

Subject: FW: Moonbeams for Sweet Dreams - Beaumont

From: Spatafora, Daniel S
Sent: Thursday, January 03, 2019 1:46 PM
To: David J Roberts
Cc: Dane Slater Cindy A Stewart; Susick, Nancy
Subject: Moonbeams for Sweet Dreams - Beaumont

Hello Chief Roberts,

Did you see this article in the Wall Street Journal?

Thanks again to the Troy Fire Department for helping to make Moonbeams for Sweet Dreams a huge success again in 2018 for our young patients and their families!! I see your rig in the photo.

Happy New Year!

Regards, Dan

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Flash Mob With Flashlights Shines Holiday Cheer to Sick Children

‘Moonbeams for Sweet Dreams’ ritual is the highlight of the day for many families at Beaumont Hospital, the father of a 13-year-old patient said



A show of support: People in Royal Oak, Mich., gather outside Beaumont Hospital to shine flashlights up to sick children, who answer by shining flashlights back. PHOTO: FABRIZIO COSTANTINI FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

[17 COMMENTS](#)

By

Jennifer Levitz

Dec. 24, 2018 8:00 a.m. ET

Every night this December, hundreds of people gather outside a hospital in suburban Detroit to give the children inside a special treat.

A bell rings at around 8 p.m., and children in the fifth-floor pediatric unit shine flashlights down. The people gathered below responds by shining their flashlights back, creating a glow that briefly overtakes the darkness.

The event, called “Moonbeams for Sweet Dreams” and organized by Beaumont Hospital, in Royal Oak, is simple and lasts only about 10 minutes.

“It’s the best part of every day,” said Joe Banaszewski, an investment adviser whose 13-year-old son, Michael, is hospitalized at Beaumont for cancer treatment. The outpouring of support not only cheers the children, he said, but also gives a boost to stressed parents. “Complete strangers love their kids and come out in the cold and the rain.”

Local police estimate that 800 people showed up on a recent Wednesday night and weekends attract as many as 1,300 people. Crowds get so big that the hospital has brought in volunteers with parking wands to direct traffic.

Big community events aren't uncommon in Royal Oak, but they typically last for one day, said Sgt. Tony Cattini, of the Royal Oak Fire Department. "This has been every night of December, and the turnout has been huge every day," he said. "It's amazing."

Scout troops travel to the Moonbeams programs from 20 miles away, and families and groups of friends attend two and three times.

Entire sports teams come, including a hockey team that duct-taped flashlights onto their sticks and did a salute to the children. Public-safety departments from throughout metropolitan Detroit send trucks and cars to shine their lights, including a fire department that used a ladder truck to hoist Santa up to the fifth-floor window to wave to the children inside.

"I get all emotional when I get out there and I start tearing up," said Patrick Slatin, an art director who lives nearby and has gone to the event repeatedly. "You turn around and see this sea of people with all those flashlights, and it makes you feel so good."



Luke Scott and his mother, Jessica Scott, shined a flashlight out the window at Beaumont Hospital toward the nearly 1,000 people gathered outside Saturday night. PHOTO: FABRIZIO COSTANTINI FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Beaumont Children's, a division of Beaumont Hospital, started the Moonbeams program last year after a mother on the Pediatric Family Advisory Council—and whose child had been hospitalized there—described the isolation of sitting in the hospital during the holidays.

"The whole world is going on without us at the holidays," the mother said, according to Kathleen Grobbel, the Child Life supervisor at the hospital.

The hospital borrowed the idea from similar efforts elsewhere. In Rhode Island, businesses, police departments and residents flash their lights at Hasbro Children's Hospital at night. And at University of Iowa home football games, fans at the end of the first quarter turn to wave to patients gathered at the windows of the university's Stead Family Children's Hospital, which overlooks the stadium. Patients and families wave back.

In Royal Oak, schoolteacher Beth Mayne said the magic of the nightly ritual at Beaumont helped her family and her daughter last year. Caroline, then 16, was hospitalized at Beaumont while undergoing treatment for a recurrence of Hodgkin lymphoma.

This year, Ms. Mayne and Caroline, who is now in remission, looking at colleges and back to playing soccer, returned to Beaumont. This time they were standing outside and shining their flashlights up.

“It probably is one of the most powerful things I’ve experienced,” Ms. Mayne said.

Write to Jennifer Levitz at jennifer.levitz@wsj.com
