November 2013

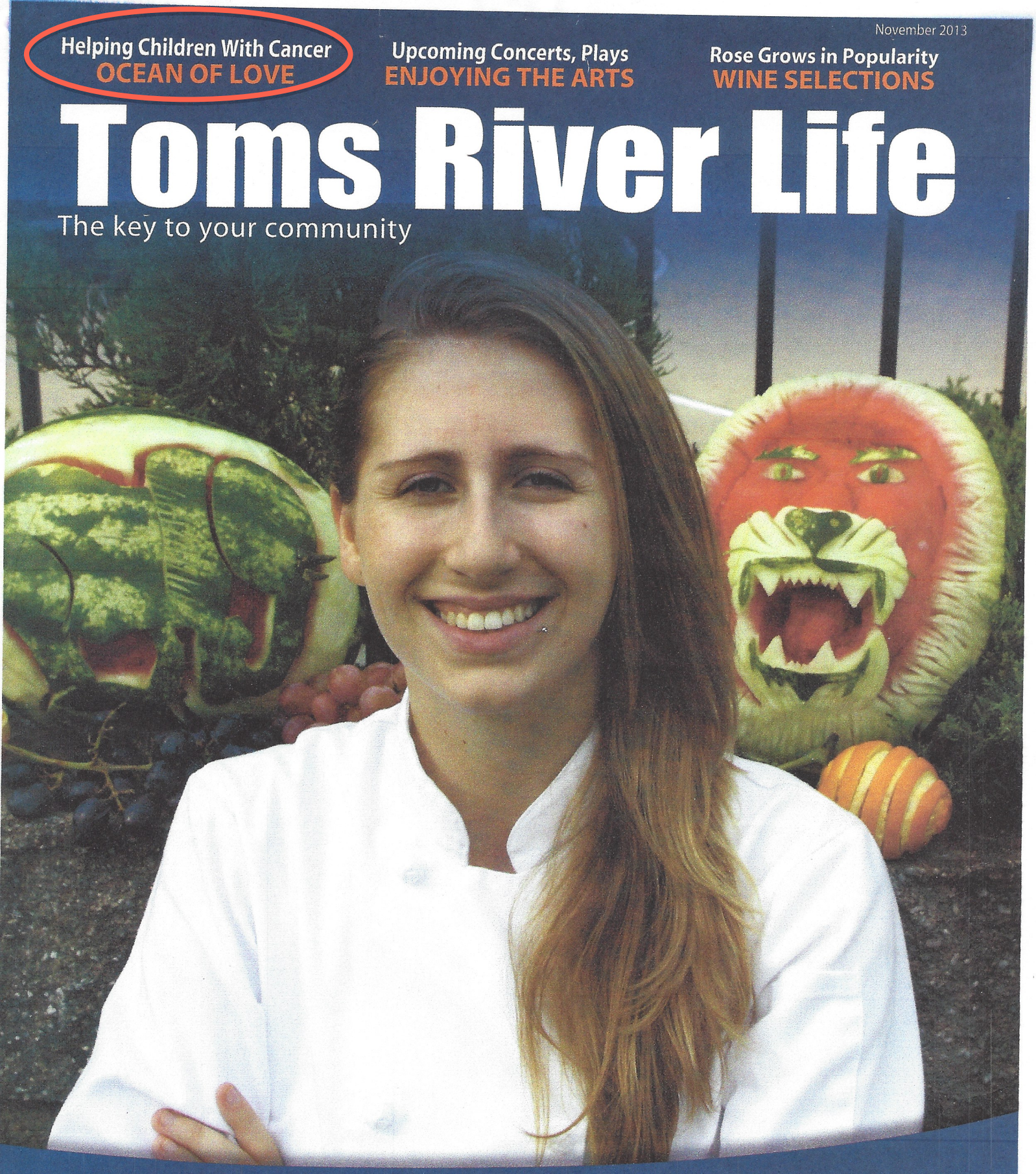
Helping Children With Cancer
OCEAN OF LOVE

Upcoming Concerts, Plays
ENJOYING THE ARTS

Rose Grows in Popularity
WINE SELECTIONS

Toms River Life

The key to your community



Artistic Flavor

Woman Turns Fruit-Carving Talent Into a Business

Aiding Children With Cancer

A series of community events that bring neighbors together helps to raise money for Ocean of Love, a nonprofit that helps families of children battling cancer.

Kate Martino (left) and Bob Tindall (right) enjoy a family night out for dinner with Eleina, 9, and Dave, 7, at the WindMill in Brick to kick off the Hawk 105.7 radio station's Billboard Radiothon, which benefits the Ocean of Love organization and children with cancer.
Photo by Art Petrosemolo

by Jeri Patasnik
Community contributor

Children with cancer and their families face many concerns other than beating the disease. For the past several years, the Hawk 105.7 radio station in Toms River has stepped in to support Ocean County families. This year, with help from the WindMill of Brick and the Lakewood BlueClaws, money for children fighting cancer was raised through the Ocean of Love nonprofit.

Ocean of Love Executive Director Linda Gillick said, "We take care of many needs by providing families with travel expenses to and from the hospital, household bills, food assistance, support groups and counseling."

One of the most successful fundraising initiatives has been the annual Hawk 105.7 Billboard Radiothon, which typically raises more than $100,000 for Ocean of Love children.

"Ocean County families are extremely grateful to our neighbors at the WindMill of Brick, Hawk 105.7 radio and the Lakewood BlueClaws for their continuous support of our organization," Gillick said.

Rena Levine Levy, CEO of the WindMill restaurants, said: "The WindMill strongly believes in the concept of neighbors helping neighbors, and strives to give back to the communities that have supported us for so many years.

"We are proud that new (franchise) owners Gerry Caffrey, Roger Corrado and Tim Cochrane chose to dedicate their grand reopening efforts toward raising funds for Ocean of Love. This is a clear indication that our franchises understand the value of neighbors helping neighbors."

In August, two events were held to enable Ocean of Love children to have fun and also to raise awareness of the organization.

On Aug. 12, the WindMill of Brick invited Hawk 105.7 DJ Chris Varacchi to kick off the Billboard Radiothon.

The children enjoyed a complimentary dinner, a visit from BlueClaws mascot Buster and other activities.

Neighborly collaborations

Each October, 105.7 DJ Andy Chase lives atop an Ocean of Love billboard for five days to raise funds for this nonprofit organization.

This year's goal was to raise $105,700 for Ocean of Love children. (The goal correlates to the radio station's frequency number.)

Through another collaboration, on Aug. 21 the WindMill of Brick stepped

up to the plate and sponsored a Lakewood BlueClaws baseball outing. Ocean of Love children experienced special pre-game, on-field activities before the BlueClaws challenged the Hagerstown Suns.

"It was beautiful to watch the children forget about their illnesses and enjoy this entertaining evening," said Theresa Segui, an Ocean of Love parent.

In September, other fund-raising events included the Eastern Shore Building Group Walk in memory of Dennis Sledzik on the Seaside Park boardwalk. Sledzik was a supporter of Ocean of Love and a friend of Gillick's.

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On Sept. 16, the Applebee's Golf Committee from Manahawkin held the eighth annual golf outing in memory of Tyler Berg at Sea Oaks Golf Club in Little Egg Harbor, with all proceeds donated to Ocean of Love. Tyler died at the age of 8. The initial tournament was held to help meet his medical expenses. The tournament has continued to help other Ocean of Love children. "These memories will be forever ingrained in our hearts and minds, thanks to our neighbors helping neighbors," Segui said.

Daisy Payne, 5, and her mother, Jean Marie, are all smiles as the little girl enjoys WindMill's signature meal during the Radiothon kickoff event.
Photo by Art Petrosemolo

1988 **Located in Toms River, Ocean of Love has assisted more than 450 families since 1988. It provides a home away from home for children with cancer.**

When the Ocean of Love family *loses a child to cancer,* their contact with the family does not end but continues with emotional support and counseling. "We provide a safe haven of love and support for each child," said Executive Director Linda Gillick, adding that the organization encourages children and families to consider Ocean of Love a lifeline at any time. For more information, visit the website at www.ocean-of-love.org. ***—Jeri Patasnik***

COMMUNITY HELPS CHILDREN IN NEED

In August, community events were held to enable Ocean of Love children to experience enjoyable childhood activities and raise awareness of the organization. On Aug. 12, the WindMill of Brick invited Hawk 105.7 radio station DJ Chris Varacchi to kick off the station's Billboard Radiothon. The children enjoyed a complimentary dinner, a visit from BlueClaws mascot Buster and other activities. On Aug. 21, the WindMill sponsored a Lakewood BlueClaws baseball outing. Ocean of Love children experienced special pre-game, on-field activities before the BlueClaws challenged the Hagerstown Suns. ***—Jeri Patasnik***

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From left: Chris Varacchi, Linda Gillick, Steven Levy, Rena Levine Levy and Tim Cochrane at WindMill in Brick.
Photo by Art Petrosemolo