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## 50 Wishes Campaign Is One Woman's Birthday Dream

By Jane Seiss

Kathy Wilson of Pasadena turns 50 in about a year, and she has set herself a fulfilling goal for the occasion. She aims to raise \$50,000 for charity by December 24, 2010, when her birthday arrives. The money will be divided among three non-profits she is partnering with: Ronald McDonald House Charities, Baltimore; Special Olympics Maryland, Anne Arundel County; and the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Mid-Atlantic.

The charitable endeavor was inspired by a lifelong love of giving and a desire to do something different for the milestone year. "I have been giving to St. Jude since childhood," Wilson explained. "I wanted to do something for local charities. I've had this vision for quite some time."

For her 40th birthday, Wilson celebrated with a big and expensive party. This time around, she said, "I didn't

want to spend the money on myself and wanted to do something meaningful."

The work to launch her fund raising plan began in November 2007. Wilson selected the causes she wanted to honor and began the process of setting up a non-profit to accept funds and sought approval of the beneficiary organizations. She had to provide "kind of a mini business plan on what you're going to be doing," she explained. The result is the *50 Wishes Children's Charity Campaign* complete with official web site and logo.

Wilson has been creative with her fund raising and promotion of the cause and has received support from family, friends, co-workers, and the community. A colleague, steel superintendent Dan Henson, entered her logo design competition and won the \$100 prize she gave for coming up with a graphic identity for *50 Wishes*. Wilson has sold raffle

tickets for electronic and cash prizes and sold them at work, to neighbors, family, and friends. She has attended events like the classic car show at Marley Station Mall and had success selling them there as well.

On October 12, with the manpower and support of volunteer friends and family, she ran a Golf Classic at Compass Pointe Golf Course. The course advertised the tournament for weeks and was very supportive of Wilson's efforts. "The golf tournament was really successful," Wilson said. "We had 68 golfers." There are plans to do another tournament at Compass Pointe in September 2010, and early registration incentives are planned.

Wilson is "constantly thinking of ideas" for raising more money, and she is well on her way. "I've got about

13 more months to go. My goal is to hand the money over to the charities by December 1, 2010," she said. "I've never done anything like this in my life. I didn't know if I could raise a dollar." An alternate quality control manager with Tompkins Builders, Inc. working at Aberdeen Proving Ground on a design and build project for The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilson is proving herself to be a creative and effective fund raiser. Her initiatives have brought an outpouring of support, and she has been moved by the participation of those around her.

More raffles and exciting prizes are planned, and donors can visit the *50 Wishes* web site at [www.50wishesccc.com](http://www.50wishesccc.com) to learn more about giving and for upcoming 2010 golf tournament plans and other opportunities.



Golfers and volunteers joined forces to raise money for Kathy Wilson's 50 Wishes Charitable Campaign during the organization's golf tournament at Compass Pointe.