

# Going the distance for a friend

Let me start by saying that I am not a runner. Despite that fact, I have always been intrigued by the idea of running 26.2 miles. I mean, if Oprah could do it, shouldn't I be able to as well? So last year I challenged myself with running the 2009 Chicago Marathon. I knew it would be a unique 18-week journey to get prepared for the physical and mental feat of running a marathon. With that in mind, I knew that I wanted a running partner who could inspire me when things got tough. Little did I know then that my running partner would be a sweet 3-year-old girl from Minnesota.

Amelia Seiwert Zigan was the daughter of a family friend. In September 2008 she was diagnosed with Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia (ALL) and underwent a year of intense chemotherapy. Her doctors and family were all optimistic with the prognosis, and she celebrated her 3rd birthday with excitement about starting preschool. But the following week, they found out that Amelia's Leukemia had returned. The treatments were aggressive and Amelia endured pain that no one should experience in their lifetime.

Needless to say, Amelia's family was devastated by the news and spent time being depressed about the turn of events. But Amelia did not let them wallow in negativity for too long. Despite having to wear a back brace, Amelia grabbed her Grandpa and said "Come on Papa, let's dance." So dance they did! Amelia's spirit energized the entire family and pretty soon everyone was up dancing. I knew immediately that I wanted to help her.

I had been involved with Betterment on a national and local level in Chicago for five years. In that time, I always felt so energized from the joy and goodwill that comes from personally helping our grateful recipients. Amelia and her family were perfect Betterment recipients, and she was the exact partner that I needed to get to that finish line.

During months of waking up before 5:00 a.m. on Saturdays to run 12, 16, or 20 miles, it was stories of Amelia dancing that I held onto tightly. I chose my challenge, but Amelia and her family had no choice but to face theirs. If they could continue to smile and endure, then I could too.

The generosity of all of the people who contributed money during my marathon fundraising was another source of motivation for me. Through their support of my run, I was able to raise over \$5,000 for Amelia's family to help alleviate the financial stress that comes with the emotional roller-coaster of caring for a child who is ill.

I am happy to report that I finished my marathon with a smile. However, it saddens me to share



that Amelia passed away on December 31, 2009.

Now, as I train for my next Chicago marathon, I think of Amelia and her family's strength and courage throughout their ordeal. If they can get through what they have experienced and continue to face each day and find time to give back, then another 26.2 miles is the least I can do.

For more information on how to contribute to my 2010 goal of raising \$10,000 for Betterment in honor of the race date 10-10-10, or to start your own personal fundraising for recipients in need, go to [www.communitybetterment.org](http://www.communitybetterment.org).



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## The Ripple Effect at work...

Marathon philanthropist Molly Conway's personal mission to help a friend and support Betterment has sparked additional unique opportunities for people in our network to make a difference for those in need.

Fellow Board Member Julie Chamberlain is also doing a marathon -- a weight loss marathon -- to raise money for Betterment! Inspired by the many recipients she has come to know over the past 10 years, Julie engaged her friends and family to sponsor her weightloss goal, pound by pound! She is hoping to drop 50 pounds and raise \$5,000 doing it!

Like Molly and Julie, can you take this personal fundraising idea and "run" with it? If you would like to help a friend and Betterment, please contact Katie at [katie@communitybetterment.org](mailto:katie@communitybetterment.org) to get started on setting up your fundraising page on our website!

Writer **Molly Conway** is pictured above with family and friends after she finished the Chicago Marathon in 2009. Her "running partner" and inspiration, Amelia, is pictured at left. Molly serves on Betterment's National Board and is a co-chair of our Chicago Chapter. She has not only spearheaded numerous events in Chicago, but was the first to begin this very personal way of fundraising for Betterment recipients. She was also one of our first 'Friends of Betterment,' a group of generous individuals who have committed to sharing \$200 a year for the next five years to support the foundation's efforts.

# Catching up with our recipients...

Their needs are all different, but there is a common thread in the varied stories of each of Betterment's 144 recipients. They all possess a generous spirit that drives them to continually give to their communities even in their own time of need. In Betterment's eyes they are heroes, and in our 10 years we have helped 81 individuals and 63 organizations continue their heroic efforts of kindness. Here are just a few updates from our tremendous group of recipients.

## Riding to recovery

Betterment national board member and former recipient Becky Bentley introduced us all to 7-year-old Olivia Loper in 2008. At the time, Olivia was struggling with complications as a result of a 2005 surgery to remove a brain tumor from her spinal cord and cerebellum. Her health issues were numerous, including hydrocephalus, requiring the placement of a shunt; a cerebellar mutism, disallowing her to speak for five months; deafness in one ear; the inability to walk on her own; and nystagmus, which made her cross-eyed.

Betterment chose Olivia as one of the recipients for its "D.C. Casino Night." Funds from the event were used to offset the costs of a vision therapy program, as well as weekly horse riding lessons through the Northern Virginia Therapeutic Riding Program (NVTRP).

Her parents, Jim and Amy Loper, tell Betterment, "Horseback riding has been a wonderful opportunity for Olivia to learn a new skill and is a big part of her continuing recovery. Olivia's motor skills and coordination have improved, in part, due to the riding lessons."

What's more, Olivia participated in NVTRP's annual riding show last year and was awarded two ribbons! Congratulations, Olivia!



Seven-year-old Olivia receiving one of her two ribbons at the annual riding show of her therapeutic riding program.

## Cleveland's 1st recipient is movin' right along

Rachel Dorocak was just seven months old when she became paralyzed from the effects of Transverse Myelitis (TM). And in 2004, at age 5, she became the Cleveland Chapter's first recipient at their inaugural spring event where funds supported her special therapy equipment not covered under insurance.

Rachel's family epitomized Betterment's ripple effect because her brothers (then ages four and six) created the "Reading for Rachel" program which has now raised over \$51,000 for TM research.

Today, Rachel is 11.5 and going into 6th grade. Though she uses a power assist wheel chair to "keep up with her friends," not much has slowed her down. She has been a football cheerleader for two years (pictured in center), active in school student council and safety patrol, and recently earned her bronze star in Girl Scouts. She spends her summers in programs through Youth Challenge, another Betterment recipient organization that works with disabled youth in Cleveland.

Rachel still undergoes extensive therapy once a week and her next big surgery will be a spinal fusion to help correct a severe spinal curve. She also participates in therapeutic riding lessons that have not only been critical to her physical development, but her emotional growth as well.

"No matter what life threw our way, we have always felt blessed," said Rachel's mom Cathy. "Blessed by the people we've met, and how our children have learned to see people for who they are."



## Normal Moments recognized nationally

After Patricia Fragan's only daughter passed away at age 16, she was determined to fulfill her daughter's wish of creating an organization that would provide services for families with critically ill children. Tricia founded Normal Moments (NM) in 2008, and our Chicago Chapter's Halloween party raised funds to help NM provide their cleaning, lawncare and meal services to families. Since then, Tricia and NM were finalists in Martha Stewart's 'Dreamers into Doers' contest! Her appearance on the show sparked viewer interest across the country, and in June, NM launched their first chapter in Wilmington, DE to serve families in the greater Philadelphia area. In Chicago, NM serves over 170 families with help from more than 75 volunteers, as well as professional snow removal companies, lawn services, and cleaning crews. They have also forged partnerships with other nonprofits like Miracles from Mia to provide financial assistance to deserving families, and Icing Smiles to give birthday cakes for ill children. Normal Moments' successes have earned them recognition in numerous Chicago publications, and in September they will be featured in Parents' Magazine!



## Meet our new National Board Members



Members of our 2010 Community Betterment National Board

**Julie Chamberlain, Mount Rainier, MD (Washington, D.C.)**

“There is nothing better than reuniting with old friends and meeting new friends at our events -- all to raise money to help people when they need it most. Everyone can make a difference!” (pictured in front row, second from right)

**Max Deuble, Canton, OH**

“My wife actually introduced me to the Betterment organization when we were dating in Cleveland. When the Canton Chapter was started a few years ago, I was very pleased to help it get going. While my job gives me the opportunity to help a lot of organizations, Betterment’s direct, one-on-one approach is something that I do not get to see. Seeing the difference that we can make with these individual families is truly rewarding.”

**Ken Fitzgerald, Oakton, VA (Washington, D.C.)**

“I feel whole being in the company of like-minded individuals who have a zest for living, gusto for grabbing life’s opportunities, and a passion and commitment for helping others in immediate need. Betterment continues to lead by example through its ongoing mission to move swiftly and tactfully in answering a call for help. Year after year I see the tangible results of Betterment’s efforts through the personal stories of those who have received our support. I am proud to be a member of this fantastic, spirited and giving community.” (pictured in center of front row)

**Dana Milkie, Issaquah (Seattle), WA**

“There once was this boy named Marc. He got really sick and needed some help. Betterment immediately stepped in and not only helped him with short term needs, but helped him regain part of his soul, spirit and purpose. Since he was my brother and my hero, and I loved him deeply, I immediately loved Betterment. Then I met the amazing people associated with Betterment and realized that I was blessed with an opportunity to be a part of their mission and the Betterment family. Ever since then, I have seen amazing people doing amazing things to directly help people in need. It is now a part of my personal mission to do as much as I can to help Betterment positively impact as many people as possible.” (Pictured in center of back row)

**Meagen Springer, West Palm Beach, FL**

“I have been inexplicably drawn to this organization for its power to impact not only a recipient’s life, but that of the community, as well as mine. Each person who is involved is dedicated to making a positive impact and is inspirational. I have always wanted to be a part of that.”

**Anthea Knapp Turner, Peachtree City (Atlanta), GA**

“Betterment embodies everything the world needs right now! In a generation where there is so much greed and selfishness, it is so refreshing to be surrounded by young, professional, successful individuals who make time out of their insane schedules to give back selflessly. There’s nothing more rewarding in life than supporting individuals and families in need who dedicate their time and lives to making the world a better place. The Betterment experience is incredibly humbling and inspirational.” (Pictured in front row, second from left)

*Thank you...*

to the following dedicated individuals who recently stepped down from our National Board. Through their helping hands, dedicated spirit and extraordinary vision, Betterment has grown leaps and bounds. Here are just a few of the ways that they have strengthened the Betterment Ripple Effect...

Norm Byrne (D.C.) has been extremely instrumental in building our D.C. Chapter and annual golf outing.

Sean Garry (Cincinnati, OH) brought Betterment to Cincinnati by involving youth and their families in a canned food drive for the food bank.

Founding Board Member Erin Greenlee (Charlotte, NC) was critical to our founding vision, energy and success. She spearheaded some of our first national events while building the Charlotte chapter.

Brien Jones-Lantzy (Annapolis, MD) helped to introduce Betterment to Annapolis and Michael Klotzbach, one of our tremendous recipients.

Jennifer Rossley (Cleveland, OH) was instrumental in the Cleveland chapter’s tremendous growth over the past six years. She also created our Betterment video and helped to revitalize our logo and branding.

# Our Betterment Chapters changing lives....

Betterment would not exist without the helping hands of the hundreds of people in our chapter cities who volunteer their time, expertise and energy to spread the Betterment ripple effect of goodness in their communities. In our 10 years, we have grown from a national board of eight people to a national board of 17 and seven chapters with individual community committees in each of those cities. From an annual kayak race in Alexandria Bay, to a canned food drive in Cincinnati, these volunteers create opportunities for hundreds of people to get involved with and give hope to people in need in their communities. Here are just a few highlights from our chapter cities in 2009.

## Palm Beach County Chapter makes a splash



What began as an impromptu lunch with a few friends has blossomed into a team of seven making a difference in Betterment's first Florida chapter: Palm Beach County (PBC).

Like most cities, the charities and non-profits in Palm Beach are plentiful, so our team feared becoming another organization asking for money in an already saturated market. But we knew Betterment was different, and our PBC network quickly realized the uniqueness that Betterment offers by personally connecting our donors with our recipients so that supporters can see exactly how their gifts make a difference.

In just 10 months, more than 150 people have come together to enjoy the Betterment experience at our first four events!

PBC guests at 'Play for a Purpose' enjoyed "dunking" local celebrities in a dunk tank, as well as a variety of outdoor games, local music and an auction. Most importantly, they met our first recipient, Rhonda Becker. According to Rhonda's daughter Stacey, "Betterment impacted our lives by enabling us to fund a month of quality home health care for my mom. On our journey with Betterment, we learned that there is power in numbers and we should never give up even when others, and you, convince yourself that there is no possible solution."

PBC started the New Year off right with 'Betterment for the Better of You,' which allowed our participants to raise money for Betterment while jump starting their New Years' resolutions with Xtend Bar and Velocity cycling classes.

A wine tasting at Darbsters Restaurant brought guests together to learn from a wine sommelier and to understand more about Betterment. And recently, more friends joined in an afternoon of polo at International Polo Club of Palm Beach. Our Palm Beach Chapter is excited to grow and expand, as well as continue to make a long-lasting and essential difference in our community.

Pictured above are PBC Chapter co-chairs Meagan Springer, Erin Ryan and Amy Young. Pictured below are Chicago Chapter board members Nicole Drusinsky and David Halpern with recipient Becca Babcock (center).



## Buffalo: Five years and 24 recipients

On October 24, 2009, the Buffalo Chapter hosted the 5th Annual Moe Dixon Concert at the Orchard Park Fire Hall. Over 150 people joined in to raise over \$8,000 for nine worthy recipients in the Buffalo community: Buffalo Ski Club, Lounsbury Adaptive Ski Program, Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Buffalo Urban Outdoor Education, Holimont Adaptive Ski Program, Lothlorien Therapeutic Riding Center, Kathleen Johnson and Excalibur Leisure Skills Center. Moe will be back again this fall—save the date for the 6th annual concert on October 23, 2010!

## Fifth Chicago fiesta still 'fantastico'

The 5th Annual Chicago Cinco de Mayo Fiesta was another huge success and raised funds for recipient Becca Babcock. Becca is 29 years old, has been battling colon cancer for four years, and yet is still a pillar of support for others suffering from cancer. She is active in Imerman Angels and other cancer organizations, and she routinely serves as an inspirational speaker, sharing her story with others fighting the disease. The event proceeds helped Becca cover her ever-growing medical bills and other financial burdens created by her struggle with cancer. Special thanks to David Halpern/Easy Bar, Salud Tequila Lounge and Michael's Catering, as well as all of our raffle donors for helping to make a difference in Becca's life!

## Upcoming Events:

For more detailed event information, go to our website or email [info@communitybetterment.org](mailto:info@communitybetterment.org).

**July 23–24 – Alexandria Bay, NY**  
Celebrate summer at the 10th Paddle on the St. Lawrence River and 2nd Annual Golf Outing!

**September – Seattle, WA**  
Betterment Month at Gold's Gym Northwest!

**September 17 – Washington, D.C.**  
Ladies Night Out at Neiman Marcus Mazza Gallerie.

**September 25 – Canton, OH**  
Fall is rockin' because Rocktoberfest is back!

**October 16 – Cleveland, OH**  
Founders' Circle reception in the city that rocks!

**October 23 – Buffalo, NY**  
Moe Dixon returns for a 6th year to help those in need in Western New York.

**December 3 – Chicago, IL**  
The Windy City's holiday gathering!

## Canton's helping hands make an impact

In its second year, the Canton Chapter hosted several volunteer outreach events along with its now signature event, Rocktoberfest. In March, volunteers gathered at a local food pantry to assist shoppers with a smile. In the spring, we helped a local botanical garden association, BeechCreek, with beautifying a visual garden for members to educate and inspire. Volleyball was the word of mouth in Canton last summer

as Betterment formed its first-ever sand volleyball team in Canton.

Rocktoberfest2009 was a huge success! Two local residents (Katelyn Dewell and Sam Stepanovich) and two local organizations (The Canton Challengers Baseball League and The Canton Jaycee's Holiday Tour) were chosen as our recipients. Despite the rainy weather, loyal members gathered for barbeque and to listen to music by The Speedbumps. Of course Ro Sham Bo continued to bring smiles to everyone's faces.

To end the year positively, 40 Canton volunteers sponsored, cooked, served, and cleaned up a delicious hot meal for 88 local residents at The Canton Calvary Mission food bank.

This summer, the Canton Chapter spreads its mission to inner city youth by partnering with Tiqvah Hands of Hope. The project, a 4-week reading program centered around Betterment's book "The Lemonade Ripple," is funded by a Dominion East Ohio Gas grant and will conclude with students doing their own community service by reading to senior citizens at a nursing home.



## Alex Bay Chapter Celebrates a Decade of Giving Back

The Alexandria Bay Chapter will host the 10th Annual Paddle for Betterment on July 23-24. Golf at Alex Bay Municipal starts the festivities on Friday, followed by our paddle kick-off party at Cavallario's Bayside Pizza/Top of the Bay. Then, it's a Saturday full of kayaking on the St. Lawrence River!

For the past nine years, the Paddle has become one of the staple events in the community, with past recipients attending and kayaking! This year, to mark the 10th anniversary, the chapter would like to raise \$10,000 in support of their 2010 recipients: Robin Scott, The Reynolds Family and Alexandria Central School Back Pack Club.

Since 2001, the chapter has donated over \$47,000 to 13 individuals and organizations in the community like John and Lisa Slate (pictured above with their family). In 2008, John was diagnosed with MS and had difficulties using the stairs to enter his home. The Paddle event raised funds to build a ramp outside of the Slate's home. John's wife, Lisa, said, "Thank you for giving John his freedom back and for taking away a fear for his safety. Thank you for being our silver lining." Since the event, the Slate's have remained active with Betterment as members of the host committee and by recommending recipients like Shane Simpson, who has been in a wheelchair the majority of his life. In 2009, Betterment helped to install a much-needed new ramp outside of his home.

Thank you and congratulations to all involved in the Alex Bay Chapter!

## Keeping a life-long volunteer volunteering

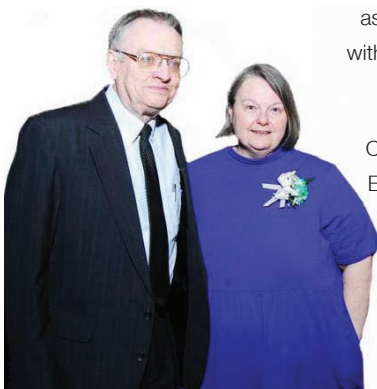
"The work that all of you do is wonderful. I wish that I could think of a stronger phrase than 'thank-you,' because it just doesn't adequately express the depth of my emotion and gratitude."

These words were written by Nancy Temple, one of four 2010 Cleveland Black & White Ball recipients, who recently suffered a near-fatal car accident, leaving her in chronic pain and discomfort. She has also been diagnosed with thyroid cancer and diabetes. In 2008, her husband was also the victim of a serious car accident, leaving Nancy as the sole caregiver and provider for the family. Nancy is a 27-year volunteer and long-time member of the Board of Trustees for WomenSafe, a domestic violence shelter in Chardon. Proving that she emulates the "ripple effect," Nancy has helped raise thousands of dollars for WomenSafe including the funding for a state-of-the-art resource center called "The Green House." Betterment's gift helped offset Nancy's household expenses that have been mounting due to her husband's accident, and allowed her to devote more time and resources to WomenSafe, a cause that matters so much to her.

Three other recipients also received Betterment's support from the nearly \$15,000 raised from this year's event! You can read more about recipients Deb Straniero, Nick Santucci, and Brenna Hannan,

as well as Nancy (pictured at left with her husband), in the "Recipients" tab on our website.

Congratulations and thank you to Event Co-chairs Sandy Croucher and Elizabeth Vernick (pictured at right) and all who planned and attended this year's Black and White Ball in Cleveland!



# Those who help make it all happen...

Ten years, 90 events, 144 recipients, and over \$570,000 shared. None of this would have been possible without people like those listed on the following pages who have invested in our mission. In 2008, we established our Founders' Circle to recognize the individuals in our network who have stepped up with leadership pledges of at least \$1,000 a year for the next five years. This year, we began our 'Friends of Betterment' which is made up of those who have committed to \$200 a year for five years. If you are interested in partnering with Betterment at this Friends level, please go to the "Donate Now" tab on our website. In an effort to be environmentally conscious, those highlighted on the following pages have given \$100 or more in 2009, and our entire 2009 donor list is highlighted online. THANK YOU to all of our donors, and especially those whose gifts have totaled \$1,000+ (**blue names**) since our inception in 2000!

Sharon Abahazi  
Barbara and Mike Abbott  
Kara and Steven Abbott  
Michael Abdalian  
**Brian Addison**  
**Lynne and Greg Agoston**  
Leanne Ahl  
Kristie Amella  
B. Robert Amjad  
**Edith Amsterdam**  
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Megan Argie  
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Tama Gresco-Sauers  
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Suzi Jakel  
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Julie Jones  
Norma Jozwiak  
Janice Kahn  
Candace and James Kaiser  
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Dana Kalowsky  
Beth Kalsek  
Jennifer Kaminski  
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Daniel Latondress  
Ann and David Lavelle  
Tim Leach  
Tom Leahy  
Julie and Pat Leddy  
Jill Ledin  
Ivan Lefkowitz  
Tanya Lenetz  
Claire Leonhardt  
Gary Leopardo  
Eric Lieberman  
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We are so grateful for the support of our mission in honor of or in memory of our donors' loved ones.

Please go to our website to view a list of those remembered in 2009 through generous gifts.

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Thank you!

## Get Involved...

There are many ways you can get involved in the Betterment network to help make a difference in communities across the country!

- Make a tax-deductible monetary gift or a gift of products or services (and double that gift through your company's matching gift program)!
- Pledge an annual gift to our One in Ten Campaign and set up monthly credit card deductions to fulfill your pledge in a very simple, painless way.
- Give the gift of Betterment by making a donation in memory or in honor of a loved one.
- Attend or volunteer for event activities.
- Run a race, host a movie night or cocktail party, or send an email blast to help a friend and Betterment.
- Share your talents and expertise by joining a local chapter board or assisting our national board.

Follow us on Twitter at "CommBetterment" and become our fan on Facebook by searching "The Foundation for Community Betterment." Go to the web to learn more: [www.communitybetterment.org](http://www.communitybetterment.org).

## 10th Anniversary Celebration in D.C.

In 2000, Betterment welcomed over 100 guests at our first-ever event, a golf outing, in Washington D.C. which raised over \$12,000 for the recipients, Sue and Anthony Ginnett of Ohio. Three days after the golf tournament, Anthony passed away at age 31. Ten years later, in honor of Betterment's 10th anniversary and our recipients who have passed away, the D.C. Chapter hosted the 10th Annual Golf Outing, and longtime Betterment friends gathered in the Nation's Capital to celebrate. Our Friday night Founders' Circle Reception in Georgetown brought together supporters from all across the country to toast the Foundation's achievements that they helped to make happen!

At Saturday's golf outing, Marc Milkie, National Board member and 2002 recipient, drove the first ball just as he did eight years prior only 12 months after losing the bottom half of both of his legs. Adding to the special spirit of the weekend was our first recipient, Sue Ginnett Reid, who joined us to share a touching message of hope.

Proceeds from the weekend assisted our 123rd recipient, Danny Shanz, a 42-year-old father of two, who was hit by lightning while teaching a golf lesson in Bethesda, Maryland. As a result of the accident, Danny suffers from short term memory loss and permanent damage to his right leg. The donation from Betterment assisted Danny and his family with the payment of his mortgage as he continues to recover and is unable to work.

The D.C. Chapter capitalized on the energy of the anniversary event and has hosted smaller events in 2010 such as Trivia Night and 'Sex and the City' Movie Premiere and Cocktail Party at Neiman Marcus. Check our website for more information on upcoming events including: Bar Olympics, Poker Night, Wine Tasting and Ladies Night Out!



Sue Ginnett Reid, our very first Betterment recipient, welcomes our 123rd recipient Danny Shanz.



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**How sweet it is!** Thanks to author and illustrator Paul Reichert, Betterment's Ripple Effect is highlighted in a new children's book to promote the giving spirit in kids. Go to our website to buy your copy of "The Lemonade Ripple." It's a great gift that keeps on giving because proceeds support Betterment and our recipients! A perfect children's gift for the Holidays! [www.communitybetterment.org](http://www.communitybetterment.org)