

NEWSLETTER



NICU Breakfast

A Year of Successes

A Banner Year helping NICU Families in Need

Welcome to our 2nd annual Bull and Oyster Roast! We are thrilled to see so many familiar faces -- and many new ones -- together tonight as we raise critical funds for Isabel's Gift, our unique non profit dedicated to assisting families with children in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). By joining in our fundraising efforts, you are providing comfort and support to hundreds of families facing the stark reality of a sick or premature baby in the NICU. You are providing hope during a bleak, desperate time in their lives...a time that should be filled with joy but instead is often marked by fear and anxiety. You are letting them know they are not alone. We applaud your support, and sincerely thank you for your help. And our local NICU families in need thank you, too.

Isabel's Gift Board of Directors

Update on 2005

Today, we are proud *Isabel's Gift* is well on the way to achieving our many goals. Thanks to the support of many of you, we have:

Raised more than \$11,000 and hosted more than 330 people at our first annual Bull & Oyster Roast fundraiser

Formed an official Board of Directors and completed the long process of becoming a charitable, tax-deductible 501(c)3 non profit organization

Begun our flagship comfort bag program at Anne Arundel Medical Center, distributing more than 75 comfort bags to NICU families in need since May (Sample bags are available at the Isabel's Gift information table -- take a peek inside to see the "goodies" our NICU families receive!)

Hosted a *NICU Nurse Appreciation breakfast* at Anne Arundel Medical Center to thank the dedicated and supportive nursing staff

Served a delicious catered Thanksgiving dinner to more than 25 NICU families at Anne Arundel Medical Center

Begun collecting book donations for a NICU library cart



2005 Bull Roast

Last Year's Bull & Oyster Roast

Three years ago, Isabel - the impetus for Isabel's Gift - was born with a serious heart condition and spent weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). Isabel's Gift founder and mother Christa Grim was overwhelmed by the difficult realities of the NICU experience...how the hours and days move with agonizing slowness when you have a baby in need...how life goes on even as you sit for hours and days by a child's bedside knowing there is still laundry to do, bills to pay and other children to be cared for at home... how thankful you are for the support of family and friends. Facing these challenging realities first-hand, Christa realized NICU parents need focused emotional and practical assistance to help them through their ordeal. Together with the help of family, friends and local volunteers, she started Isabel's Gift to address these issues and provide local NICU families critical support in their time of need.

Today, Isabel's Gift is a growing, thriving organization

dedicated to providing this assistance in unique and collaborative ways.

We are excited about our accomplishments, and look forward to expanding our program in the months and years ahead so we can help as many NICU families as possible. If you are interested in helping us as an Isabel's Gift volunteer, please sign up at our information table. Thank you again for your support, and we hope you have a great time at our 2nd Annual Bull & Oyster Roast!

Check it out!

Our Isabel's Gift comfort bags have been warmly received by NICU families and hospital staff. Take time tonight to take a peek inside a sample bag at our information table. The bags include: lotion, tissues, lip balm, bottled water, paper and pen, stationary, CDs, a toothbrush, candy, tea bags, food coupons, travel mugs, a knitted baby cap & booties and our NICU Parent's Advice Guide.



Girl Scout Troop 291

For More Information

If you would like more information about our Isabel's Gift programs and volunteer opportunities, please visit our website at www.isabelsgift.org

Coming in 2006 - We plan to:

Speak at the National Convention of Perinatal Social Workers (NAPSW) this April in Las Vegas, Nevada, where we hope to obtain support for five *Isabel's Gift* pilot programs in hospitals nationwide

Distribute emergency funds to NICU families in need of financial assistance through our new *Pink Heart Families* program

Work with the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore to begin distributing comfort bags to their NICU families

Special Thanks To:

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