

CITY SUBURBAN NEWS

PHILADELPHIA & THE MAIN LINE'S FAVORITE WEEKLY

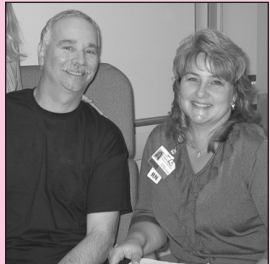
FREE

Year 24, No. 16

SPECIAL 2-WEEK EDITION – HAPPY NEW YEAR!

December 24 – January 6, 2009

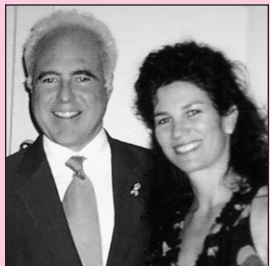
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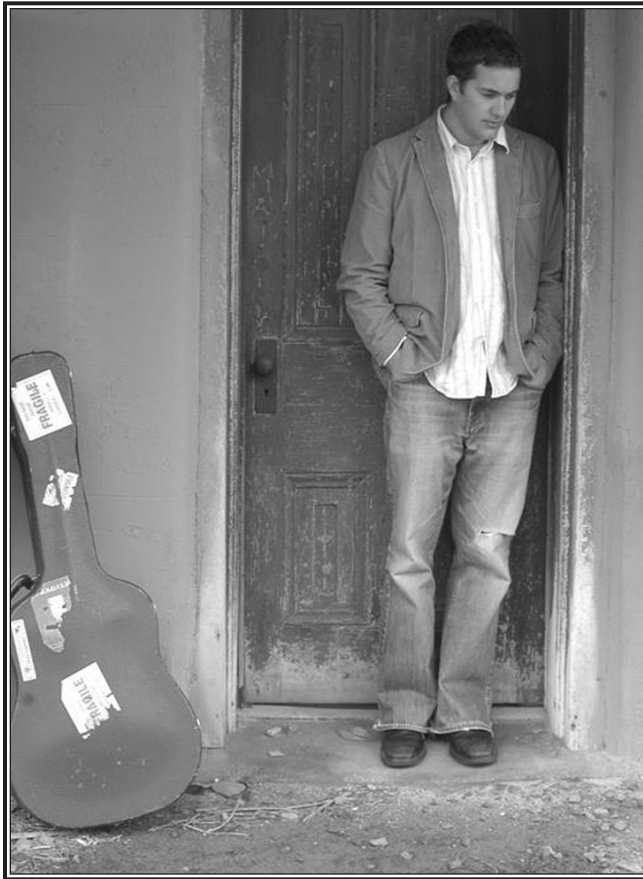
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Singer/Songwriter Kabir Green to Perform



Kabir Green is a songwriter who sees life as an opportunity to tell a story. See him perform at the PSALM Salon, 5841 Overbrook Avenue, Philadelphia, on Saturday **January 3, 2009**.

Kabir Green will be appearing Saturday **January 3, 2009** at the PSALM Salon, 5841 Overbrook Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19131. The performance will begin at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the door or online at

www.thepsalm.org. For information call 215-477-7578. Kabir Green is a self-taught musician and has been singing and songwriting most of his life. He penned his first song, "Let's Go Fly a Kite" in fifth grade and hasn't looked back since. Raised in the quiet hills of Chester County outside Philadelphia, PA, Kabir is a songwriter who sees life

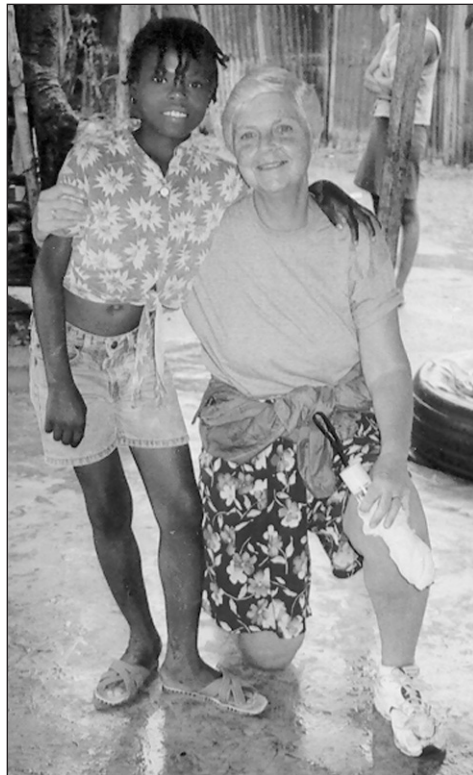
See Kabir Green to Perform on page 2

From an early age Kabir was keenly aware of the thread that connects blues, rock and country, and the soulfulness and spirituality of American roots music.

as an opportunity to tell a story. From an early age he was keenly aware of the thread that connects blues, rock and country, and the soulfulness and spirituality of American roots music. He was instilled with a love for music that arises out of such deep cultural wellsprings, what he calls, "The Music of Place."

Sisters Keep Education & Medical Care at Forefront of Mission Work

When Sister Ann-Joyce Peters, of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ), relocated to the Dominican Republic in 1995, she and her volunteers began working in a *Fe y Alegría* school in one of the poor barrios of Santo Domingo. *Fe y Alegría* is an international educational movement sponsored by the Jesuits for children and adults living in poverty. But, almost 14 years later, this ministry in educational enrichment has yielded a Montessori-style learning and homework help center; a library; a nutrition center which provides food, vitamins, and dental care; and a medical center which has supplied general medication to more than 5,500 people, in addition to treating several hundred afflicted with HIV/AIDS. All of this thanks to the support of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus and the generosity of many donors.



Sister Mary Alice Minogue, formerly of Rosemont, PA, relocated to the Dominican Republic 12 years ago as a way to provide a better educational future for youth in the Dominican Republic.

See Sisters' Mission Work on page 3

Father Writes "Colin Gets a Chance" in Honor of Son

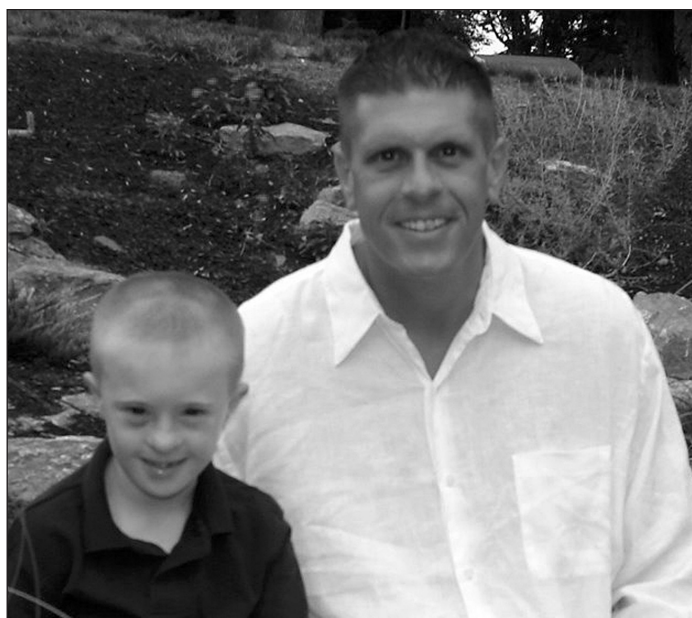
Book opens lines of communication with parents, teachers and children about Down syndrome and the significant impact children have on their peers.

Springfield, PA resident Brian A. Beale has written a touching story on the acceptance of children during the most difficult of situations in *Colin Gets a Chance*.

The coach is typical of most; he wants to win so he plays the best players. Colin is like all little boys that love the game of baseball; he just wants to play. Only one thing has gotten between Colin and his dream. He has Down syndrome. Colin knows he isn't the best on the team but he holds on to his dream that one day he will get his chance. Colin's dream is about to come true.

The story takes place on the day of the biggest game of the year. The game is tied, the winning run is on third, and Colin hasn't been chosen to play all season. Colin sits on the bench and dreams of playing the game he loves when his teammate, Billy, on behalf of the team, asks the coach to let Colin bat for him. They all decided it was now their turn to cheer for Colin.

Colin Gets a Chance is a story about acceptance, leadership and hope. It pro-



Colin Beale, age 10, the inspiration for the book "Colin Gets a Chance" and his father Brian Beale, author of the book.

vides a unique approach to parents in opening up the lines of communication with their children regarding a topic as sensitive as Down syndrome and the significant impact children have on their peers. After all, everyone deserves "a chance" in life.

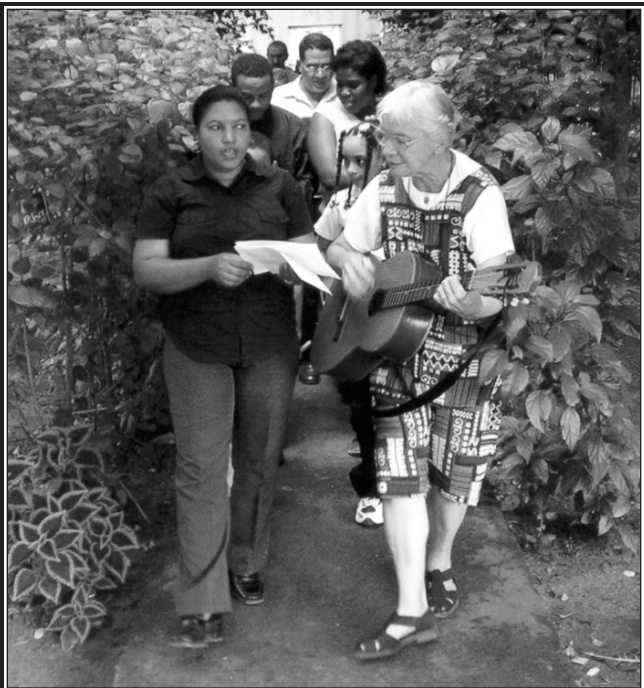
Brian A. Beale wrote *Colin Gets a Chance*, in honor of his son, Colin, who was born in December 1998. Brian and his wife, Mary, were so excited about having their first child when they were thrown life's biggest curveball with just five words; "Your son has Down syndrome."

After receiving this news, Brian wiped the tears from his eyes, realizing it didn't change the love he had for his newborn son, and he set out to turn the experience into a positive one. Brian and Mary founded a non-profit foundation to raise the awareness of Down syndrome and how much these individuals have to offer, while donating the proceeds to special needs organizations, but Brian always knew he wanted to do more.

See "Colin Gets a Chance" on page 10

Sisters' Mission Work

Continued from front page



Sister Ann-Joyce Peters has spent the last 14 years devising a better educational system, as well as a medical clinic and nutrition center for those less fortunate living in the Dominican Republic. Her tireless work in the poverty-stricken country continues.

Reflecting on her ongoing mission work, Sister Ann-Joyce seems to have benefited as much as the people she serves. "It's a privilege to work with them and find God in them," she said.

Her call to help those less fortunate, coupled with her fluency in Spanish, led Sister Ann-Joyce to the Dominican Republic, a poor country whose people are plagued by disease, malnutrition, prejudice between Haitians and Dominicans, not to mention an incredible lack of educational resources. When *Fe y Alegría* invited the first group of volunteers to help out in one of their schools, Sister Ann-Joyce considered it a godsend. "I didn't want to be starting something new that might not work," she said. "I wanted to join an organization that was already in process."

The Jesuits provided housing for Sister Ann-Joyce and her volunteers and supported the new endeavor with advice, teacher training, and occasional donations. Although most of the volunteers are American, the first group was actually international with an American, Chilean, and Spaniard. After three years working in the nearby *Fe y Alegría* school, the group (encouraged and helped by *Fe y Alegría*) branched out into the batey, a Haitian settlement, about two miles from their house. There they began tutoring children in their homes.

Besides education, improving the natives' health and hygiene has been a primary focus of the sisters' Dominican Republic ministry. Sister Kathleen King, a Sister of the Holy Child with the Society's European Province, oversees the medical dispensary, which has helped keep people free from amoeba and parasite infestation, among other ailments.

In the program's third year, Sister Mary Alice Minogue, SHCJ - a "born" teacher - joined Sister Ann-Joyce as an educator in what has developed into a Montessori-style educational center. The Montessori learning method is different from traditional schools. "The children are able to choose - within limits - what activities they would like to do," Sister Mary Alice said. "They are able to have some voice and choose what they want to do." And reading is what the children want to do most. "The kids learn for the joy of learning," Sister Mary Alice said. "Once a child can read we open up a whole world for them in books."

Today, Sister Mary Alice oversees the education center in the Dominican Republic. Until recently, children who did not attend the public school (which by law accepts any child) could not benefit from the Sisters' supplemental Montessori education program. This measure motivated many parents to enroll their children in the public school. Now the Secretariat of Education in the Dominican Republic has officially recognized the Sisters' Montessori program as part of the public school system. It is safe to say that it is probably the only Montessori program in the nation

offered to poor children within the Dominican public school system. (This thanks to many donations received from Montessori schools in the United States and in the Dominican Republic.) The center continues its mission of helping children who attend the public schools with supplemental education. Since the public schools cannot afford to offer classes for a full day, the children go either in the morning or in the afternoon. "We aim to help the children do well in school. In the Dominican Republic and in many, many third world countries, the schools are very poor," Sister Ann-Joyce said. "Most schools give only two and a half hours of actual instruction each day. The rest is assembly, snack, and recreation."

The Society's center serves as the missing link to a better education, while living and working in the Dominican Republic serves as a teaching tool for the sisters and their volunteers. Response-A, a teaching program founded and sponsored by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, which also focuses on education, regularly recruits, prepares, and trains lay volunteers from the United States to serve in the Dominican Republic, generally for a year at a time.

The number of volunteers accepted varies from year to year (from five in 2003-2004 to three in 2004-2005 to six in 2007-2008 to two in 2008-2009). For this reason, the sisters have called on the natives to help further the cause. Currently, five teachers are Dominican, and there are some Dominican volunteers as well. "It's the light in the children's faces, and I love those teachers," Sister Mary Alice said of why she continues. "We pull each other through knot holes. We formed a team. They're calling each other brother and sister. We suffer together and we share very deeply."

Part of that sharing is living with - and without - the same amenities as the natives. "We don't have electricity all the time. We have it every day, but not all day," Sister Ann-Joyce said. "Water is not running all the time. We have about seven large water tanks, so we are never without water, but it's not always coming out of the faucet."

And, although the people living in the Dominican Republic are poor on possessions and the creature comforts sometimes taken for granted in America, Sister Ann-Joyce described them as being rich with life. "The people are very happy," she said. "They put people first, and we Americans put projects first. They welcome interruptions. They're very people-oriented."

The Society of the Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ) is a religious order of Roman Catholic Sisters founded by Cornelia Connelly. The Society is composed of three provinces (American, African, and European). In addition to the United States, the American Province includes Chile and the Dominican Republic. Since the Society's founding in 1846, education has been at the heart of its mission. Today, the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus continue to serve as educators in the broadest sense of the word through their ministries in teaching, spiritual direction, social work, legal work, health care, parish administration, and pastoral care. Throughout the world, the Sisters of the Holy Child serve in schools, colleges, universities, parishes, health care organizations, and social service and legal centers. The Society has also founded and continues to sponsor 14 schools, a college, and several social service programs. For information visit www.holychild200.org.

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