved ones outside of the hospital.

**MULTI-STATION INFUSION ROOM** – The Multi-station Infusion Room will have several stations with dividers for patients receiving either inpatient or outpatient chemotherapy, transfusions or other treatment. Parents can sit with their child and watch movies or play games during the treatment process.



L to R: Scott, Logan, & Linda Webb, Toby Keith, Chuck Spicer & Dr. William Meyer with OU Medical Center.

**PALLIATIVE CARE ROOM** – The Palliative Care Room will provide a homelike environment with the support of hospital care for families who are facing end of life. It will combine the medical requirements of a hospital room with the comfort of a residence. Parents or caregivers will have their own bed, but will be close enough to be at the patient's bedside almost immediately.

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Front Row, L to R: Gage, Toby, Turner.  
Back Row, L to R: Paige, Trevor





“Most of the kids in Oklahoma that are diagnosed with cancer are treated right here at The Children’s Hospital,” said Linda Webb, Executive Director (and Ally’s mom). “We wanted to do something on the oncology floor that will directly help these patients.”

“I’ll just add that Allison was a very high stress patient, and the older hospital where we were treated was a little more scary ...” said Scott Webb, Ally’s dad. “This will be more kid friendly, and I think will take stress off the kids more.”

“Since the inception of Ally’s House, the group has been one of our hospital’s biggest supporters,” said Chuck Spicer, Chief Administrative Officer, Children’s Hospital. “The fact that they are so committed to directly helping families going through cancer treatment is a reflection of the organization. We are proud and thankful to be involved with such wonderful group.”

The new rooms were designed by HKS Architects, Inc. which is based in Dallas; the firm has worked on similar projects for some of the top children’s hospitals in the country.

## Edmond Santa Fe High School: Takes Ally’s House By “Storm”




Not even a tornado moving through their city could keep Santa Fe High School students from “blowing” past the fundraising goal for their annual Double Wolf Dare Week (DWDW) campaign. Despite the weather emergency, a national economic downturn, and finishing their campaign on Friday the 13th, the teens raised a whopping \$150,515 benefiting Ally’s House.

DWDW is an annual fundraising event in which the student body, along with their families and friends, come together to raise money for a worthy non-profit organization. “Making Dreams a Reality” was the theme for this year’s campaign, using reality shows as a basis for T-shirts, assemblies, contests, etc. Even the final assembly revealed the campaign total dramatically, with a student-constructed yellow school bus covering one end of the gymnasium with the grand total hidden behind it. Everyone waited eagerly to see if the lofty goal of \$100,000 had been reached. The gym full of students and teachers chanted, “Move that bus! Move that bus!” much like each episode of TV’s Extreme Makeover Home Edition. Mouths dropped and students jumped and shouted as the staggering total was revealed.....the students’ DREAMS BECAME A REALITY!



*Ally’s House is humbled  
and inspired by the  
students and faculty of  
Santa Fe High School.*

**GO WOLVES!**



This holiday season, Ally's House was proud to join the Bob Stoops Champions Foundation in making the holidays bright for twenty children undergoing treatment for cancer. Local businessman Tim Smith decorated each child's home with Christmas lights for the holiday season. Ally's House provided assistance to each family to offset the additional electricity costs.

Our annual "Operation Christmas Elf" program was once again an enormous success! 102 pediatric cancer patients received Christmas gifts thanks to our many volunteers from around the country.

One grateful parent wrote, "Thank you so much for making our daughter's Christmas special. You have done a wonderful job making her feel special and loved."

Thank you to all of our generous and tireless "Elf" volunteers!

Ally's House continued an annual tradition and teamed with the Oklahoma Children's Cancer Association (OCCA) for the annual Christmas Party held at The Children's Hospital at OU Medical Center. This year 396 children and their families attended.

"The numbers seem to grow every year" said Jan Davis, OCCA Christmas Party Chair.

Families were treated to gifts, food, fun, and a visit from Santa!

Special thanks to:

- Phil & Mary Brady for their generous donation of gift cards for all teens who attended;
- Little Caesars for a fabulous pizza discount and speedy delivery;
- Our fantastic volunteers for all of your hard work - couldn't do it without you!



## Whitten-Newman Foundation's Dallas Cowboy Extravaganza

On December 20th, the Whitten-Newman Foundation hosted a Dallas Cowboy Extravaganza and invited seven Ally's House kids. Each child brought along a parent and joined representatives of Ally's House and the Whitten Newman Foundation and boarded a party bus to head south to see the historic final game played in Texas Stadium between the Cowboys and the Baltimore Ravens. The party bus lived up to its name with games, prizes and pizza shared by the entire group – all spectacularly decked out in new official Cowboys gear, also provided by the foundation.



The whole gang enjoys the luxury suite at the Cowboys vs. Ravens game.

*Thank You*  
**WHITTEN-NEWMAN  
FOUNDATION!**

After checking in at the Marriott Suites hotel, the happy group reboarded the bus and headed to a fully catered luxury suite to watch the game in style! The surprises continued as the suite was visited by injured running back Felix Jones, who graciously signed autographs and took photos with the kids. (When injured Dallas safety & former OU star Roy Williams was unable to make it to the suite, he attended a lunch back in Oklahoma City to meet all of the kids!)

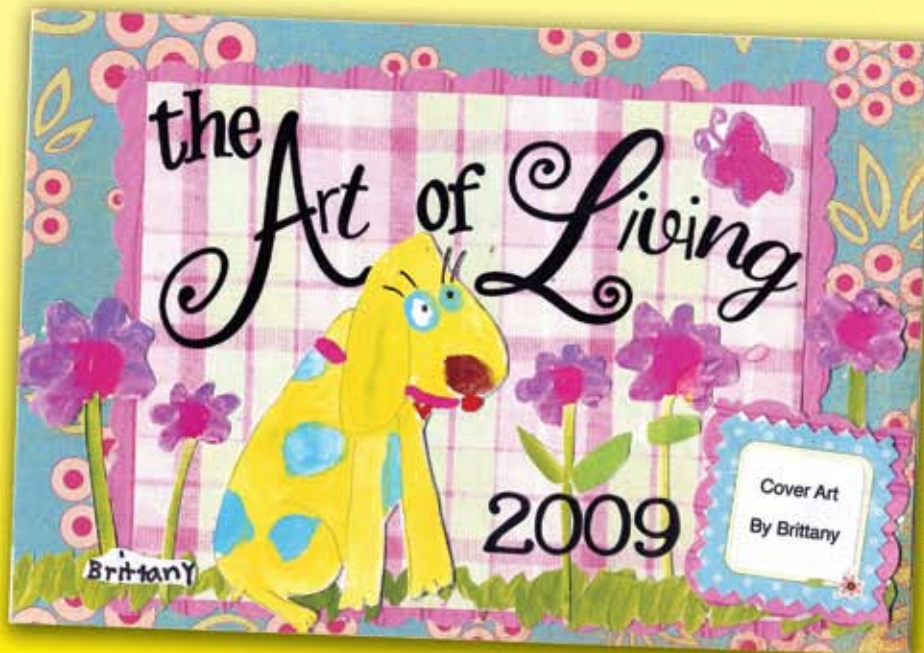
Though the Cowboys were not victorious, the trip was an amazing time for everyone. It was capped off with a great night's sleep at the hotel, a delicious breakfast and a relaxing ride home – each armed with photos, mementoes and wonderful memories.



## 2009 Art of Living Calendars

The 2009 Art of Living calendars are touching and colorful calendars filled with artwork by Oklahoma children with cancer, along with inspirational saying and quotes. These one-of-a-kind calendars are wonderful for your office or home – and make great gifts!

Order now for a donation of \$10 on our website at [www.allyshouse.net](http://www.allyshouse.net).





## The Giving Continues at Deer Creek High School

Last spring, the students of Deer Creek High School generously raised more than over \$47,000 for Ally's House during their annual Wonderful Week of Fundraising – the most the school has ever raised. This year the incoming freshmen were introduced to the amazing giving spirit that is a proud tradition at Deer Creek. After a presentation by Ally's House staff about our mission, the freshman class gathered items for patients: stickers, coloring books, craft supplies, new clothes, books, cards, and video games. We're honored that Deer Creek introduced our mission to a whole new group of big-hearted students.

## Cyclist Rides from San Diego to Oklahoma City for Wounded Soldiers and Children with Cancer

Eric McGinnis pulled it off – in October he completed a 1500-mile bike ride from San Diego to Oklahoma City to raise money and awareness for Ally's House and wounded soldiers. He arrived in Oklahoma City on Sunday, October 18th, greeted by media and supporters.

The 36-year-old type I diabetic raised more than \$10,000 as he rode for the Warrior Foundation in San Diego, which provides assistance to disabled soldiers, and Ally's House in Oklahoma, an organization that helps children with cancer.

His parents, wife and 3 children traveled the same route in a rented RV where he rested and fueled up each night.

The end-of-the-ride gathering featured music, jumping inflatable rooms for kids, balloons and a much-enjoyed head-shaving ceremony where McGinnis and his young sons had their heads shaved in honor of children with cancer. The mother of a local pediatric cancer survivor did the shaving.

McGinnis received a special commendation from Oklahoma Governor Brad Henry for his service to Oklahoma children with cancer.

“As a parent, I can not begin to comprehend what a family goes through when their child is battling cancer,” McGinnis said. “These children epitomize courage and strength; they are an inspiration and are true heroes in my eyes. I couldn't think of a charity more worthwhile for my efforts.”



Eric McGinnis and Ally's House kid Kiki celebrate his ride.



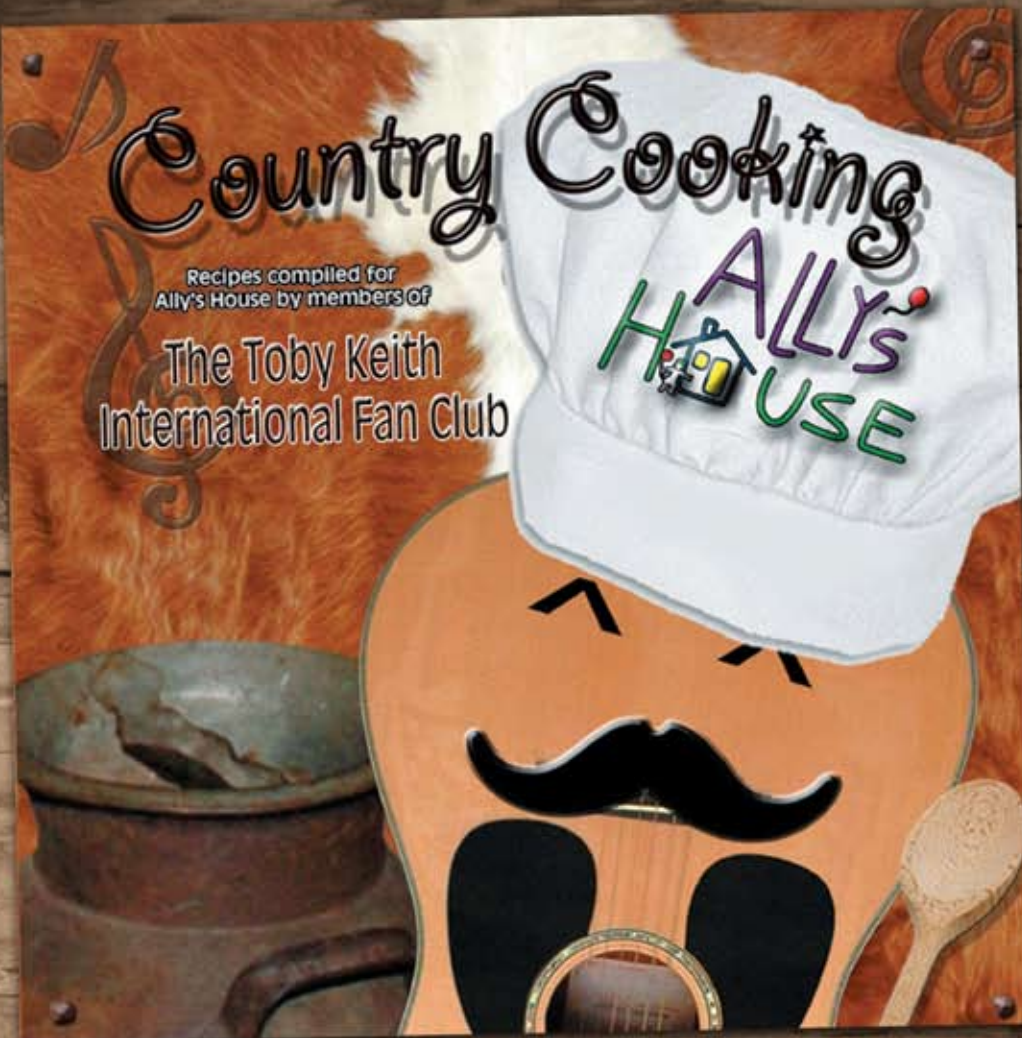
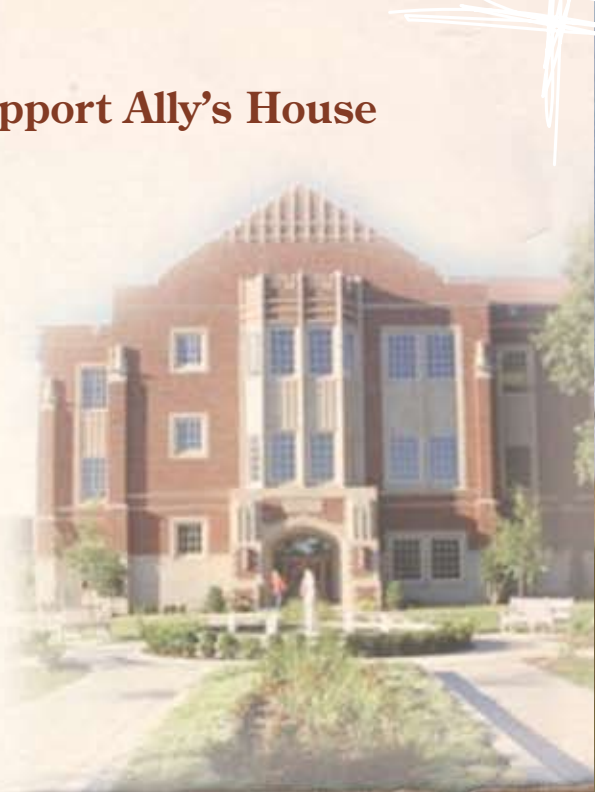
IBC Students  
Sold Koozies at  
McGinnis Bike Ride

## University of Oklahoma Business Students Support Ally's House

Within Price Business College is a program called Integrated Business Core (IBC) where students get hands-on, real-world training in the business field. From brainstorming and market analysis, to managing employees and the legal implications of business transactions, to selling products and closing the books on the last sale, IBC develops the skills it takes to launch a successful business. All profits from the business go to local non-profit charities.

For the fall 2008 semester one of the IBC companies, "Boomer Beverage Buddies," chose Ally's House as the recipient of their profits. The students of Boomer Beverage Buddies sold foam drink koozies. Unlike conventional koozies, these koozies could be worn around the neck allowing the user to hold their beverage while cheering on their favorite Sooner sports team.

On December 12th, the IBC companies made their final presentations marking the end of the semester and presenting the checks to each of the designated charities. We are pleased to announce that Boomer Beverage Buddies donated \$7,370.57 to Ally's House!



### Country Cooking Cookbooks

The first ever Ally's House cookbook is available, filled with a collection of delicious recipes submitted by members of the Toby Keith International Fan Club. It also includes a few special submissions from Ally's House kids and families describing simple meals they enjoy.

It features the best cookbook format – a binder that tilts and props open for hands-free cooking! Available for a donation of \$25, plus shipping. Support our kids while your family enjoys wonderful delicious meals. Order your cookbook on our website at [www.allyshouse.net](http://www.allyshouse.net).

# Ally's House: Our Biggest Challenge Ever

Ally's House is proud to be teaming with the American Cancer Society to house Oklahoma cancer patients and their families.

The vision is for side-by-side places for families and patients to stay during treatment: Ally's House for pediatric patients, and an ACS Hope Lodge for adult patients. Office space and administrative areas will be shared. Not having to worry about where to stay or how to pay for lodging will allow guests to focus on the most important thing: getting well.

Ally's House will provide a refuge in Oklahoma City that will serve as a nurturing, homelike environment where patients and caregivers can retreat to their private rooms or connect with others who are going through many of the same experiences.

Currently, there are 28 ACS Hope Lodge locations throughout the United States, but American Cancer Society has never teamed with another organization like Ally's House.

Like each ACS Hope Lodge, Ally's House will offer a variety of resources and information about cancer and how best to fight the disease. A land lease is secured, and an aggressive capital campaign is underway.

"The American Cancer Society is looking forward to partnering with Toby Keith and Ally's House on this project. Our organizations share a common goal of support and service for cancer patients and their families. This unique effort will help us provide much needed housing for both children and adults. The ability to serve patients together is an exciting opportunity."

Lesa Foster

Regional Vice President – Oklahoma

**"You've got to generate a lot of revenue to pull something like this off," said country music star Toby Keith. "Each year we try to get bigger and stronger."**



# Spread the Word!

Is your Oklahoma company, organization, church, civic group or school looking for a non-profit to support? Choose us! In most cases, Ally's House can provide a speaker to provide your group with information about our mission and how they can help. Also, we encourage you to send your friends and family the link to our website. They can watch our informational video, read newsletters, and even sign up as a monthly donor!

**Support our kids with a donation of any amount!**

**Visit our website and click on "I Want to Be an Ally's House Supporter" to sign up as a monthly donor, or send your gift to:**

Ally's House  
P.O. Box 722767  
Norman, OK 73070  
(405) 733-ALLY (2559)



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