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Message from the Chairman

To all, I want to start by saying that this is an exciting time for the TRA. Members of our Executive Committee are engaged in a Strategic Planning effort to promote existing and new program ideas as well as to find ways to expand upon our partnerships with organizations across the country that support the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt. This Arena issue is but one example of that and highlights the Teddy Bear Program and the great work of Jim Pehta, Marie Kutch and so many others over the years. Collectively we can and are making a difference and in the words of TR, "There can be no greater satisfaction in life than working hard at a job that is well worth doing". Our work with the TRA is such a "job" and I commend all of you who are doing so much to promote the legacy of TR.

VADM David Architzel USN (Ret)
Chairman TRA Board of Trustees

In future newsletters we plan to feature Theodore Roosevelt organizations that relate to our mission to promote the legacy of TR as you will see in features below. This newsletter will also be a forum for our partners in the TR arena to provide updates, event information, and other relevant information.

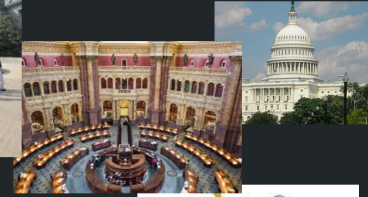
This edition features our Teddy Bears for Kids Program, a focus of the TRA since 2008 under the leadership of Jim Pehta, past member of the Executive Committee and Chair of the Chicago Annual Meeting. Over the past decade over 80,000 teddy bears have been donated to children. This year 780 Teddy Bears have brightened the lives of sick children.....congratulations to Jim and his team of volunteers.

To enter the TRA website, [Click here](#)

Theodore Roosevelt Association

2020 Annual Meeting

Washington, DC



Teddy Bear Toss at Boston College Men's Ice Hockey Game

"Providing smiles twice - once for the child who gives and once for the child who receives"

That was the motivating theme for the Teddy Bear Toss at the Boston College Men's Ice Hockey game against Notre Dame on December 6, 2019 at Conte Forum according to TRA member Jimmy Connelly who helped organize the event. All the bears tossed onto the ice were TRA bears and all were then donated to area hospitals such as Boston Children's Hospital and the Franciscan Children's Hospital. The BC cheerleaders distributed the wrapped bears, with the TR Teddy Bear story inside, at the doors, to children young and older, telling them to toss the bears onto the ice for children in hospitals. During the 2nd intermission when the skater carrying a larger bear on his shoulders said it was time, the bears were tossed onto the ice, then collected, and during the following week, brought to the hospitals by BC hockey players. The entire BC community was



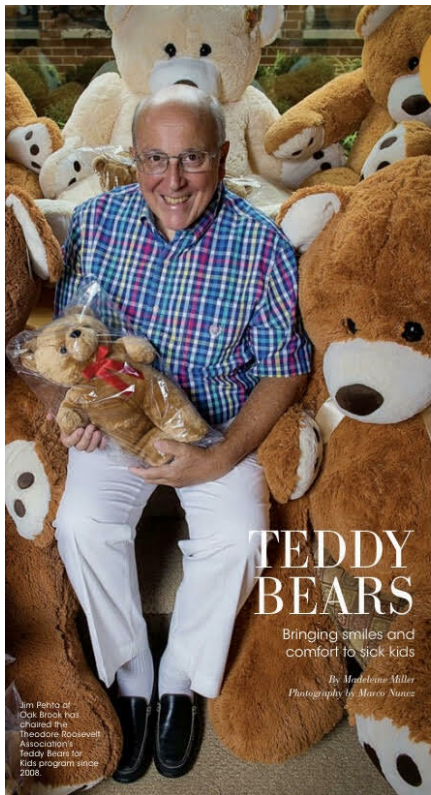
bchockey
Boston Children's Hospital



423 likes

bchockey Thanks to the generosity of our fans, Jimmy Connelly, Pikes Peak Hockey Club and the Teddy Roosevelt Association, we dropped donated toys and teddy bears off at @bostonchildrens yesterday. Best wishes to the children and their families! 🧸📺
#WeAreBC🦉

excited to be a part of this motivating "Giving" event. Thank you, Jimmy and the Theodore Roosevelt Association for your generosity and positive example of Men and Women for Others!



TEDDY BEARS

Bringing smiles and comfort to sick kids

By Madeleine Miller
Photography by Marco Nunes

Jim Pehta of Oak Brook has chaired the Theodore Roosevelt Association's Teddy Bears for Kids program since 2008.

One of the most popular and beloved toys of all-time is the teddy bear. Maybe you still have yours from when you were little.

A teddy bear is a friend who won't "un-friend" you—a cuddly companion who's by your side when no one else is—a comfort when you need someone to hug and hold on to. A bear is your buddy that assures you that you won't have to face difficult times alone—like when you're sick.

The Theodore Roosevelt Association's (TRA) Teddy Bears for Kids program has been distributing bears to hospitalized children since 1986. The program initially focused on New York City-area hospitals, but went nationwide in 2009.

Oak Brook resident Jim Pehta has been the chairman of the Teddy Bear program since 2008, and is responsible for successfully expanding it throughout the United States.

"We've delivered more than 88,000 teddy bears to children in hundreds of hospitals since the program began," Pehta said. "If a hospital has 36 beds, they need 36 bears. A teddy bear provides comfort and security when a child needs it most, such as when he or she comes out of surgery."

The story of how stuffed toy bears came to be called "teddy" bears can be traced back to a hunting trip that President Theodore Roosevelt took in 1902. After several days of hunting in Mississippi, the president had failed to shoot a bear; but his hunting guides were determined that he would not go back to the White House empty-handed, so they followed dogs that had cornered a large black bear against a tree. The men tied the bear to

the tree, and summoned Mr. Roosevelt to come and claim his prize. When the president arrived, he refused to shoot the bear, citing that it was "unsportsmanlike."

When newspapers got wind of the story, they ran with it. A cartoonist's depiction of the event garnered even more national attention for the story. A Brooklyn candy shop owner saw the cartoon, and placed several stuffed bears that his wife had made in his store window. He wrote President Roosevelt, asking if he could call the bears "Teddy's bears," and was given permission. The rest is history.

"I believe that President Roosevelt would be very pleased with TRA's Teddy Bear program," said Tweed Roosevelt, CEO of TRA and great-grandson of the former president. "His father opened boarding houses for orphaned boys, so my great-grandfather learned about helping others at a very early age. He would take enormous pride in the fact that teddy bears are being used today to help sick children."

The teddy bears that hospitalized children receive through the program have plenty of personality. They are pleasingly plush, come in cuddly white, chocolate brown and cozy-caramel colors, and are about a foot tall, with red bowties. Their arms are open wide as if in need of a hug, and their eyes are full of love. Inkwell Global Marketing in New York City has been manufacturing the bears since the program began.

"God put us on this earth to do good," said Gary Brill, Inkwell's business manager, "and children are a gift from God. These bears make sick kids feel better, and put smiles on their faces."

"I remember going to a local hospital recently with some park rangers from the National Park Service. One little boy fell asleep in his bed, clutching his bear. The strongest man in the room could not pry that teddy bear out of this child's arms. Everyone left the ward that day in tears—this moment will remain with me forever."

"The Teddy Bear program not only benefits children; it profoundly impacts the lives of the adults who are involved in it."

What Hal Holbrook did for Mark Twain, Joe Wiegand does for Teddy Roosevelt. He brings the 26th president to life, performing as Roosevelt more than 400 times a year in theaters, at conventions, meetings and other events. The Colorado Springs, Colo., resident is a member of TRA, and has been a longtime supporter of the Teddy Bear program.

"My heart breaks when I hear of children suffering from illnesses," he said. "If I can help alleviate some of the pain and suffering by giving them teddy bears, that's the least I can do. It's an honor to be a part of a program that is hosted by TRA. Theodore Roosevelt was a great American."

Another supporter of the program is Jimmy Connelly, a pilot and business owner who resides in Boston. Connelly firmly believes that the true measure of life is not in monetary things, but in what you give back to others.

"Children are so important," he said. Connelly shared the story of visiting the pediatric division of the University of Vermont Medical Center with some members of Boston College's hockey team.

"One of the players handed a giant teddy bear holding a heart that said 'I Love U' to a young girl who'd been in the hospital for quite a while," he said. "It was such an emotional moment, that he stood back from her bed and started to cry. This young man now understands the value of giving to others, and the girl understands that we love and support her."

Barbara Gaab of New Haven, Conn., is a 30-year member of TRA with a passion for helping others.

"The Teddy Bear program has been a great way to honor and support TRA," Gaab said. "You should see the children when they get their bears; their faces light up with excitement and joy as they hug them tightly. This program softens the stress and fear of being in the hospital. And the hospitals are grateful to get the teddy bears, too, as this enables them to give something comforting to their young patients."

The teddy bear is so special, so iconic, that he even has a special day set aside for him. Sept. 9 is National Teddy Bear Day, and it's the perfect opportunity to celebrate the joy that these friendly bears have brought into our lives and into the lives of our children.

It's the caring and the concern of the donors and the people who get involved in the program that bring joy and comfort to kids who need it, Pehta said.

"We established the Teddy Bear Honor Roll to recognize those who contribute \$400 or more to the program," he said. "Each donor receives a beautiful plaque with a photo of President Roosevelt and his or her name engraved on it." ■

For more information, visit www.theodoreroosevelt.org.

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"The Teddy Bear program not only benefits children; it profoundly impacts the lives of the adults who are involved in it." —GARY BRILL



I have belonged to the TRA for more than 30 years, and I was a volunteer, also for many years, at Yale New Haven Hospital. The TRA Teddy Bears for Kids program allows me to combine and honor both these organizations in a very satisfactory way.

Although I never worked directly with children being treated at Yale, I certainly understood the confusion, pain, fear, and trauma so often experienced by young ones in a hospital setting. What better way to aid them, and build their confidence in those treating them, than with a teddy bear all their own?

The TRA Teddies offer comfort – both physical and mental – just by their presence in a young patient's arms and life. They are small enough, soft enough, to hold, and yet they are big enough not to get lost in the busyness of a hospital setting. The nurses are delighted to have something positive to offer their young patients.

Let me quote a manager for the Pediatric Oncology unit who wrote me after receiving the teddy bears this past September:

"As a nurse in Pediatric Oncology for 32 years, I have learned that we may not always be able to take all of the pain and sadness away but an act of kindness will mean so much to our patients and their families. Your donation and act of kindness allowed the nursing staff to bring many smiles to faces of children and their families. We are extremely grateful for this".

I, in turn, am grateful that Jim Pehta and the TRA Teddy Bears for Kids program makes it easy for me to donate these bears every year.

Barb Gaab

It is not too late to help a child smile with a new teddy bear.....when they need it the most!

Since 1986, the TRA has donated over 84,000 teddy bears to hospitalized children



Teddy Bears for Kids



Since 1986, Teddy Bears for Kids has brought this and more to hospitalized children nationwide. Through relationships with over 55 hospitals and partnering organizations, we've reached 84,000 sick kids nationwide.



Despite cold temperatures, winter continues to be a busy time at Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. Members of the Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society and Sagamore Hill park staff combined efforts to compile a survey of birds at the site on December 21, 2019. Over 20 species were observed on the grounds. TR often conducted his own bird surveys of places where he lived, such as Sagamore Hill and vicinity, the Adirondacks, and the White House.



The curatorial staff is currently working with two authors, Michael Cullinane and Ed O'Keefe, who are using the Sagamore Hill archival collection for research on their upcoming books. A taxidermy conservator recently visited the site to provide a condition assessment and treatment proposal for the Cape Buffalo in the Front Hall of the Theodore Roosevelt home. The specimen has hung in that location for the last 110 years. Susan Sarna, Chief of Cultural Resources, Sagamore Hill NHS

On January 4&5, 2020 at [Theodore Roosevelt Birth place, New York](#), celebrates 101 years since TR passed away. The Manhattan Sites commemorated Theodore Roosevelt Strenuous Life with a series of Living History presentations from Joe Weigand, Reenactor. This year we commemorate his death by remembering TR's life as The Naturalist, The Explorer, and the 26th



President of the United States with six presentations at the site Auditorium.

On Tuesday, January 7, 2020 Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace honored a request for a private VIP tour by U.S. Secretary of Veteran's Affairs, Robert Wilkie, and seven members of his staff. The tour, consisting of the home's five period rooms, its galleries, and a Q & A session, was conducted by Manhattan Sites Curator and former Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace Interpreter, Daniel Prebutt. Also on hand was Curatorial Volunteer, Lena Bramsen (see opposite panel). The group thoroughly enjoyed their visit, particularly because they are currently focusing on motivational techniques and view TR as a prime example of the ideal.

TRA Social Media

Don't forget, the TRA is on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)! Social media is a great way to stay involved with conversations about TR and keep up to date on the latest TR- and TRA-related happenings. We are regularly talking about interesting topics, both current and historical. So FOLLOW us on Twitter and LIKE us on Facebook!

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