

SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS

By Christie Taylor, Diana Maiocco and Pam Hardin

BRUCE WILLIS JOINS PRESTIGIOUS RANKS OF USO



Bruce Willis recently became the latest celebrity "volunteer" for the *USO* when he and his band, the Accelerators, performed in the Persian Gulf for the "Touch of Home" tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The band performed several shows in various locations such as Iraq, Kuwait, and Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates). The tour continued a great tradition of the *USO* by bringing a little bit of home to the troops and providing a great morale boost to those serving their country in the military.

For over 60 years, The *United Service Organizations (USO)* has been the GI's "home away from home," providing a wide range of services to those serving in the United States military. It was formed in 1941 at the request of President Franklin Roosevelt and is chartered by the US Congress as a non-profit charitable corporation. The *USO* mission is to provide morale, welfare and recreation-type services to uniformed military personnel. The original intent of Congress—and enduring style of *USO* delivery—is to represent the American people by extending a "touch of home" to their military members. It is largely made up of volunteers (the ratio of volunteers to employees is 20:1) and corporate sponsors. Among the many services the *USO* provides are: new-

comer briefings for troops and family members, family oriented events, employment assistance for military discharges, and *USO* Canteens (which provide a relaxing alternative to the daily stress for the troops.) However, the *USO* is probably most famous for its history of shows that have entertained military audiences stationed all over the world.

Celebrities from all areas of show business have participated in *USO* shows over the years. The *USO* first reached its height of activity between 1941 – 1947, presenting an amazing 428,521 performances on outposts throughout the world in the years during and immediately following World War II. Celebrities from that era performed at military bases and also volunteered at stateside Canteens. By war's end, the *USO* could claim that more than 1.5 million volunteers had worked on its behalf. However, the *USO* had all but disbanded by 1947. In 1950, when the U.S. entered the Korean War, the *USO* regrouped and eventually opened 24 clubs worldwide. Once again, *USO* Camp Shows performed thousands of times for battle-weary troops and for wounded GIs in the Evac hospitals in Japan. The tradition continued through in the 1960's and 1970's when the *USO* shows went to combat zones during the Vietnam years.

That same dedication to the men and women in uniform continues today.

Current stars as varied as Jay Leno, Kid Rock, Wayne Newton, Gary Sinise, the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders, and (now California Governor) Arnold Schwarzenegger have joined the *USO* to support the troops. They follow in the great tradition set by the celebrity probably most associated with the *USO* of all, Bob Hope. The *USO* has recognized Bob Hope as the "Ambassador of Good Will" for his amazing years of service. His Christmas tours particularly during the Vietnam War became legendary. His service was so extraordinary that in 1997, the *USO* successfully worked with Congress to designate Bob Hope as the first honorary veteran of the United States Armed Forces. "The Spirit of Hope Award" was created in his honor and is given to *USO* entertainers and other distinguished Americans whose patriotism and dedication to the men and women of the Armed Forces reflect that of Mr. Hope.

Testimonials confirm that the entertainment the *USO* has provided throughout its history has been instrumental in keeping morale high within the military. It is this remarkable history and tradition of the *USO* that Bruce Willis joined as he and the Accelerators again brought "a little touch of home" to the troops serving in the Middle East.

To learn more about the many services the *USO* provides and how you can help, please go to their website www.uso.org.

To read the personal accounts of Bruce's trip written by Sgt. Nicholas Wall, MSgt. Reed Lawson, Staff Sgt. Dawn Finnis, and Lt. Col. Lon VomBauer, please turn to page 38.

ALF CLAUSEN PLAYS TO A VERY SPECIAL AUDIENCE

Given Alf Clausen's love of music, it's not surprising that one of his favorite charities is *Discovery Arts*. This amazing non-profit effort brings music, dance, and dramatic arts to children in the hospital battling cancer and other life threatening illnesses. Created in 1993, *Discovery Arts* began by working one-on-one with the children at Jonathan Jaques Children's Cancer Center in Long Beach, California. Volunteers from the arts community dress the children in costumes, paint their faces with magical characters, put tap shoes on their feet, and then dance, paint and sing their way through an afternoon of fun. The responses from the children, their families and the medical staff at the hospital have been wonderfully supportive and encouraging. These experiences meet many emotional needs of the children not otherwise met by the medical community. Most important, it gives them a creative outlet for expressing their feelings about their illness, and it gives them an opportunity to escape from the scary, confusing world of hospitals and intensive treatments.

Discovery Arts was formally incorporated as a non-profit agency in 1998 with the mission to expand the delivery of these experiences to many more children in many more hospitals throughout southern California. Through their *Arts Adventures*,

Discovery Arts provides positive, creative, fun experiences that address the emotional needs of these critically ill children. Each *Art Adventures* has its own theme. It may be the "Hollywood Walk of Fame" or "Let's Go Camping." The children dress in costumes they will keep, have their faces painted, and then tap dance, paint and sing until their hearts content! They may find themselves playing a musical instrument or creating a special art project; they may learn magic tricks, dance with puppets or act out a role in a lively play. For those children too ill to participate in a group, a *Discovery Arts* team member

that provide an outlet for creative expression.

Discovery Arts welcomes anyone who can offer either a financial gift to help support these valuable programs, or lend their time and talent as singers, dancers, players, artists, storytellers, puppeteers, magicians, or clowns. And even those who might think they're not "artistic enough" can still help by dressing the children in costumes or painting their faces. (It's easier than you think, and besides, the kids are very forgiving!). Others help involve the kids in the art projects setup by an Arts Coordinator,

or just sit and visit with the children. Most importantly, the kids all love and need one-on-one attention, and this is a great opportunity to provide it. At the same time, you can also help bring a little joy into the lives of critically ill children ... The more the merrier!

Discovery Arts has ongoing weekly programs at the Jonathan Jaques Children's Center at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center and the Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC).

Thank you Alf, for sharing this wonderful organization with the fanzine. Information for this article was obtained from www.discoveryarts.org. Please visit this website to read more about this remarkable program.



brings the magic beside for their very own "adventure." *Arts Adventures* are a highlight for children during their hospital stay and a welcome relief for parents. Testimonials from both doctors and family members confirm that the arts can play a significant role in a child's recovery by addressing their emotional needs. They describe heartwarming examples of very sick children getting out of bed and transforming before their eyes into creative, happy, "normal" children. Doctors also agree that the immune system is enhanced by positive experiences

NEIL MANDELBERG'S EFFORT TO EDIT CANCER OUT OF THE PICTURE

According to Neil Mandelberg, "I support the *American Cancer Society* because I've seen so many suffer from this affliction and have lost people very close to me from cancer. My daughter has survived her own challenge from melanoma."

The *American Cancer Society* is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer through research, education, advocacy, and service. With more than two million volunteers nationwide, the *American Cancer Society* is one of the oldest and largest voluntary health agencies in the United States.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States. Half of all men and one-third of all women in the US will develop cancer during their lifetimes. Today, millions of people are living with cancer or have had cancer. The risk of developing most types of cancer can be reduced by changes in a person's lifestyle, for example, by quitting smoking, eating a better diet or avoiding excessive sun exposure. The sooner a cancer is found and treatment begins, the better are the chances for living for many years.



Cancer develops when cells in a part of the body begin to grow out of control. Although there are many kinds of cancer, they all start because of out-of-control growth of abnormal cells. Normal body cells grow, divide and die in an orderly fashion. During the early years of a person's life, normal cells divide more rapidly until the person becomes an adult. After that, cells in most parts of the body divide only to replace worn-out or dying cells and to repair injuries. Because cancer cells continue to grow and divide, they are different from normal cells. Instead of dying, they outlive normal cells and continue to form new abnormal cells. Cancer cells develop because of damage to DNA. People can inherit damaged DNA, which accounts for inherited cancers. Many times though, a person's DNA becomes damaged by exposure to something in the environment, like smoking or ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

Melanoma is a cancer that begins in the melanocytes – the cells that produce the skin coloring or pigment known as melanin. Melanin helps protect the deeper layers of the skin from the harmful effects of the sun. Melanoma is almost always curable when it is detected in its early stages. Although melanoma accounts for only a small percentage of skin cancer, it is far more dangerous than other skin cancers, and it causes the majority of skin cancer deaths. It accounts for nearly half of all cancers in the United States. More than one million cases of nonmelanoma skin cancer are found in this country each year. The *American Cancer Society* estimates that about 54,200

new melanomas will be diagnosed in the United States during 2004.

Below are the risk factors for non-melanoma and melanoma skin cancers:

- Unprotected and/or excessive exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation
- Fair complexion
- Occupational exposures to coal tar, pitch, creosote, arsenic compounds, or radium
- Family history
- Multiple or atypical moles
- Severe sunburns as a child

The chances of getting skin cancer can be lowered by staying in the shade as much as you can, wearing a hat and shirt when you are in the sun and using sunscreen.

For more information, please contact the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit their website at www.cancer.org.

In addition to the ACS, Neil supports the *Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation* (www.jdrf.org) because "My niece was diagnosed many years ago and I support the research because further control of the disease is possible...and occurring. I also support the need to feed the hungry and homeless, Parkinson Syndrome and Heart Disease research."

Please support these important organizations by volunteering or donating your time and or money. Thank you Neil for sharing these special causes with *Moonlighting Strangers*.