

Foundation makes \$100K donation

OCEANPORT — Kristen and Rich Gillette, of Oceanport, presented a \$100,000 check to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia on Dec. 11 in memory of their daughter Kortney, who died of a brain tumor in 2005.

Through the Kortney Rose Foundation, they support advances in research and treatment and raise awareness of pediatric brain tumors.

Kristen Gillette, president of the Kortney Rose Foundation, said in a press release, "When we set the goal of donating \$100,000 in 2008 we knew it was a lofty one. We are very grateful for all of the continued support we have received. Donating the foundation's annual efforts around the time of Kortney's birthday helps turn a sad time into a more positive one and is creating her legacy of helping other children through the promise of research."

Also taking part in the check donation were Renee Bonin, principal of Wolf Hill Elementary School, math teachers Ms. Reardon and Mrs. Saffiotti, and 20 fourth-grade math students. These students as well as last year's fourth-grade math classes helped to count change in the "Kortney's Coins for a CURE" program, a foundation fundraiser held at the school in May. Several schools raised money through the fundraiser, but Mrs. Bonin, Mrs. Gillette and the school's math teachers worked together to build the program into Wolf Hill's math curriculum.

As a result, the school collected almost three-quarters of the total \$15,000 raised by the program, Bonin said.

Richard Breslin, senior major gift officer of the Foundation for the Children's

Hospital of Philadelphia, accepted the check and said, "The \$175,000 that the Kortney Rose Foundation has donated to Children's Hospital in the past two years has been earmarked specifically for the large-scale Genomics Project to hunt genes behind brain tumors and use the gene knowledge to guide therapy, devise new tests and treatments."

The Kortney Rose Foundation was established in August 2007 by the Gillettes. Kortney was described as a vivacious 9-year-old with a winning smile and a zest for life. In December 2005, she was diagnosed with a brain stem glioma and succumbed to the disease just four months later.

The 2008 donation was raised with the generosity of corporate sponsors including World Subaru of Tinton Falls and Pound Puppies. Fundraising efforts included a dinner gala, the "Kortney's Coins for a CURE" program, the Kortney's Challenge two-mile fun run/walk, and many generous donations.

In addition to raising money for research, another primary focus of KRF is to raise awareness about the prevalence and severity of pediatric brain tumors. Brain tumors are the No. 1 cancer-related cause of death in children age 19 and under and are diagnosed as often as leukemia. In 2008 KRF introduced a bill to designate May as Brain Tumor Awareness Month in the state of New Jersey. Passage should be in early 2009.

For more information on the Kortney Rose Foundation, visit www.thekortney-rosefoundation.org or call 732-222-1491.



Kortney Gillette