

Dream Come True telethon raises over \$50,000 to help sick children

By GAIL MAHOLICK

Donations small and large brought the total of Sunday night's Dream Come True Telethon to \$50,793.

The first tote board noted \$8,131 was raised, while the second board listed a total of \$29,793, but when the larger donations were presented, the total soared to the new height. Last year's telethon raised \$45,134.

The telethon was sponsored by the Dream Come True, Blue Ridge Chapter, at Penn's Peak, Jim Thorpe, and was aired live on Blue Ridge Communications TV13 and Service Electric, channel 19 in the Tamaqua area.

As Kristal Nemeroff, one of the show's hosts read the final total, she ended the announcement with a cheer.

"We did it," said the 15-year-old singer. "I know how much it means to a kid and their family because I am a former recipient." Nemeroff has Osteogenesis Imperfecta, a brittle bone disease that has caused numerous bones to break throughout her life and forced her to endure wearing full body casts for weeks at a time, but has not daunted her spirit. This is the second year she served as one of the show's hosts. Nemeroff also sang several songs during the telethon.

Other hosts were George Roberts of Blue Ridge TV 13, Dr. Edward Miller and Nick Hawkey.

School children's donations and call in donations were added to the larger donations.

Among the larger donations were: Becky's Drive In car show, \$13,417.81; sausage stand at Palmerton Community Festival, \$3,838.06; Tech Net comedy night, \$6,000; PaddleFEST, \$4,985.35; Scrubs 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament, \$5,528.35; Dream Kids, \$2,000; Walnutport Playground, \$1,607; Marine Corps League Mountaineer Detachment, \$500; Slatington Lions Club, \$500; Lehigh Area School District, \$300; SS. Peter and Paul School, \$723; memorial contributions in memory of Herminia Oncheck, \$499; Pencor Services dress down day collection from employees, \$333; Palmerton Hospital Medical Staff, \$2,500; Free Spirit Chapter of Pa., proceeds from car show, \$400; and Bear Mountain Butterflies butterfly release, \$220.

The house band was recording artist Donna Parsons and her band, who performed throughout the evening. Other entertainers included singers Amanda Santos of Palmerton, and Angela Nardini of Jim Thorpe. The Studio Kids, Penn's Peak Studio Theater and Hannah Ahner, a student at SS Palmer Elementary School, played the piano. The Emerald Dragon Karate Swat Team of Slatington put on an outstanding martial arts demonstration and the trio of Pat McGeehan, Nancy Porambo and Jillian Miller performed some Blue Grass music. The Dream Kids chorus also performed several numbers.

Several groups from the Carbon County Performing Arts displayed their dancing talents. The Ricky Bell Band also performed. Also appearing was David Morales on piano and organ and the Lehigh High School Show Chorus, under the direction of David Perkins.

Viewers also had the opportunity to meet Daniel Brandwein of Lansford, and Voula Sabol and Derek Szena, both of Palmerton, who are some of the special children who

have had a dream fulfilled and Nadalyn Imbriaco who will have her dream fulfilled in February when she and her family will travel to Disney World in Florida. Several items were auctioned off throughout the evening, including a basketball autographed by the St. Joseph's University basketball team, and a basketball autographed by the 2004 National Coach of the Year, Phil Martelli. There also was a football autographed by Joe Namath. Other items include ski passes donated by Blue Mountain Ski Area and a Penn State Jacket donated by Fred's Haberdashery of Palmerton. Telethon sponsors were Foster Jewelers, Terry's Winners Circle, Dynamite Woodworking, Ohl Fuel, Brodheads ville Chevrolet, Kovatch, PenTeleData, Blue Ridge Service Center, First National Bank of Palmerton and Atty. William G. Schwab and Associates.

Dream Maker Awards were presented to outstanding volunteers, who have served the organization for five years or more. Among the recipients were Carl Litwin, Wheels of Time Car Club, Old Time Plow Boys Club, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Hunsicker, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Yandrisovitz and family, Carol Kocher and Heidel Hollow Farms, Inc.