



Members Make a Difference

With the help of MDRT members and Foundation Knights, the MDRT Foundation has had a tremendous impact on thousands of lives worldwide. In its 41-years of existence, it has helped hundreds of worthy organizations around the world, both small and large. Recently, the Foundation focused on helping a very special company in San Diego, California, headed by nine-year-old Taylor Crabtree.

During the 2000 MDRT Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California, members had a chance to meet the owner of TayBear Company, who sells decorated hair clips and uses the profits to buy teddy bears for children suffering from cancer and chronic blood disorders.

Taylor raised \$32,613.50 with the help of MDRT members who bought her accessories and made donations to TayBear at the Foundation booth.

Someday, Crabtree hopes all children suffering from cancer will be given a TayBear to hug for the journey. "I don't know if this is possible, but I want to try and make it happen," she said.

Back home in San Diego, Crabtree is busy reading e-mails and letters from MDRT members who bought the video of her Annual Meeting speech to share with their children and grandchildren. Yet perhaps most touching are the letters sent from parents of the children who have received Crabtree's bears. The following is an excerpt from a letter written to Crabtree after she visited a Park Ridge, Illinois, hospital this past spring:

March, 2000

Taylor,

My wife and I took my son to his doctor's visit at Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge, Illinois, where you were passing out bears. My son was 12 years old and a little embarrassed to have a teddy bear. He said he would give it to his sister. The way he held the bear, I knew his sister would never have it.

While in the doctor's office, we found out his cancer had returned. My son loved Duffy. He took him to bed every night. Duffy was with him during the next week of chemotherapy and when he was home recuperating. He was with him when he went back to the hospital with an infection last Friday. My son died Monday due to complications from the infection. Duffy was right above his pillow the whole time.

I am not writing you to make you sad, but to let you know that Duffy brought a lot of happiness to my son. My son was at an age where it may not be cool to like a teddy bear, but I know that underneath, he loved that bear. Duffy will now be with him always.

I know that you do so much to make others happy and probably wonder if what you are doing helps. For the number of bears you give out, you may not get too many people telling you that what you do is helping them. I just wanted to let you know that at least one boy was made happy by the work you do.

*Thank you,
Ryan's Dad*

"Due to support from MDRT members and other caring individuals, thousands more teddy bears will be given to children with cancer through TayBear Company," said 2000 MDRT Foundation President **Guy E. Baker, CLU, MSFS**, of Bakersfield, California. "MDRT members do so much for so many people and have an enormous impact on lives around the world. The MDRT Foundation thanks you, MDRT members, for your continued support in making a difference." JS

To find out more about the MDRT Foundation, go to www.mdrtfoundation.org. For more information about TayBear Company, visit www.taybearhugs.org.



MDRT member Allen R. Bruce, CLU, ChFC, and a young volunteer accompany Taylor Crabtree (far right) as she delivers bears to children at the hospital.