

## In Memory of D. Timothy Roberts

Tim Roberts was with the New Jersey State Organization of Cystic Fibrosis since 2010. He was our Grant Administrator and Bookkeeper for thirteen years and did an impeccable job at both.

Sadly, Tim passed away this July 15th and is deeply missed by his family and friends, and work family here at NJSOCF.



## Thank you NJSOCF!!!

Ten-year old Bryan was so thankful to NJSOCF for providing special meal replacement shakes for diabetes that he posed for a photograph to let us know. St. Joseph's Children's Hospital reached out to NJSOCF for assistance on Bryan's behalf and we were there on the spot!



Since 1977 the New Jersey State Organization of Cystic Fibrosis has been providing assistance to individuals with CF and their families throughout the State of New Jersey. NJSOCF is a not-for-profit tax exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3). Our special state-funded program for adults over 18 is called Pharmaceutical Services for Adults with Cystic Fibrosis. We use our funds to help purchase the life-sustaining medications, nutritional supplements and extra nutritional foods, and medical equipment. We also assist with office visits, diagnostic/lab work expenses and even help with insurance deductibles. Please see our website for more information [www.njsocf.org](http://www.njsocf.org).

## New Jersey State Organization of Cystic Fibrosis

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[njsocf.org](http://njsocf.org)



## HOW TO DONATE

**ON-LINE:** Making a donation on line is simple and convenient. Just visit our website—[www.njsocf.org](http://www.njsocf.org).

**MEMORIAL GIFTS:** A memorial gift to NJSOCF makes a lasting tribute to a departed loved one. A special occasion gift can be used to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and even be given in lieu of wedding favors.

**UNITED WAY:** Employees that

participate in the United Way payroll deduction program at work can designate their contributions 100% to NJSOCF.

**MATCHING GIFTS:** Many medium-sized and large companies offer a matching gift program. Your employer may match your personal tax-deductible donation to NJSOCF with an equal amount of company funds.

## Our Mission

To help ease the heavy financial burden placed on CF patients and their families and to provide needed information. No other cystic fibrosis organization in New Jersey offers the same type of focused financial assistance and emotional support.

## Our Motto

We help them breathe easier!

## Contact Us

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Office Mascot Sunny enjoys running and digging on Island Beach State Park whenever she gets the chance.

## ***Cystic Fibrosis and The Healing Power of Pets***

**Debbie and Joe Pansini love giving a home to a pet in need**

**"T**he holidays are right around the corner, a time when we are forever thankful and grateful for our CF family and friends at the New Jersey State Organization of Cystic Fibrosis. You make life easier with the outstanding assistance you provide. We are so blessed with your love and support. Thank you for your amazing care. You are hardworking angels, giving so much to us."

Sometimes the best medicine can be a nudge or kiss from your beloved pet. Debbie has CF, with sepsis several times in her life. She believes she has nine lives from the love of her rescue kitties. Since childhood Debbie would bring strays home. Debbie and her husband Joe love giving a home for a pet in need. While spending a lot of time in her bedroom sick as a child she had the comfort and love of her pets. Simon is her oldest boy, a Ragamuffin pictured with Debbie, he is now 17. Elsa is a Bengal and is 14 years old, and Molly a Tuxedo is two. All of them had health issues, and Debbie and Joe believe their longevity is because of the care and tremendous love that is shown. The love they share with each other and all creatures great and small is a tremendous force.

**Blessings to all, Debbie and Joe Pansini**



### **Michael and Heather exchange vows with their pets Royce and Bentley in attendance**

**T**wo weeks after they met on a dating site back in 2016 Michael told Heather that he had cystic fibrosis. Michael never told his friends growing up that he had CF, but with Heather it was different and he told her right away. She said that a friend's son had CF and she watched him on occasion, but she went home and googled CF life expectancy and cried. At that time Michael was past the life expectancy of someone with CF. In spite of that knowledge Heather and Michael started dating, became a couple, and married this year with their two dogs in attendance.

Heather was a package deal with her pup, Bentley. The two of them went through therapy dog training before she met Michael. Little did she know that the girl who wouldn't drive in NYC would put Bentley in the car and drive through the streets of New York to visit a very special patient. Bentley was born to be a therapy dog, he sat with Michael while he did his therapy and put his paw on him from the first day they met. They had a tight bond from the start!

While in the hospital they saw a puppy in foster care on-line and picked her up on the way home. Royce was slow at potty training and a typical energetic puppy, but also a blessing.

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During COVID, being home 24/7 for close to two years, being with the two dogs kept what was a crazy and confusing time, more balanced and endurable.

In 2021 right before his birthday Michael and Heather were told that Heather needed surgery for something they never heard of. So in April, on his birthday, Michael woke Heather up and proposed. He said, "I want you to be my wife." There were a lot of unknowns to navigate, but her surgery, recovery and wedding planning were at the top of the list.

They always knew they wanted an outdoor wedding so on June 11 Heather and Michael were married in Sparta on Lake Seneca, and Bentley and Royce were in attendance. Bentley escorted Heather with her Dad down the aisle and Royce was waiting for her with Michael. The wedding included a sit down lakeside dinner, a cellist whose spouse has CF, and a cake featuring their beloved Bentley and Royce.

Michael's best man gave a lovely speech touching on the balance of Michael and Heather's life together. He noted that their experiences help in any situation to look at things and bring the other back to calm, how they tackle things together, head on, and try to cut the chaos out and manage to divide and conquer whatever comes their way.

With Bentley and Royce by their sides Michael and Heather live a grounded, balanced and loving life together.

## Vinny Cimmino and Cannoli....best friends

Cannoli, a 9 year old Frengel, a Beagle/French Bulldog mix, gives Vinnie unconditional love, comfort and hope. Vinnie found Cannoli in a pet store when he was 8 weeks old, but Cannoli was very sick and when Vinnie brought him to the Vet, the doctor said he had a very bad case of pneumonia. Vinnie nursed the little puppy back to health, and although he was a happy playful puppy, he was left with a chronic cough.

Seven years ago Vinnie had a double lung transplant at Columbia Presbyterian. It seemed that just as Cannoli recovered from his bout of pneumonia, Vinnie had his lung transplant. Now when Vinnie coughs, Cannoli coughs too! Remember, the pneumonia left Cannoli with a chronic cough. Vinnie believes he is imitating him.

Vinnie and Cannoli have both been through rough times but overcame them together. They recently shared a birthday with party hats and all. Vinnie says, "Cannoli is a little dog version of me." It seems that Vinnie and Cannoli were destined to be best friends.



## Office Chit Chat...



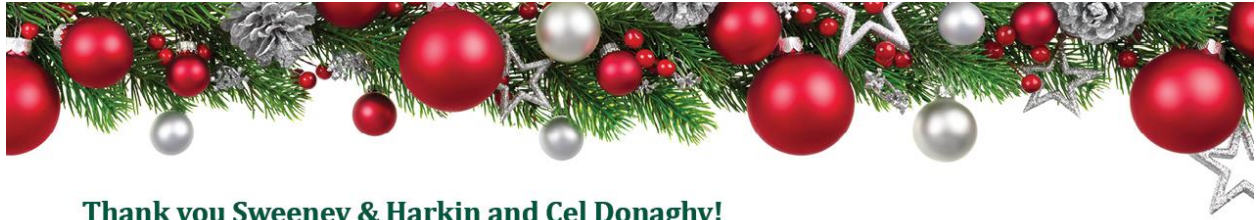
No one was more deserving than Bea Rittenberg to win the Mothers' Day Tea special prize. She won a beautiful Kate Spade handbag with a matching wallet. Bea has been attending our many "Pocketbook Bingo" fundraisers since the event's inception and has never gone home with a bingo prize, a designer handbag. Bernice DeMeritt presented Bea with the Kate Spade handbag along with Marty Rittenberg, her husband.

Marty Rittenberg is Vice President of NJSOCF and has sat on the Board of Directors since 1990. Bea and Marty came to the organization when they were raising their son Harris who had CF.

Harris was a graduate of Wayne Valley High School. He was a high achiever, and during his school years he served as Senior Class President, editor of the school newspaper, and co-editor of the senior year book. Harris always dreamed of attending Columbia University and seemed destined to go there. His dream came true, he was accepted and ready to pursue a career in medicine. Tragically, Harris lost his battle with CF a few days before he was set to report to campus in 1983.

A scholarship was established in memory of Harris at Wayne Valley High School to honor outstanding high achieving students in the graduating class. The scholarship ran for 16 years.





## Thank you Sweeney & Harkin and Cel Donaghy!

In June, 2006 a phone call from Cel Donaghy began a friendship that would change the course of NJSOCF for the next 17 years! Through the Sweeney & Harkin Annual Golf Outing for Cystic Fibrosis, Cel and his amazing committee donated funds to NJSOCF totaling nearly \$1,000,000.00! "These funds have made a tremendous impact on our ability to assist the CF community," said Executive Director Debra Sikkema. Thank you Cel, Kevin, Claire, Scott, his hardworking golf committee, and Cel's loyal friends and supporters who attend this amazing golf outing every year.



## Pocketbook Bingo...Always a Hit!



After a long hiatus due to COVID we resumed our famous Pocketbook Bingo and hosted two events in 2022!

In November of last year, friends and supporters of NJSOCF once again filled the Pompton Lakes Elks Lodge to play Bingo for twelve fabulous designer handbags, and came together to raise awareness for Cystic Fibrosis.

Our Bingo enthusiasts also enjoyed an upscale Tricky Tray, refreshments and 50/50 Raffle. "No one seems to tire of this event. Every Bingo sells out to at least 250 people," said Executive Director Debra Sikkema. "It's a great night to bring your friends and family to play bingo, win prizes, including a designer handbag, and just have lots of fun!"

**Thank you to everyone who attends and for all our devoted volunteers who make this event a rousing success!!**

## 40th Annual Golf Tournament



This year marked NJSOCF's 40th Annual Golf Tournament. Since 1983 when the first Cystic Fibrosis Golf Tournament was held at the Montclair Country Club, NJSOCF has been raising funds and raising awareness for the CF community in New Jersey by bringing supporters together each year for a highly successful event. In spite of record breaking heat,



this year's tournament at Crystal Springs Golf Club did not disappoint! A big thank you to all our supporters, sponsors and volunteers who worked so hard to make this event a success!