



in the School

Kids Helping Kids

***The Story of Jarrett's Joy Cart
as a Learning Tool**

***How to Help Spread the Joy**

***Examples of Schools Who Have
Participated**



JARRETT'S JOYCART® THE STORY OF JARRETT'S JOY CART AS A LEARNING TOOL

Kentuckian Jarrett Mynear's inspirational life story serves as a motivational tool for students of all ages. The project he started in March 1999, Jarrett's Joy Cart, was born out of this young boy's empathy for other children in difficult situations, despite his own fight to stay alive. Living with cancer from age 2½ until his death at age 13½, Jarrett became a symbol of strength and determination for others. More importantly, he taught us that no matter how tough your situation in life, reaching out to help others was the best way to help yourself.

Jarrett's Joy Cart, an all-volunteer effort to provide visits, toys and gifts to hospitalized children and those in various crises situations, garnered national attention. Jarrett's efforts won many local, state and national awards, including the prestigious Prudential Spirit of Community Award as one of the top five middle school volunteers in the nation, the media-sponsored Jefferson Awards, an award typically reserved for adult volunteers, and Disney's Millennium Dreamers. He met with President Clinton, Senators John Glenn and John Warner and Kentucky Governors Paul Patton and Ernie Fletcher. Jarrett was also featured on *Oprah* in a segment titled, "Remembering Your Spirit," and was a favorite guest on the former *Rosie O'Donnell Show*, appearing four times.

Many public speaking appearances and television interviews gave this amazing child the opportunity to get his messages – reaching out to others, not letting adversity place limits on your abilities and service above self – to a vast audience, earning him a national following. Lexington news anchor Marvin Bartlett, who received an Emmy for one of his stories about Jarrett and the Joy Cart, spent countless hours interviewing Jarrett, his family and others whose lives he touched, for his book, *THE JOY CART*. It is available in paperback from Publish America and has been used in classrooms across the country.

Jarrett Mynear's story and the continued efforts of his Joy Cart, in Kentucky and nationwide, provide a prime example for Character Education programs, units on non-fiction, contemporary Kentucky figures, service and volunteer organizations, along with other opportunities within the curriculum.

HOW TO HELP SPREAD THE JOY

Schools, clubs and organizations looking for service projects can learn about Jarrett's Joy Cart and help "spread the joy" by developing creative fundraising activities to benefit the project. Monies donated are used to purchase toys and gifts that are delivered to children, ages 0 to 18 years, at the Children's Hospital.

Jarrett's Joy Cart will gladly provide a brief 4:30 minute DVD of Jarrett and his story. Schools may also print off any information found on the website. Jennifer Mynear, Project Director, former Special Education Teacher, experienced public speaker, and Jarrett's proud mom, is also available to speak to groups. Time and distance must be taken into consideration.

We understand and respect district guidelines on fundraising. However, to offer possible *alternatives* to schools or related organizations keeping up with toys and gifts, storing and transporting them, we have created some fun ideas for students to get the sense that they are giving something tangible for a child. Items for ages 0-3 and 12 and older are *needed most*; however, we accept toys and gifts for ages 0-18. Toy values range from \$6.00 - \$11.00. We also provide small less expensive novelty-type items for clinic treasure boxes. Due to our small, all-volunteer staff, we kindly request that schools be responsible for transport of toys to the Joy Cart storage facility.

Here are some ideas to get your school involved with Jarrett's Joy Cart.

1. Create a Joy Cart Tree where pictures and prices of suggested toys can be hung for students, individually or in groups, to pick what they want their donation to go for. This would be along the lines of the "Angel Tree," but donate the value of items rather than the actual item, along with their request for a purchase. Volunteers will see that their wishes are met.
2. Research advertisements and catalogs for prices and choices, then hold a "Shower the Kids with Joy" fundraiser, using a similar concept as the "Joy Cart Tree."
3. Business Plan/Fundraiser: In 2006, Maegan Waltz, a third-grade teacher at Lexington's Garden Springs Elementary, was working on an economics unit with her students. Students studied basic economic concepts related to scarcity, markets, production, distribution and consumption of goods. Products, the materials needed to make them,

costs, advertising, and actual production were all part of the unit and completed in small groups. The students voted that the proceeds from the sale of their products would go to charity.

As an aside, Mrs. Waltz had been reading *THE JOY CART*, by Marvin Bartlett, to students as a human-interest story. When it came time for students to suggest possible charities to benefit from their efforts, several ideas were presented, but the class unanimously voted to donate to Jarrett's Joy Cart. Mrs. Waltz's class had an evening store where students invited family and friends to purchase their products. It was a HUGE success! They presented Jarrett's Joy Cart with an amazing donation of more than \$450.00! The students from her class were able to sponsor toys and gifts for *every patient* at Kentucky Children's Hospital that week.

4. Fill the Treasure Box – In addition to weekly hospital visits with gifts and toys for all patients, Jarrett's Joy Cart provides small treasure box toys for outpatient visitors to UK's Pediatric Specialty Clinic departments, where children with such ailments as cancer, cystic fibrosis, heart, lung and kidney issues and diabetes are treated when not requiring hospitalization. Dollar store and novelty type store items, all \$1.00 or under, are used for this part of the project. This allows students to participate at any level, knowing they are helping "spread the joy."

The Joy Cart also provides the Pediatric Specialty Departments with books, toys, crafts, DVDs and video games to help patients pass the time during their visits.

Jennifer. Ms. Gray also made arrangements for Mrs. Mynear to speak about the project at the local Optimists Club meeting.

Muhlenburg High School and the Kentucky Chapter of National Honor Society: The NHS chapter from Muhlenburg High was gearing up to host the state Honor Society conference in Louisville. Jennifer Mynear, director of Jarrett's Joy Cart, was invited to speak at the opening dinner ceremony. Schools from across the state were invited to participate in a challenge to collect toys and monetary donations to support the Joy Cart.

Camp Dick Robinson Elementary in Garrard County: Students learned about Jarrett and his Joy Cart and spent several weeks collecting toys. The drive featured a special challenge from Principal Janet Overstreet – she would spend a spring day on the roof of the school if students met their goal for collecting for JJC. We trust that Principal Overstreet enjoyed the view, because her students greatly surpassed their goal! What a wonderful effort to “Spread the Joy”!

Wayland Elementary in Hartford, KY: Principal Adam Cross used Jarrett's story as a Character Education tool to talk about respect and reaching out to others.

Whitesville Elementary: Students learned about Jarrett's story and conducted their own toy drive, delivering *hundreds* of toys for hospitalized children and toys for treasure boxes in the clinics to Lexington.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Jarrett's Joy Cart at Kentucky Children's Hospital:
Serves all pediatric patients from Central and Eastern Kentucky.

Jarrett's Joy Cart - Lexington
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Jarrett's Joy Cart - Louisville:
Serves pediatric oncology patients at Norton-Kosair Children's Hospital, from the Louisville area and the western portion of the state.

Jarrett's Joy Cart - Louisville
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JARRETT'S JOY CART WEBSITE
www.thejoycart.com