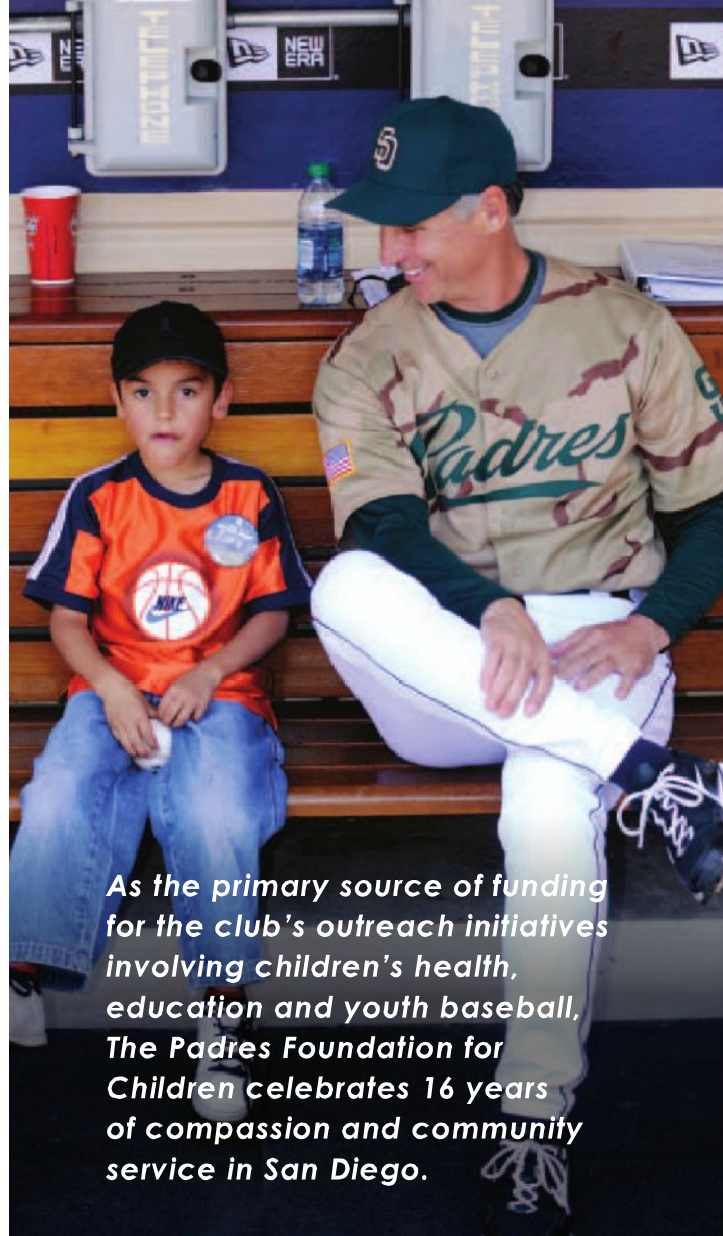


Live, Learn, Play

By Jeanne Ferris

All photography courtesy of the San Diego Padres



As the primary source of funding for the club's outreach initiatives involving children's health, education and youth baseball, The Padres Foundation for Children celebrates 16 years of compassion and community service in San Diego.

With this year's line-up featuring the talents of Heath Bell and Clayton Richard, Chase Headley, Cameron Maybin and Nick Hundley (to name just a few), the Padres have since 1969 remained a hometown favorite and one of only two teams to have originated in California; not to mention the first team in professional sports to develop a military affairs department. Having twice won the National League Pennant, the club's commitment to generating a winning team and enjoyable ballpark experience for the fans are ever-present in their efforts.

From the front office to the athletes on the field, the entire franchise is without a doubt intentional about giving back – a philanthropic

legacy that began in 1995 by Padres Chairman, John Moores. Their focus embraces:

- **LIVE:** an outreach initiative, focusing on children's health and fundraising with organizations such as Rady's Children's Hospital.
- **LEARN:** addresses educational needs to acknowledging the teachers and facilitators involved within the community.
- **PLAY:** supports youth baseball by refurbishing Little League ballparks, facilitating Coaches, Clinics and other innovative play programs.

The heart of The Padres Foundation since 1999 has been Sue Botos, recently promoted to vice president of communications.



The mission of The Foundation is to simply “build community pride through positive connections with fans, players and Padres staff and leading the community through relevant, visible programs and partnerships,” notes Botos. “All of the initiatives [we support and champion] have powerful stories, but you cannot help but be drawn to the ones that without question make a difference in the life of a child. [As one example], our Cindy Matters Fund was established in 1997 and over the years we have donated more than \$1.1 million to pediatric cancer research; [a day without concern], we host the kids and their families to an afternoon or evening of baseball, they meet the players and can play as kids without rules – they are the kings and queens of Petco Park when they visit.”

Star volunteer, Summer Serrano has been a Padres Foundation volunteer for 15 years. When asked why she supports this organization of all the charities in San Diego, she answered with just two words, “Sue Botos.”

“She is the best person I could ever work for, so upbeat and a ball of energy,” Serrano said. “Plus, I love baseball and I love the Padres. I see them among the fans all the time, they really do care about giving back to the community.”

The club’s charitable giving is as tightly interwoven with its creative, dedicated foundation fundraisers as the stitching of a baseball in a rookie’s hand. There are three major in-ballpark fundraisers: Scoreboard Surprises, Shirts Off Their Backs and the Annual Garage Sale – with all proceeds directly benefiting the foundation.

“The little kids are so excited when they actually buy something at the garage sale worn by one of the players,” notes Serrano. “I love the smiles on their faces — that is so satisfying for me.”

New owners, Jeff Moorad and Tom Garfinkel’s quiet yet highly visible presence are felt throughout Petco Park. They are seen walking among the fans, staff and volunteers, and have made tangible improvements; the “ballpark experience” is high on the list, and of course, a winning team.

“We are very fortunate in that [Moorad and Garfinkel] support the vision that the San Diego Padres and the Padres Foundation are community assets,” said Botos. “We will continue in our commitment by investing in efforts that support youth in the San Diego and Baja regions.” ♦