

# update

A Publication of Gabriel's Gifts Missing Children's Organization Fall 2005

## First Annual Gabriel's Gifts Charity Golf Tournament Raises \$8,000



2005 Golf Tournament Winners (from left):  
Scott Cannon, Tom Cagle, Pat Cagle and Kevin Cagle

Gabriel's Gifts First Annual Golf Tournament was a big success and netted over \$8,000 for our important programs! It was a beautiful day for golf at Wildcat Golf Club. Forty-five players teed up to support child safety.

Many thanks to Golf Chairman and Gabriel's Gifts Board Member, Justin White, who pledges an even bigger and better event in 2006.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Second Annual Gabriel's Gifts  
Charity Golf Tournament**

**October 16, 2006**  
**Wildcat Golf Club**



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perfect gift?**

**Make a donation in  
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**(See donor form  
on Page 4.)**

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**Gabriel's**  
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Missing Children's Organization  
a 501(c)(3) charity dedicated to  
helping families locate missing  
and abducted children.

# Special Thanks to Our Golf Tournament Sponsors



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*Thank you all for your generous support!*



## CARLIE BRUCIA

The video-taped kidnapping of Carlie Brucia in February 2004 sent chills down the spines of citizens across our nation.

Joseph Smith, Carlie's heartless killer, was recently convicted of her abduction and murder. The jury has recommended the death penalty.

While this act of justice will not bring Carlie back, it sends the strongest possible message to the heinous predators of our children – in America, if you harm our children, you *will* pay. We encourage Circuit Judge Andrew Owens to carry out the jury's recommendation.

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Gabriel's Gifts Missing Children's Organization welcomed two new members at our November meeting. Jim Arket, Senior Vice President of Grub & Ellis Company, and Cedric Mills, recent graduate of the Project Blueprint Board Leadership Program, join in the fight for child safety.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

### Enterprise Rent-a-Car Foundation.

Many, many thanks to Enterprise-Rent-a-Car Foundation and local Houston HR Manager, Collette Miller-Edwards, for providing a \$2,500 grant to Gabriel's Gifts. These badly needed funds will help us reach more children!

## AMECO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The annual conference of the Association of Missing and Exploited Children's Organizations (AMECO) was held in October in Tampa, Florida. The threat of hurricane Wilma's landfall cut the conference short by half a day while participants scrambled to return to their homes, but the conference was deemed a huge success by all who attended.

Gabriel's Gifts CEO, Beth Alberts, was elected Secretary of the AMECO Board of Directors during annual elections.



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Fifth Annual Champagne Brunch**

**April 30, 2006**

**12 - 3 PM**



## HOUSTON REGIONAL AMBER PLAN

### HOUSTON REGIONAL AMBER PLAN MARKS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

By Beth Alberts

Wednesday, December 7, 2005, marks the fifth anniversary of the implementation of the 13-county Houston Regional Amber Plan.

This important child recovery tool has been activated by law enforcement agencies 48 times for cases involving 50 children, of whom 46 were safely recovered, two remain missing and two were recovered deceased.

During the last five years we have made tremendous progress on behalf of missing children. All fifty states have statewide plans. We have been working together to build an effective, nationwide network so that the Amber Alert can follow, state-to-state if necessary, the abductor and child.

The White House has emphasized child safety by holding the first ever White House conference on missing children and by enacting the Child Protect Act of 2003 creating harsher penalties for those who prey on our children and funding initiatives to increase both child safety and prosecution of child predators.

In the Houston area, missing children's organizations like Gabriel's Gifts, search and rescue volunteers like those of the Southeast Texas Search and Rescue Alliance, and law enforcement agencies like the Houston Police Department and Harris County Sheriff's Office, have joined forces to bring children to safety.

The media has embraced not only the newsworthiness of endangered missing children and vulnerable elderly, but the importance of their own role as harbingers of the details needed to

enlist the public's help in locating the child.

These partnerships make our community safer, and our critical response faster and more effective. Still, there is much left to do.

Convicted sexual predators have always roamed our streets, but we received more than 300 new ones from Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and more than half are not registered. Their whereabouts remain unknown to law enforcement.

The Internet poses an unprecedented threat to the safety and innocence of our children in myriad ways. Thousands of tech-savvy adults, right this minute, are seeking innovative ways to breach the safe guards we put into place to protect our kids. Over-worked, under-funded law enforcement agencies are out-gunned by predators using the most sophisticated, state-of-the-art equipment and methods of reaching out to children and hiding from those who would stop them.

Local, State and Federal budgets are strained, and agencies struggle to meet their citizens' most basic needs. They are trying to do more with less – to service a broader mandate with fewer staff, fewer dollars and often, out-dated technologies.

We have never before had such an immense need for a coordinated, consistent response to the threat against our children.

In Houston, we have amazing people and amazing teamwork. I'm proud of what we've accomplished in the last five years, but recognize that it's only the beginning. Each year in our region almost 12,000 children are reported missing.

As we accomplish some of our goals and move toward new frontiers, it's important that everyone – our entire "village" – works together to protect our children, and to support those on the front lines responsible for that critical first response to an endangered missing child or adult.

January 10, 2006, will mark the tenth anniversary of Amber Hagerman's abduction and murder in Arlington, Texas. This little girl's legacy, the Amber Alert, has proven to be a mighty tool in the arsenal we use to recover our abducted children quickly and safely. We honor her memory every time the Amber Alert goes out and the community takes notice and gets involved.



### AMBER ALERT TRAINING CLASS HELD FOR TELECOMMUNICATORS

Beth Alberts worked with Fox Valley Technical College and the Department of Justice to develop curriculum to be used in providing Amber Alert training to law enforcement telecommunicators. This new training was provided for the first time at a National Amber Alert Conference held November 30 – December 1 in Fort Myers, Florida. This training was the first in a series of training sessions to be provided to law enforcement agencies nationwide so that call takers at every agency are prepared to gather necessary information during missing child calls, some of which, inevitably, will necessitate the issuance of an Amber Alert.

# Gabriel's

G I F T S  
Missing Children's Organization

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## HURRICANE KATRINA AND THE MISSING

Gabriel's Gifts staff worked with the Houston Police Department, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's Team Adam representatives and Children's Protective Services to gather information and match up parents and missing children at Reliant Center. Thousands of children and families were separated during Hurricane Katrina and unfortunately some still are. We are proud of the Houston effort to assist in this overwhelming disaster.

Additionally, Gabriel's Gifts Board Members Doug Beatty, Sydney Greenblatt, Loretta Nemer and Justin White took very active, demanding roles to assist the evacuees and agencies working with them.



*Houston Police Department Officers Darrin Buse & Matt Dexter work missing child cases at Reliant Center after Hurricane Katrina.*

### Gabriel's Gifts:

- **provides** public awareness about missing children, missing child prevention and education programs and training for volunteers and law enforcement agencies;
- **administers** the Houston Regional Amber Plan, a 13-county child abduction alert that goes out to all law enforcement and media outlets as well as to the public and business partners;
- **coordinates** the Southeast Texas Search and Rescue Alliance — a consortium of 8 volunteer search and rescue organizations working together to provide training, education, and search support.

# Donor

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# Form

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